
Rumah Rengganis: A Cross-Generational Community Literacy Platform

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Abstract

The development of literacy culture in Indonesia shows improvement, but has not yet fully reached a high level nationwide. Amid the wave of digitalization, literacy is no longer understood merely as the ability to read and write, but rather as a social practice and a medium of communication. This study aims to analyze the role of the Rumah Rengganis Literacy Community in Cirebon City as a medium for social expression and reflection. The study employs a qualitative approach using in-depth interviews with five informants, observation, documentation, journals, and books. Data analysis utilizes symbolic interaction theory grounded in the concepts of mind, self, and society to understand the process of meaning-making through literacy interactions. The findings reveal that literacy at Rumah Rengganis is interpreted as a practice of social meaning-making that connects texts with the realities of life. This community functions as an egalitarian space for symbolic interaction, where works and discussions shape the construction of social reality. Furthermore, Rumah Rengganis serves as an alternative, informal public space that fosters critical dialogue and intergenerational participation. This study recommends strengthening policy support, cross-community collaboration, and the development of further research to expand the role of independent literacy communities in building social awareness and literacy-based public spaces at the local level.

INTRODUCTION

The development of a culture of literacy in Indonesia over the past decade has shown interesting dynamics (Agus et al., 2021; Sari et al., 2025). The National Library of Indonesia has recorded a year-on-year increase in reading enthusiasm (antaranews.com, n.d.). The national reading enthusiasm score (Tingkat Gemar Membaca, TGM) in 2024 reached 72.44%, placing it in the moderate category, meaning it has not yet reached a high level nationally. The rapid development of information technology has transformed the way people live and work, requiring society to adapt to both the conveniences and the complexities of the digital age. Furthermore, literacy is no longer understood merely as the ability to read and write, but also as a means of social communication and self-expression.

Amid the rapid pace of digitalization, various independent literacy communities have emerged that play an active role in creating alternative spaces for the public to discuss, write, and reflect on social conditions through book-based activities. One notable example at the local level is Rumah Rengganis, a literacy community that has flourished in the city of Cirebon. The Rumah Rengganis literacy community is not merely a reading space, but also a space for social interaction that fosters a diverse literacy scene, bringing together people from various segments of society across generations — including students, university students, artists, and young

writers — through activities such as book discussions, literary analyses, literary performances, and reflective forums on social issues. These activities demonstrate how literacy transforms into a medium of communication that enables its members to express their views on the social, cultural, and political realities around them.

From a communication studies perspective, this phenomenon can be explained through Symbolic Interactionism (George Herbert Mead & Herbert Blumer), which emphasizes that social meaning is formed through the interactions and symbols humans use in the communication process. In the context of literacy communities, activities such as reading, discussing, and writing serve as symbols of communication that shape a shared understanding of social issues, as well as positioning the literacy community as an alternative public space where people engage in critical dialogue outside formal institutions and freely and equally voice their ideas and social reflections.

The limitations of previous research lie in the absence of studies that specifically address literacy in Indonesia within independent communities. Research generally still focuses on aspects of formal education, such as the School Literacy Movement or the National Literacy Movement, and rarely highlights the role of independent literacy communities as spaces for non-formal social reflection outside educational institutions. Most of the literature on community literacy continues to focus on increasing reading interest, educational achievement, or digital literacy. Agnia, Khumayah, and Rahmayanti (2025) explain that the learning process should not be limited to activities in formal settings; rather, individuals also need to be able to implement and apply their knowledge to serve the community (Agnia et al., 2025). Studies linking literacy communities to communication theory — particularly symbolic interaction theory — remain very limited. Furthermore, the context of Cirebon City, as a region with a rich coastal culture and complex social dynamics, has not been extensively studied from the perspective of literacy communication.

Due to cultural influences, education is not yet viewed as a priority in some areas (Widiyana et al., n.d.). Although the culture of literacy in Cirebon Regency is considered relatively developed, data shows that the TGM and the Community Literacy Development Index (Indeks Pembangunan Literasi Masyarakat, IPLM) remain relatively low. In 2023, the IPLM stood at 51.54% and increased to 57.56% in 2024, while the TGM in 2024 reached 68.97%. The Head of the Cirebon Regency Archives and Library Service (Dede Kurniawan, 2025) stated that the 2025 Cirebon Literacy Festival aims to raise public awareness of the importance of literacy, ranging from reading and writing to communication skills (dkis.cirebonkota.go.id, n.d.).

The novelty of this research lies in three aspects. First, this study specifically examines literacy as a social practice of meaning-making within an independent community context, rather than focusing on formal educational institutions. Second, this study applies symbolic interaction theory — encompassing the concepts of mind, self, and society — to analyze literacy practices in a non-formal community setting, an approach rarely taken in previous research. Third, this study focuses on Cirebon City — a region with a rich coastal culture and complex social dynamics — which has not been extensively studied from the perspective of literacy communication. The integration of symbolic interactionism with community literacy studies represents a novel contribution to both communication studies and literacy research.

Based on the above discussion, this study aims to fill a gap in the literature by examining the role of the Rumah Rengganis Literacy Community as a medium for social expression and reflection among urban residents in Cirebon. Through various literacy activities, this community not only contributes to strengthening reading interest but also provides a space for the growth of social awareness, cultural criticism, and solidarity. This study is therefore expected to broaden understanding of the interrelationship between communication, literacy, and the formation of public spaces at the local community level.

Literacy practices within communities have often been narrowly understood as merely reading and writing, resulting in the social dimension of literacy — as a process of interaction and the construction of collective meaning — receiving insufficient attention. Literacy in a community context functions not only as an individual skill but also as a social practice involving communication, the interpretation of symbols, and reflection on social reality.

Symbolic interactionism holds that human social interaction is mediated by symbols that are given meaning through a process of interpretation, with individuals and society understood as products of ongoing social processes (Zanki, 2020). Blumer (1969) asserts that the construction of meaning in social interaction rests on three main premises: meaning, language, and thought. This perspective aligns with Mead's assertion that an individual's thoughts and identity develop through social processes. The three key concepts in symbolic interactionism — mind, self, and society — form the basis for understanding the reciprocal relationship between the individual and society (Mead, 1934). In a literacy community, writing, discussion, and literary works can be understood as social symbols that serve as the medium for the collective construction of meaning.

Previous research has shown that symbols of communication play a crucial role in the formation of group identity and social meaning. However, the application of symbolic interactionism is still dominated by studies in problematic or institutional contexts. E. Hutapea (2022) demonstrates how drug-using communities develop distinctive communication symbols as a strategy for social adaptation. Nevertheless, research that views literacy communities as arenas for informal symbolic interaction remains very limited (Rivo Nugroho et al., 2024), as previous research has largely focused on formal educational institutions or problematic social issues. Communities serve as spheres of social life where public opinion is formed through equal participation and rational-critical dialogue, free from the domination of the state and the market (Moh Fathul Hasan, n.d.). Within the literacy community, the practices of reading, writing, and discussion constitute a process of the social construction of meaning that shapes collective identity and reality.

Based on this review, there is a significant research gap — namely, the scarcity of studies that integrate symbolic interactionism within the context of non-formal literacy communities. Research on the Rumah Rengganis Literacy Community is therefore important for understanding literacy practices as a social process that shapes meaning, public dialogue spaces, and collective reality. This study is expected to enrich the study of community literacy by positioning literacy as a reflective and meaningful social practice in community life.

Literacy can be defined as an individual's ability to recognize, understand, interpret, produce, and communicate information through written text across various life situations. It is also related to a person's capacity to expand their knowledge and play an active role in society (UNESCO). Literacy is a critical issue, particularly in today's era of the Fourth Industrial

Revolution. A society's level of success is greatly influenced by its generation's ability to generate new ideas and innovations. Countries with a strong culture of literacy generally demonstrate strong capabilities in collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and effective communication, making them better prepared to face and succeed in global competition (Mayasari et al., 2022). Current developments in the concept of literacy also encompass digital literacy, media literacy, and information literacy, which support public participation in social life and education.

Rumah Rengganis is one of the thriving literacy spaces in the city of Cirebon. Designed as a combination of a mini-library, a small bookstore, and a coffee shop, it provides a space for the community to read, discuss, and engage in literacy activities. Rumah Rengganis also frequently serves as a gathering place for a cross-generational literacy community that organizes various events such as book discussions, writing workshops, and literary appreciation sessions. In addition to providing books for on-site reading, Rumah Rengganis sells books across various genres, including literature, politics, history, and works from independent publishers (Cirebon Regency Regional People's Representative Council, 2021). This concept makes Rumah Rengganis not only a place for reading, but also a cultural space that supports the growth of literacy activities in the community (Arianingrum et al., n.d.). With its welcoming and open atmosphere, Rumah Rengganis serves as a space for young people and literacy advocates to exchange ideas, engage in discussions, and broaden their horizons through reading and writing activities (Rakyat Cirebon, 2020).

Community communication is the process of exchanging information, ideas, and values among community members with the aim of fostering participation, awareness, and social solidarity. It is participatory, horizontal, and rooted in local needs, growing out of citizen initiatives that enable communities to express their own interests and independently manage social change. In this context, community communication is not merely about conveying messages, but about building social relationships that strengthen cohesion and collective identity.

The evolution of modern society has expanded the scope of community communication beyond formal institutions such as schools. Literacy practices are now flourishing in various social spaces — such as interest-based communities, discussion forums, and literacy groups — which allow for free expression and social reflection unbound by institutional norms (Barton & Hamilton, 1998). In this context, a literacy community can be understood as a "third space" (Soja, 1996) — an alternative space where diverse identities, experiences, and cultures come together through dialogue on equal terms. Community literacy thus emphasizes participation, a local focus, and social interaction as the primary foundations of its communicative practices.

Social expression within literacy communities is creative and collaborative. Community members not only express ideas individually but also influence one another through dialogue and discussion, thereby fostering collective creativity. Literacy communities thus function as social agents that enable their members to actively participate in the production of meaning and social discourse. In addition to serving as spaces for expression, literacy communities also act as arenas for social reflection — the process of understanding, interpreting, and critiquing social phenomena through collective consciousness. Literacy practices such as critical reading, reflective discussion, and narrative writing enable community members to evaluate social realities, including issues of education, culture, social inequality,

and shifting values in the digital age. This process of reflection contributes to the development of empathy, solidarity, and critical awareness among community members (Nurfalah et al., 2020).

From a social science perspective, a literacy community is understood as a social group that consciously organizes reading, writing, and discussion activities for educational, cultural, or community empowerment purposes (Nasrullah, 2022). Alfianti (2025) emphasizes that literacy must be understood as a social practice shaped by cultural contexts, values, and social interactions. Literacy communities can therefore be viewed as spaces where meaning, symbols, and social identities are formed and negotiated through ongoing literacy practices (Kamaluddin Mabruhi et al., n.d.). Over time, literacy communities have come to serve not only to improve literacy skills but also as alternative public spaces where social expression, critical reflection, and the formation of collective consciousness take place. Literacy communities thus play a dual role: as a means of intellectual and cultural empowerment, and as a social space that facilitates dialogue and the construction of social meaning through symbolic interactions among their members.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach, utilizing data collection techniques such as journals, books, observation, in-depth interviews, and data analysis. Qualitative research places greater emphasis on the use of inductive reasoning, in which categories or concepts emerge from direct interactions between the researcher and informants in the field, as well as from the data obtained. Communication activities taking place within the community include forms of interaction among members, patterns of symbolic communication, as well as social expressions and reflections that emerge in literacy activities. Interviews were conducted with five informants, including the community manager, active members of the Rumah Rengganis literacy community, and participants in literacy activities (book discussions, literary analyses, or poetry readings).

This study was conducted at Rumah Rengganis, a literacy community located in the city of Cirebon, West Java. A qualitative approach was chosen because this study seeks to gain an in-depth understanding of the communication processes, symbolic meanings, and social functions that emerge in the activities of the Rumah Rengganis Cirebon literacy community. Methodologically, this study employs symbolic theory, which has distinct characteristics as it views meaning as a fundamental aspect of every social interaction.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study outline field findings regarding literacy practices at Rumah Rengganis (destarini, 2025).

Literacy as a Practice of Social Interpretation

All informants rejected the notion of reading as a passive activity. They viewed reading as a tool for interpreting social reality. One informant described reading as a process of connecting texts to the surrounding social context, rather than merely absorbing the content of a book. Another informant noted that the literary works they wrote always drew from their lived experiences in their environment, such as poverty, cultural unease, and ecological crises.

“I don’t write from an empty space. I write from what I see and feel around me.” (Interview with Informant 5, December 27, 2025)

Reading serves as a social symbol that is collectively interpreted, where reading is understood not only as the act of comprehending a text, but also as a process of experiencing and interpreting a shared reality. Thus, literacy at Rumah Rengganis is not viewed merely as the consumption of texts, but rather as a social practice of making sense of the world.

Communication Patterns in the Rumah Rengganis Literacy Community

Two-way and multi-directional communication patterns enable community members to actively engage in the exchange of ideas, whether through book discussions, literary analyses, or community conversations. These interactions create a space for communication where literary symbols are collectively interpreted and given meaning.

The community leader, Arifah, explained that communication at Rumah Rengganis takes place on an equal footing, without a senior–junior hierarchy. Members respect each other’s differing viewpoints and interact in a spirit of dialogue, whether through in-person meetings or digital platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Medium, and Google Drive.

“Communication is excellent; we have a lot of fun, there’s a strong sense of mutual respect and tolerance, and it’s not authoritarian at all. Everyone is respected, and we usually communicate through a WhatsApp group in addition to talking in person here at Rumah Rengganis.” (Interview with Informant 1, December 27, 2025)

Books and discussions are viewed as a means of broadening one’s horizons—not merely as reading material, but as sources of argumentative support that lend legitimacy to opinions. Discussions are designed to foster an understanding of others’ perspectives and deepen shared knowledge. This pattern of interaction encourages members to consider others’ viewpoints before forming their own opinions.

“The saying that ‘books are windows to the world’ is certainly true; usually, we focus on the key points to be discussed, not to argue over them. Because if we argue, it turns into a debate, but if we discuss, we want to understand more deeply, to expand our knowledge and perspective, and to understand why someone expressing an opinion on that topic might say such things—what is the literature behind it? That way, it broadens our perspective rather than becoming a conflict; that is the nature of the discussion.” (Interview with Informant 1, December 27, 2025)

Discussions are viewed as spaces for dialogue aimed at broadening shared understanding, where differences are seen as a source of knowledge rather than a venue for confrontation. The interactions that take place are not merely informative, but also reflective and transformative.

“Yes, we respect every difference of opinion and try to understand their perspective, so we don’t immediately talk about right and wrong, but instead discuss it as something that needs to be explored further.” (Interview with Informant 1, December 27, 2025)

Community members serve as active participants in the exchange of meaning through book discussions, literary analyses, and open forums that facilitate the sharing of perspectives and reflections on social realities. Communication functions not only as a means of conveying information but also as a mechanism for social bonding that strengthens relationships and collective identity. This process unfolds through face-to-face interactions, digital communication, cultural activities, and the publication of literary works, which collectively

shape the community's social network. This multi-directional communication pattern is the most dominant in literacy communities, as it plays a role in fostering a participatory atmosphere and maintaining group harmony (Wati Dewi et al., 2024). Through this form of communication, the literacy community serves as a space for social expression.

Literacy Communities as a Medium for Social Expression

Research findings indicate that Rumah Rengganis serves as an effective medium for social expression among its members. Rumah Rengganis functions as a space for expressive communication that allows members to articulate their personal experiences through literary works; through poetry, short stories, essays, book discussions, and literary forums, members can articulate personal experiences related to the social realities around them. As stated by Arifah:

“The anxieties they feel are usually personal in nature; since social issues inevitably affect us personally as well, we typically channel and express all of that through our creative work—whatever form it takes, depending on each person's individual reasons for writing. If they like poetry, they pour it into poetry; if they dislike the current regime, they write about it in poetry; if they prefer essays, articles, or plays—we nurture all of these together, so we don't limit that space. Whatever they prefer is left open; later we'll discuss together where to direct the follow-up.” (Interview with Informant 1, December 27, 2025)

Through the practice of reading, critiquing, and discussing works, members develop a reflective understanding of self-expression within social relationships. Literacy does not stop at the cognitive realm, but functions as a social practice that facilitates the articulation of identity, personal experiences, and critical awareness of social issues. This community serves as a medium through which personal experiences can be projected into a broader social space. These activities provide a space for individuals to voice their identities, personal experiences, and critical perspectives on social issues.

Literacy Activities as a Form of Social Reflection

Literacy activities cannot be separated from their social context; rather, they are positioned as a form of public communication that reflects the realities of society. Reading and writing are understood as communicative activities that connect texts with social issues, such as poverty, acculturation, and humanitarian crises. According to Tegar:

“When it comes to the writing or works I create, I always feel like they reflect who I am in relation to what's around me. Personal issues can become public issues. Because, in my view, everyone goes through the same issues—for example, a neighbor dying of starvation is also a public issue. It's considered personal because it's close to us, but we can all feel that too, so that reflection is the contemplation before we write to observe our surroundings” (Interview with Informant 5, December 27, 2025)

The findings indicate that the reading, writing, and discussion activities at Rumah Rengganis always stem from the social realities currently facing society. Informants emphasize that works are never created in a vacuum, but always reflect the context of their time—whether addressing issues of war or contemporary concerns such as mental health and technology.

“In a literary work—or, in fact, in any work of art—the work will inevitably reflect and depict the society of its time.” (Interview with Informant 1, December 27, 2025)

Literary works serve as symbolic messages that bring subjective experiences into the public sphere. Through discussion and publication, these messages undergo a process of collective negotiation of meaning.

a. Literary Talks, Discussions, and Workshops

Rumah Rengganis actively organizes regular events such as poetry-writing workshops, poetry-reading contests, and literary discussions, bringing together writers and participants to discuss creative and social themes.



Figure 1. Manuscript Unveiling Event
Source: Rumah Rengganis Archives, 2025

Literacy activities such as discussions and book reviews represent a two-way communication process that fosters an equal exchange of ideas. Books and community networks, such as the Tjirebon Book Club (TBC), serve as symbolic mediums that connect individuals within a shared framework of meaning. Through these interactions, messages are not only conveyed but also negotiated based on the participants' experiences and social backgrounds.

b. Rengganis House Week as a Literary Festival

During the 2025 Rengganis House Week, this community organized a variety of literary activities, including visual exhibitions, book discussions, short story showcases, and poetry nights, with broad participation from students, writers, and the general public. This event was also supported by the Indonesian Ministry of Culture and attended by dozens of students and community activists. During the event, each participant was required to write an original poem, which was then analyzed by a mentor. The collection of poems resulting from this event is planned to be published as a book documenting this collaborative work.



Source: Rumah Rengganis Archives, 2025

Figure 2. Cirebon Literature Week

The literature week and literacy collaboration at Rumah Rengganis expand the space for communication into an inclusive cultural public sphere, where literary works serve as social symbols to reflect collective reality. The creation of short stories, poetry, and essays serves as a channel for symbolic expression to reflect on social issues, such as poverty and acculturation. The involvement of participants across all age groups enriches the dynamics of communication by bringing diverse perspectives, so that literacy activities function as a practice of social communication that builds critical awareness and strengthens cultural cohesion within society.

Art and Discussion as Constructions of Social Reality

All informants indicated that the literary works and discussion practices at Rumah Rengganis are not neutral. Recurring themes include poverty, local culture, mental health, ecology, and social relations. Tegar stated that, “We always connect books to the issues around us.” The works created in this community are not merely personal expressions, but “social narratives” (Interview with Informant 5, December 27, 2025)

Research findings show that literary works produced by community members are not merely personal expressions, but serve as social narratives that reflect the reality of communal life. For example, Nissa Rengganis’s poem **Voices from the Refugee Camp** depicts the suffering and uncertainty of refugees as symbols of complex social life. The poem demonstrates how experiences of conflict and political domination are understood and transformed into an aesthetic medium to provoke critical reflection on broader social realities. Furthermore, the poetry anthology **Manuskrip Sepi**, which won an award in the 2015 Indonesian Poetry Day Competition, underscores that community-based works also possess a strong social resonance beyond the confines of the community itself.

Rumah Rengganis as a Community-Based Informal Public Space

Rumah Rengganis is not rigid or closed-off; rather, it fosters an open and dynamic space for dialogue based on the principle of equality. The scope of public engagement is expanded through various literary events, such as literary weeks, cross-community discussions, and the use of social media.

“Absolutely, because there really aren’t any restrictions—as we saw earlier, the banter was lively, and people didn’t hesitate to share their opinions. In a sense, spaces like this are rarely found even in formal or academic settings, such as in the classroom, so this kind of semi-formal

space should actually be adopted by our education system. The existence of this Rengganis community is indeed very positive. Hopefully, this positive model can be adopted by other communities. Hopefully, Kuningan can as well.” (Interview with Informant 4, December 27, 2025)

According to Sidig Nugraha, his involvement in the Rengganis Community stems from his background as a theater artist. Sidig believes that theater is closely linked to literacy because it relies on literature and language as its primary sources of meaning, “I’ve also recently experienced that situation where someone creates a piece of work and gets absolutely torn apart by criticism. Yet the person being criticized just takes it in stride and even jots down the feedback. “But from the tone of the person delivering the criticism, I felt their intonation was flat, so perhaps in another setting it would have been quite stinging. But here, since the Rengganis household is already framed in such an open way toward criticism, it’s actually quite amazing.” (Interview with Informant 3, December 27, 2025)

Cahya believes that candid criticism, while it may cause discomfort in other settings, is actually welcomed openly at Rumah Rengganis. The community’s culture, which values openness and mutual respect, fosters participatory discussions.

Mind: In the Rumah Rengganis Literacy Community

The research findings indicate that the process of mind formation within the Rumah Rengganis Literacy Community occurs through participatory symbolic interactions. These findings support the perspective of symbolic interactionism, which views the mind as the result of symbolic interpretation processes within social interactions. The dialogic communication patterns at Rumah Rengganis enable members to interpret literacy symbols such as books, texts, and discussions reflectively, thereby allowing the mind to develop as a process of reflective and critical thinking rooted in social relations.

Symbols are not understood in isolation, but are negotiated through diverse experiences and social contexts. This process demonstrates that members’ critical thinking skills develop through equal and ongoing social relationships.

Self: Literacy Communities as a Medium for Their Members’ Social Expression

The self can be understood as a communicative identity formed through symbolic interaction. Rumah Rengganis functions as a space for expressive communication that allows members to articulate personal experiences in the form of literary works; through writing poetry, short stories, and essays, as well as through book discussions and literary forums, members can articulate personal experiences related to the social realities around them. In symbolic interaction, the self is formed through processes of communication and social recognition. Literacy practices at Rumah Rengganis function as a medium for the formation of communicative identity, where members’ personal experiences are transformed into symbolic expressions that carry social meaning. Discussions and critiques of works strengthen the process of self-reflection, while also fostering critical awareness of social reality. Thus, the self is not understood merely as an individual subject, but as the result of dynamic social interactions that foster both self-awareness and social awareness

Society: Literacy Activities as a Social Reflection

From the perspective of symbolic interactionism, society is formed through shared meanings generated by repeated social interactions. Literacy activities and the publication of works reinforce the community’s function as a participatory and inclusive informal public

space. People act based on the symbols of ongoing interaction at Rumah Rengganis, shaping society as a shared communicative order that governs the ways its members think and act.

The literary works and discourse produced at Rumah Rengganis can be understood as a process of members' subjective experiences, which are then collectively interpreted and re-internalized as a shared understanding. Discussions of other social issues foster a critical discourse that goes beyond mere hobbyist activities. Thus, this community not only reflects social reality but also plays an active role in shaping how members understand and interpret reality. At Rumah Rengganis, poetry, short stories, and discussion practices serve as cultural mediums that contribute to the formation of collective awareness regarding Cirebon's social reality and the various social issues surrounding it.

Rumah Rengganis provides a space for rational dialogue free from domination, enabling members to develop their opinions and social awareness on an equal footing. The involvement of people of all ages and backgrounds enriches the dynamics of communication, allowing literacy to flourish as a social practice that contributes to strengthening cultural cohesion and critical awareness within the community.

Rumah Rengganis as a Participatory Public Space

Rumah Rengganis can be understood as a public sphere in the Habermasian sense—that is, a space where citizens can engage in dialogue on an equal footing, rationally, and free from domination. Open discussions, equal opportunities to speak, and the absence of a single authority reflect the principles of a democratic public sphere. Activities such as book discussions, script readings, Rengganis Week, and the publication of works in digital media demonstrate that this community is building a participatory space that facilitates the exchange of ideas and social critique. Discussions and personal works serve as social symbols that connect experiences across generations.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Rumah Rengganis Literacy Community functions as a space for literacy communication that shapes the mind, the self, and society through participatory and egalitarian symbolic interactions. This multi-directional communication pattern leads members to interpret literacy symbols reflectively, thereby fostering the development of the mind as a process of critical thinking rooted in social relations. Literacy practices at Rumah Rengganis play a role in the formation of the self as a communicative identity, where members' personal experiences are expressed and collectively interpreted through literary works and discussions. Ongoing interactions shape society as a shared consciousness, with literary works functioning as social symbols that both reflect and construct social reality. As an inclusive and participatory informal public space, Rumah Rengganis facilitates the exchange of ideas across social backgrounds on an equal footing, thereby transforming literacy from an activity of information consumption into a social practice that fosters critical awareness and the identity of the younger generation. Furthermore, this community functions as a cultural incubator that produces literary works, public discourse, and collaborative networks across communities as part of a strategy for social change, which is expanded through digital media despite still facing the challenge of audience fragmentation.

Rumah Rengganis serves not only as a literacy community but also as a non-formal platform that fosters critical and participatory dialogue, strengthens cultural integration, and

cultivates social awareness through literacy-based communication practices. Rumah Rengganis functions as a space for social expression and reflection that promotes individual development, broadens collective consciousness, and ensures the sustainability of literacy culture in Cirebon. The existence of such a space not only supports literacy practices but also strengthens public discourse, the process of social meaning-making, and the formation of critical citizens as the foundation of the community's democratic and cultural life.

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