

Management of Functional Literacy Programs: The Role of Funding, Learning Community Participation, and Learning Resources

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Abstract

The Functional Literacy Program requires adequate resource management to support the achievement of student competencies. This study aims to analyze the role of funding, student participation, and learning resources in the management of the Functional Literacy Program in Antirogo Village, Summersari District, Jember Regency. The study used a quantitative approach with a survey method. The study population was 158 students spread across ten study groups, with a sample of 61 respondents determined through proportionate stratified random sampling. Data were collected using a closed questionnaire that measured funding components, student participation, learning resources, and literacy achievements including reading, writing, arithmetic, speaking, and listening skills. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation, and simple linear regression at a significance level of 5%. The results showed that all three components had a significant relationship with the achievements of the Functional Literacy Program. Funding contributed the most, at 32.2% with a correlation value of 0.567, followed by student participation at 27.2% with a correlation value of 0.522, and learning resources at 22.9% with a correlation value of 0.478. All relationships had a significance value of 0.000. Descriptively, students also responded positively to all three components, especially regarding the accuracy of funding targets and involvement in overcoming personal problems. These findings indicate that the management of the Functional Literacy Program needs to integrate targeted funding, active student participation, and contextual learning resources to support the sustainability and achievement of the program.

Keywords

Program Management, Functional Literacy, Funding, Learner Participation, Learning Resources.



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INTRODUCTION

Literacy is a basic skill that enables a person to obtain, understand, and use information in everyday life. From a lifelong education perspective, literacy is not only defined as the ability to recognize letters, read text, or write sentences, but also

includes the ability to use language and numbers to communicate, make decisions, solve problems, and participate in social and economic life. Therefore, literacy education needs to be positioned as part of adult education, oriented towards increasing the capacity and independence of learners. Literacy should be understood as a lifelong learning process related to needs, social change, and the context of one's life (Hanemann & Robinson, 2022; Learning, 2022).

The Functional Literacy Program is a form of non-formal education designed to help low-literacy communities develop reading, writing, arithmetic, speaking, and listening skills. These skills go beyond mastering basic skills and are directed towards their use in family activities, work, public services, and community life. The research paper explains that functional literacy learning must be linked to the learners' situations through an andragogical and integrative approach. The program also needs to consider the local context, participant needs, participatory processes, flexibility, diversity of materials, and the utilization of learning outcomes in everyday life (Addae, 2021; Akello et al., 2017; Douai et al., 2025).

The achievement of the Functional Literacy Program's objectives is determined not only by the learning materials or tutor skills, but also by the quality of program management. Program management is necessary to ensure that goals, objectives, activities, resources, funding, and learning processes are organized in a focused manner. Strengthening organizational capacity and responsiveness at the local level is crucial because the implementation of adult education is influenced not only by policy but also by the ability of the implementing institution to manage resources and adapt the program to community needs. Grotlüschen et al. (2024) demonstrate that adult education organizations and strategies at the local level play a crucial role in supporting the implementation of lifelong education.

In practice, literacy programs still have the potential to be administratively flawed and fail to address the real needs of learners. Learning that focuses solely on recognizing letters and numbers can result in the material being perceived as irrelevant by participants. This situation has the potential to reduce learners' interest, engagement, and continued attendance. Research in Antirogo Village also identified that literacy programs implemented conventionally and not aligned with community needs can lead to boredom and low learner participation. Yet, participation is a crucial prerequisite for the program to succeed and achieve its goals (Biao, 2022; Learning, 2022).

Funding is a crucial component in the management of the Functional Literacy Program. Funding is needed to support the provision of teaching materials, learning

resources, activity administration, tutor incentives, monitoring, evaluation, and the sustainability of study groups. The availability of funds alone does not guarantee program success, as funds must be allocated based on need and used effectively. However, limited funding can limit program reach, reduce service quality, and hinder the sustainability of activities. Biao (2022) explains that financing is a fundamental issue in adult education because low resource allocation can impact access, quality, and sustainability of educational services.

Beyond funding, student participation is an integral element of program management. Participation is demonstrated not only through attendance at learning activities but also includes involvement in identifying needs, setting goals, participating in the learning process, providing input, and evaluating the program's benefits. Adult students have diverse experiences, family responsibilities, employment, motivations, and barriers. Therefore, program managers need to create flexible and relevant learning schedules, materials, and strategies. Broek et al. (2023) explain that adult participation in learning is influenced by the interaction between motivation, expected benefits, learning opportunities, support, and structural conditions that enable individuals to transform their desires into concrete involvement in learning. Participation also needs to be understood as active engagement, not simply as program recipients. A participatory approach provides space for participants to share their experiences, needs, and challenges. This involvement can help institutions develop more contextualized learning and strengthen a sense of ownership of the program. Kastner and Motschilnig (2022) demonstrate that a participatory approach in adult basic education can support empowerment, engagement, collective action, and a more democratic learning process.

The next component is learning resources. In functional literacy education, learning resources are not limited to books and modules, but can include tutors, media, the family environment, economic activities, public service documents, signs in the surrounding environment, and the experiences of learners. Good management of learning resources allows reading, writing, arithmetic, speaking, and listening materials to be linked to real-world problems. The research paper differentiates learning resources into those specifically designed for learning and those readily available within the community for use (Abbott et al., 2020). Therefore, an institution's ability to identify and organize learning resources determines the level of relevance of learning for learners.

Based on this description, the management of the Functional Literacy Program can be assessed through the organizer's ability to manage funding, foster learner participation, and provide appropriate learning resources. These three components are interrelated resources. Funding supports the availability of facilities and activity implementation; participation ensures the program's alignment with the target's needs; and learning resources connect the learning process to the lives of learners. In this study, program management is not interpreted as measuring all management functions comprehensively, but rather focuses on the role of these three supporting components in program implementation.

The research was conducted on the Functional Literacy Program in Antirogo Village, Summersari District, Jember Regency. A local-level study is necessary because the management of adult education programs is influenced by the characteristics of learners, the capacity of the organizer, and the resources available within the community. This study aims to analyze the role of funding, student participation, and learning resources in the management of the Functional Literacy Program. The results are expected to serve as a basis for organizers and policymakers in strengthening program management to make it more contextual, participatory, targeted, and sustainable.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach with a survey method. This approach was used to analyze the contribution of student participation, funding, and learning resources to functional literacy achievement. The survey method allows for systematic data collection from respondents using research instruments designed according to the variables studied (Morissan, 2012; Sugiyono, 2011). The study was conducted in Antirogo Village, Summersari District, Jember Regency. The research location was purposively selected due to the Kenitu Functional Literacy Program, which was the object of the study.

The study population consisted of 158 students spread across ten study groups within the Kenitu Functional Literacy Program. The sample size of 61 students was determined using the Slovin formula with a 10% precision. Sampling was conducted using proportionate stratified random sampling, where the sample size was determined proportionally within each study group, and then respondents were randomly selected. This technique was used because the population was spread across groups with varying numbers of students (Arikunto, 2006; Sugiyono, 2011).

The independent variables in this study included student participation, funding, and learning resources, while the dependent variable was functional

literacy achievement. Functional literacy achievement was measured through the ability to read, write, count, speak, and listen, which can be used in daily life.

Primary data was collected using a closed-ended questionnaire consisting of 17 statements. Seven statements measured program supporting factors, and ten statements measured functional literacy achievement. Each statement was rated using a five-level Likert scale: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree. Secondary data was obtained through observation and documentation of participants, study groups, and program implementation.

The research instrument was first tested for validity and reliability. Validity testing was conducted to determine the accuracy of each item in measuring the research variables, while reliability testing was used to assess instrument consistency (Arikunto, 2010). The collected data were then examined, coded, tabulated, and analyzed using SPSS software. Data analysis included descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies and percentages, as well as simple linear regression to determine the relationship and contribution of each supporting factor to functional literacy achievement. Statistical testing uses a significance level of 5% or 0.05.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Results of the Analysis of the Role of Program Management Components

The results of the simple linear regression analysis indicate that funding, learner participation, and learning resources each have a significant relationship with the achievement of the Functional Literacy Program. A summary of the test results is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Results of the Analysis of Supporting Components of the Functional Literacy Program

Program Component	R	R ²	Contribution	t-value	Significance	Regression Equation
Funding	0.567	0.322	32.2%	5.246	0.000	$Y = 18.675 + 2.276X_2$
Learner participation	0.522	0.272	27.2%	4.656	0.000	$Y = 20.667 + 1.388X_1$
Learning resources	0.478	0.229	22.9%	4.149	0.000	$Y = 20.746 + 2.198X_3$

All three components showed a significance value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, funding, learner participation, and learning resources each have a significant relationship with program achievement. The correlation coefficients of the three components range from 0.478 to 0.567, which, in this research manuscript, are categorized as moderately strong relationships.

The Role of Funding

Funding has a correlation coefficient of 0.567 with a coefficient of determination of 0.322. This means that funding contributes statistically by 32.2% to the variation in the achievement of the Functional Literacy Program, while the remaining 67.8% is

associated with other factors not analyzed in the model. The calculated t-value of 5.246 is greater than the t-table value used in the study, with a significance value of 0.000.

These results position funding as the component with the greatest contribution compared to learner participation and learning resources. In the context of program management, funding supports the implementation of activities, the provision of facilities and infrastructure, the procurement of learning materials, and support for the implementation of tutors' duties. However, the findings of this study describe the statistical contribution of funding and do not specifically measure the efficiency, transparency, or accountability of budget management.

The Role of Learner Participation

Learner participation has a correlation coefficient of 0.522 and a coefficient of determination of 0.272. Thus, learner participation contributes 27.2% to the variation in program achievement, while the remaining 72.8% is associated with factors outside this variable. The calculated t-value of 4.656 with a significance value of 0.000 indicates that the role of learner participation is statistically significant. These findings indicate that learner involvement is an important part of the implementation of the Functional Literacy Program. Participation is related to involvement in achieving program objectives, efforts to overcome challenges encountered, and motivation to develop personal competencies. Therefore, program managers need to ensure that learners are not only recipients of program activities but are also actively involved in the learning process.

The Role of Learning Resources

Learning resources have a correlation coefficient of 0.478 with a coefficient of determination of 0.229. This indicates that learning resources contribute 22.9% to the variation in program achievement, while the remaining 77.1% is associated with other factors. The calculated t-value of 4.149 and the significance value of 0.000 indicate a significant relationship between learning resources and the achievement of the Functional Literacy Program. Although its contribution is the lowest compared to the other two components, learning resources still play an important role in program management. Learning resources help learners acquire knowledge, skills, and benefits that can be applied in their daily lives. The research manuscript also indicates the need for learning materials that are relevant to the local context, tutor support, the utilization of human resource potential, and flexible arrangements for learning locations and schedules.

Overall, the research results show the order of contribution of program management components: funding (32.2%), student participation (27.2%), and learning resources (22.9%). These findings indicate that the management of the Functional Literacy Program needs to prioritize the adequacy and appropriate use of funding without neglecting student involvement and the quality of learning resources. These three components need to be managed in an integrated manner so

that the program is not only implemented administratively but also supports students' achievement of reading, writing, arithmetic, speaking, and listening skills.

Discussion

The research results indicate that funding, student participation, and learning resources play a significant role in the implementation of the Functional Literacy Program in Antirogo Village. All three components have a positive relationship with program outcomes, although the magnitude of their contributions varies. Funding contributed the highest at 32.2%, followed by student participation at 27.2%, and learning resources at 22.9%. These findings indicate that the management of the Functional Literacy Program is not solely focused on learning implementation; it also needs to be supported by financial resource management, active student involvement, and the provision of relevant learning resources.

The coefficient of determination is derived from three simple regression analyses conducted separately. Therefore, the percentages of funding, student participation, and learning resources cannot be summed to obtain an overall contribution. Each value indicates the proportion of variation in program outcomes that can be explained by each variable when analyzed individually. These results also indicate that much of the variation in program outcomes is related to other factors not analyzed, such as tutor competence, learning methods, facilities and infrastructure, family support, management leadership, learning schedules, and program monitoring and evaluation.

The Role of Funding in Program Management

Funding obtained a correlation value of 0.567 and a coefficient of determination of 0.322. Thus, funding contributed 32.2% to the variation in Functional Literacy Program outcomes. A significance value of 0.000 indicates that the relationship is statistically significant. Compared to the other two components, funding is the factor that contributes most significantly to program achievement. This finding is understandable because funding is directly related to the institution's ability to carry out planned activities. Funds are needed to provide teaching materials, learning media, activity venues, group administration, transportation, tutor incentives, monitoring, and evaluation. The availability of funding also enables managers to maintain program continuity so that activities do not stop before learners achieve the required competencies. In the research paper, funding is positioned as an economic resource that must be used as needed to ensure the program's optimal implementation.

These findings align with Biao (2022), who explains that financing is a fundamental issue in adult education. Limited investment can reduce the reach, quality, and sustainability of educational services. Financing adult education also requires a clear division of responsibilities between the government, the community, the implementing institution, and other stakeholders. However, this research finding does not imply that increased funding automatically results in a more successful program. Funding needs to be managed based on the principles of adequacy, targeted targeting, efficiency, transparency, and accountability. Administrators need to prioritize their budgets based on the needs of students, not solely on administrative activities. In the context of the Functional Literacy Program, funding should be allocated to needs directly related to the learning process and the sustainability of students' competencies.

The Role of Student Participation

Student participation has a correlation value of 0.522 and contributes 27.2% to program outcomes. A significance value of 0.000 indicates that student involvement is significantly related to the outcomes of the Functional Literacy Program. In this study, participation relates to mental and emotional involvement in achieving goals, the ability to recognize and solve problems, the desire to develop oneself, and the willingness to assume responsibility in learning activities. These findings indicate that students cannot be viewed solely as recipients of services. They are key actors determining the sustainability and meaningfulness of the program. Student attendance at activities is a basic form of participation, but more meaningful participation includes involvement in identifying needs, determining materials, developing schedules, implementing activities, and evaluating learning outcomes.

Broek et al. (2023) explain that adults' decisions to participate in learning are influenced by the interaction between motivation, expected benefits, learning opportunities, environmental support, and structural barriers. This means that low participation does not always reflect low motivation. Participation can also be influenced by employment, family responsibilities, activity time, distance from the learning location, economic conditions, and perceptions of the program's benefits. Kastner and Motschilnig (2022) also emphasized that a participatory approach in adult basic education can create a democratic learning space and support empowerment, emancipation, participation, and collective action. This finding reinforces the importance of involving learners as partners in program implementation, not simply as policy targets.

Consequently, administrators need to provide mechanisms that allow learners to express their needs and challenges. Learning schedules need to be tailored to learners' activities, while materials must relate to the issues they actually face. Strong participation can increase a sense of ownership in the program, maintain attendance, and encourage learners to use literacy skills in their daily lives.

The Role of Learning Resources

Learning resources have a correlation value of 0.478 and contribute 22.9% to program outcomes. Although its contribution is lower than funding and participation, the relationship between learning resources and program outcomes remains significant, with a significance value of 0.000. These results indicate that the availability and utilization of learning resources remains a crucial element in the management of the Functional Literacy Program. Learning resources in literacy education are not limited to books and modules. The research paper differentiates between learning resources specifically designed for learning and resources readily available in the environment and available for use. Learning resources can include tutors, print media, public service documents, signs in the environment, economic activities, markets, family environments, and the life experiences of learners.

This perspective aligns with the concept of literacy as a skill used in various life contexts. Hanemann and Robinson (2022) position literacy as part of a lifelong learning process, not as a skill that is completed once someone can read and write at a basic level. Literacy development needs to be ongoing so that individuals can adapt their abilities to changing social, economic, and technological needs. The research findings can also be linked to a social practice approach in literacy education. Noreen and Iqbal (2025) demonstrate that implementing learning that connects literacy to daily life activities can strengthen learners' use of basic skills. Therefore, learning resources should be developed from situations close to the learner's immediate environment, such as reading health instructions, calculating income and expenses, writing identification, understanding public service information, or communicating in community activities.

A relatively low contribution of learning resources may indicate that the availability of learning resources is not being optimally utilized. Learning resources may be available, but they are not always appropriate to the learner's initial abilities, needs, work environment, and life context. This situation requires managers and tutors to map needs, develop contextual learning materials, and utilize the environment as part of the learning experience.

Implications for Program Management

Overall, the research findings confirm that funding, student participation, and learning resources need to be managed as mutually supportive components. Funding provides the operational basis, participation maintains the relevance and sustainability of activities, while learning resources determine the quality and meaningfulness of the learning process. If any one component is not managed properly, program effectiveness can decline. Recommended program management is participatory, contextual, flexible, and sustainable. Managers need to prepare budgets based on real needs, involve students in decision-making, provide relevant learning resources, and conduct regular monitoring. UNESCO recommendations on adult education also emphasize the importance of flexible learning opportunities, collaboration between actors, recognition of non-formal learning outcomes, and strengthening community capacity to participate in social life and the workplace.

Interpretation of the research findings still needs to consider its limitations. Data were collected in 2024–2025, using student perception responses, and analyzing each variable separately through simple regression. The research also did not measure all management functions, such as planning, organizing, leadership, supervision, evaluation, budget transparency, and manager competence. Therefore, the research results are more appropriately interpreted as evidence regarding the role of the three supporting components in program management, rather than as a comprehensive evaluation of the entire Functional Literacy Program management system.

CONCLUSION

The Functional Literacy Management Program in Antirogo Urban Village is supported by three key components: funding, learner participation, and learning resources. These three components are significantly linked to the program's outcomes, which encompass reading, writing, numeracy, speaking, and listening skills. Funding makes the largest contribution at 32.2%, followed by learner participation at 27.2% and learning resources at 22.9%. These findings indicate that the program's success is determined not only by the learning process itself but also by the institution's ability to manage financial support, foster active learner engagement, and provide learning resources tailored to participants' needs.

Priority must be given to funding activities, facilities, open learning materials, and the execution of tutors' duties. However, increased funding must be accompanied by enhanced learner participation through flexible learning approaches that align with their specific needs. Learning resources also need to be developed contextually by leveraging the learners' environments, experiences, and daily activities. Thus, the integrated management of these three components can strengthen the relevance, sustainability, and overall success of the Functional

Literacy Program. These research findings should be interpreted with caution, as the study did not comprehensively measure all aspects of program management, such as planning, organizing, supervision, and evaluation.

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