

Child-friendly village: Promoting growth without devices in the digital age

Sri Muniroch, Siti Masitoh, Rina Sari, Aulia Mar' atussolekhah

*Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang
Jl. Gajayana No.50, Malang, East Java, 65144, Indonesia*

ARTICLE INFO:

Received: 2024-12-24
Revised: 2025-02-11
Accepted: 2025-04-22
Published: 2025-05-30

Keywords:

Child-friendly village,
Children's growth and
development, Com-
munity's assets and
potentials

ABSTRACT

Brubuh Hamlet in Kalipang Village, Sutojayan District, Blitar Regency holds strong potential to become a child-friendly area, particularly in supporting children's growth and development without reliance on digital devices. In response to this, a community service program on Child-Friendly Village Development was carried out with two main objectives: (a) to identify and explore the assets and potentials of the community to create a supportive, child-friendly environment; and (b) to encourage community members to take action toward realizing this vision. Using the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach, various local assets were mapped—including individual skills, physical infrastructure, social capital, natural resources, cultural values, and religious traditions. Building on this foundation, actions were implemented through educational workshops on the importance of a gadget-free developmental environment for children, as well as the construction of a play area equipped with facilities designed to stimulate children's physical, cognitive, and emotional development. As a result of this initiative, residents became inspired to propose and initiate further community-driven activities, demonstrating increased ownership and engagement in building a child-friendly environment.

©2025 Abdimas: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Universitas Merdeka Malang
This is an open access article distributed under the CC BY-SA 4.0 license
(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>)

How to cite: Muniroch, S., Masitoh, S., Sari, R., & Mar'atussolekhah, A. (2025). Child-friendly village: Promoting growth without devices in the digital age. *Abdimas: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Universitas Merdeka Malang*, 10(2), 420-436. <https://doi.org/10.26905/abdimas.v10i2.15125>

1. INTRODUCTION

In the current digital era, nearly all individuals from various social groups cannot avoid the use of gadgets. Today, gadgets have become a basic necessity that is inseparable from daily activities. Almost half of early childhood children in Indonesia are already using gadgets. Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) shows that 33.44 percent of early childhood children have used wireless gadgets and 24.96 percent have accessed the internet. Among these users, 25.5 percent are children aged 0–4 years, and 52.76 percent are children aged 5–6 years (Santika, 2023).

This phenomenon is also observable in Kalipang Subdistrict. Kalipang, located in Sutojayan District, Blitar Regency, is a developing area. The total population is 8,363, consisting of 4,129 males and 4,234 females. The community's livelihoods vary, with most residents working as private employees, followed by traders and daily laborers. There are 1,336 women who are full-time housewives, while a small portion are working mothers. Economically, the majority of the population falls into the lower-middle class, with only a small segment considered affluent. Although this area cannot be categorized as underdeveloped,

it has not yet reached an advanced stage. Socially, the community in Kalipang has begun to exhibit individualistic tendencies, but their experience and knowledge remain limited. Consequently, many parents, especially mothers, give gadgets to young children for various reasons without understanding the potential consequences. However, the environment in Kalipang actually holds great potential for supporting children's development. As a lush village with ample open space, it provides opportunities for outdoor activities. Even without gadgets, parents still have the chance to support their children's growth and development by utilizing the surrounding land, provided they have sufficient knowledge to make use of the local potential.

In relation to child development, Jean Piaget's concept of the critical period explains that children need to sharpen their sensorimotor abilities by exploring and engaging with real-world objects (Piaget, 1965). This interaction helps form mental schemas of objects in the child's mind and enables them to recognize symbolic representations of those objects. When children use gadgets, they are unable to interact with real objects and do not directly engage with the real world, leading to negative consequences from this passive information intake on their development, particularly in cognitive control, which is responsible for behavioral changes and metacognitive functions (Marulis & Nelson, 2021). Motor activity is a vital component of child development and learning, as the validation of real-world representations depends on the development of the vestibular system. The vestibular system allows children to ensure sensorimotor integration, so the less children move, the less accurate their understanding of the external world becomes (Noel & Angelaki, 2022). This ultimately leads to a decline in their metacognitive abilities. Early exposure to gadgets makes children feel bored in non-virtual realities and poses serious risks (Smirnova et al., 2018).

Awareness of the impact of gadgets on children has prompted community service practitioners to carry out various initiatives aimed at preventing the negative effects of gadget use among children. Basir et al. (2024) conducted educational sessions on the dangers of gadgets and distributed educational toys as a means to reduce gadget usage among children. The results showed increased community awareness regarding the harmful effects of gadgets on children. Suhardoyo et al. (2023) organized socialization activities about healthy gadget use in children, which had a positive impact on public understanding of gadget usage. Jayadi et al. (2021) held training sessions on supervising children's gadget use, which led to improved parental understanding of their essential role in monitoring children while using gadgets. Tina et al. (2023) conducted outreach on gadget use among early childhood children in orphanages, resulting in increased understanding of gadget use and knowledge on how to address gadget addiction. Sarini et al. (2024) also held socialization activities on the dangers of gadgets and parental mediation strategies, which positively impacted understanding of gadget use. Other community service activities related to children's gadget use have been widely conducted across the country, primarily through educational and outreach programs. These efforts have shown positive outcomes in increasing understanding of gadget use in children.

Considering the connection between theoretical frameworks and practical efforts in community service activities, it can be concluded that this issue represents a general phenomenon in which many early childhood children excessively use gadgets. Recognizing this fact, the scope of this community service activity involves collaborating with the community to explore and utilize local assets and environmental potential to create a supportive environment for child development, so that gadgets are no longer seen as an alternative activity for children. Using the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach, this initiative aims to: (1) identify the assets and potential of the target village to foster a gadget-free environment for child development; and (2) encourage residents of the target village to take action in creating a child-friendly environment that allows children to grow and develop by utilizing the surrounding environmental potential, with the activities carried out in one hamlet in Kalipang Subdistrict as a pilot project.

2. METHODS

The issue of gadget uses among children as well as the potential and assets identified in Brubuh Hamlet, this community service activity was carried out in Brubuh Hamlet, Kalipang Subdistrict, Sutojayan District, Blitar Regency.

Activity

The community service activity was carried out using the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) method. In accordance with this method, the implementation stages of the activity followed the sequence outlined.

Discovery

This stage is characterized by a gradual and periodic assessment process, aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of the community's potential. The identified potentials are then classified to facilitate community development, including human, natural, economic, infrastructural, and sociocultural assets (Fitrianto et al., 2020). At this stage, the preliminary activities had been carried out by the service team through observation and a potential survey, which were later incorporated into the community service proposal. The subsequent stage, conducted in collaboration with the community, involved gathering PKK women cadres and members from Brubuh Hamlet, also attended by village and hamlet officials, and guided by a five-member service team. In this forum, a Focus Group Discussion was conducted, focusing on the issue of gadget use among children and the identification of Brubuh Hamlet's assets and potential for creating a child-friendly environment.

Dream

This is a follow-up stage that focuses on envisioning dreams or aspirations. Building on the previously identified community assets, this process involves identifying the roles of each community member involved. It also serves as a moment of reflection, fostering motivation to realize shared aspirations and encouraging maximum effort in community development (Haris et al., 2022). At this stage, a dialogue on mapping potentials and assets was conducted with the PKK cadres and members of Brubuh Hamlet, with the service team acting as facilitators.

Design

The design stage, or development planning, is a necessary procedure to systematically and thoroughly realize the envisioned goals, aiming to achieve targeted outcomes with clear indications of sustainable progress. This stage serves as the foundation that determines whether the efforts to develop community assets can be successfully implemented in line with the aspirations of the local community (Fitrianto et al., 2020). This stage was carried out through discussions and dialogues involving PKK cadres and members together with the community service team.

Define

As a form of agreement in determining the steps to realize the community's aspirations regarding the development of assets in Brubuh Hamlet, these efforts can be implemented through skill-building or play-based training activities that can be taught to children. This step of determining actions or planned activities involves PKK cadres as initiators, PKK members as implementers, and the community service team as facilitators.

Destiny

This stage represents the final process in the ABCD approach, involving the consolidation and affirmation of the goals to be pursued, as well as providing motivation to foster a strong spirit and confidence in the intended outcomes. In addition to the PKK cadres, PKK members, and the community service team, this stage also involved a child psychology expert who provided insights on the importance of limiting gadget use and creating a child-friendly environment to support optimal development.

In practice, this conceptual stage was realized through a series of steps including activity identification, strength mapping, environmental condition analysis, and action planning and implementation, which will be discussed in the results section of this article.

Evaluation

Activity evaluation was conducted using pre-test and post-test assessments. This analysis employed the Wilcoxon test to determine the difference in scores between the pre-test and post-test. The scores were analyzed using the SPSS program to obtain the results, which were then interpreted accordingly.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This community service activity was carried out in several stages over a period of three months (May – August 2024), from the preparation phase to implementation.

Stage 1: Identifying needs

The community service team began by engaging in dialogue with local residents to identify the strengths, assets, and potential within the community. This stage aimed to socialize the planned activities and establish initial communication with all stakeholders, including the Village Head, Village Secretary, PKK leaders, cadres, and residents, particularly those with young children. The dialogue was directed toward identifying key groups and major assets, including individual skills, social assets, physical infrastructure, natural resources, cultural, and religious values that could serve as the main drivers in fostering a gadget-free, child-friendly development environment.

The next step involved appreciative interviews through a Focus Group Discussion (FGD), guided by the following questions: (1) Have you ever participated in community activities?; (2) If so, what factors contributed to the success of those activities?; (3) Did the situation and conditions affect the success of those activities?; (4) What are your views on a child-friendly environment?; (5) What can be done to create a child-friendly environment?; (6) What potentials do you have to help realize a child-friendly environment?

The FGD focused on at least two main topics: residents' perspectives on community activities and their views on a child-friendly environment. In the context of this community service initiative, the first topic was essential for forming an overview and predicting which activities would receive community support, while the second was aimed at determining the direction of activities related to creating a child-friendly environment.

Regarding the first topic, the FGD results generally showed that most mothers had participated in community activities, either officially as part of organizing committees or informally by offering support to ensure the success of such events. These activities included celebrations of national holidays, regular PKK programs, integrated health service posts (posyandu), and social gatherings (arisan). According to

the participants, the success of an activity was highly dependent on the support and involvement of both residents and local leaders. Support included financial and manpower contributions, while involvement referred to participation in the implementation and attendance to enliven the events. The factors influencing the success of these activities were both economic and social conditions. Economic conditions referred to the community's financial ability to support the events, while social conditions related to residents' perceptions, enthusiasm, and sense of togetherness in making the activities successful. These FGD findings indicate that the community has strong potential to support this initiative.

On the topic of a child-friendly environment, residents expressed a positive view of its importance, especially given the negative impacts of gadget use among young children. The community shared various ideas for creating a child-friendly environment by utilizing their surroundings, which they believed had strong potential to be developed for this purpose. Additionally, residents recognized their individual capabilities and skills, which could be used to conduct joint activities with children to divert their attention from gadgets.



Figure 1. Identifying needs

Stage 2: Strength mapping

The second stage of the community service activity in Brubuh Hamlet, Kalipang Subdistrict, Sutojayan District, Blitar Regency, involved a mapping process to organize community strengths, associate or group various assets, and identify both individual skill maps and community asset maps. This stage was conducted during the second community service event. It served as a follow-up to the previous asset identification process, aiming to reflect and reinforce the community's motivation to realize their dreams and aspirations. In line with these aspirations, actions were taken to listen to the hopes and goals of the community through a dialogue process, which led to the identification of assets most closely related to the community, commonly referred to as "low hanging fruit", with a focus on the development of human resources.

The Potential Mapping Dialogue for a Child-Friendly Village in Brubuh Hamlet, Kalipang Subdistrict, was held with PKK leaders, cadres, and mothers participating in the Posyandu program. This activity aimed to organize the community's strengths and identify individual skills (human capital), associations (social capital), physical infrastructure (physical capital), natural resources (natural capital), economic opportunities, cultural strengths (cultural capital), and religious strengths (religious capital) present in Brubuh Hamlet.

The mapping process revealed several key assets, including community leaders actively promoting civic engagement, psychological knowledge, skills in creating traditional games and healthy food, proficiency in English, and carpentry. More specifically, the head and female head of Brubuh Hamlet were identified as highly supportive figures in community activities. Additionally, one resident was found

Child-friendly village: Promoting growth without devices in the digital age

Sri Muniroch, Siti Masitoh, Rina Sari, Aulia Mar'atussolekhah

to be a psychologist, and several PKK women had skills in making traditional games and healthy foods. There were also women proficient in English who taught informally. Physical infrastructure and natural resource assets included wide, unpolluted green spaces. Finally, the community continued to uphold strong cultural and religious values.



Figure 2. Strength mapping

Stage 3: Environmental condition analysis

In the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) method, the term “low hanging fruit” refers to assets or opportunities that are easy to identify and access within a community to support development. The concept originates from the idea of “low-hanging fruit,” meaning solutions that can be readily utilized because they require minimal effort or resources. In this context, “low hanging fruit” refers to assets or potentials already present in the community and easily leveraged, such as local skills, public facilities, or established social networks.

Moreover, these assets do not require significant investment or major changes to provide immediate and tangible benefits to the community, thereby helping to boost community members’ motivation to engage more actively in the development process. This approach facilitates the initiation of positive early actions, which can eventually pave the way for more substantial and long-term changes in community life.

The assets identified in Kalipang Subdistrict, Sutojayan District, Blitar Regency, show strong potential for development in creating a child-friendly environment through a community-based approach. Interestingly, most of these assets originate from the surrounding natural environment, offering great opportunities for utilization without the need for significant capital or major changes. The environmental condition analysis was based on an asset map that includes: (1) Individual assets: Brubuh Hamlet is home to residents with specific skills and abilities, such as expertise in psychology, proficiency in English, skills in crafting toys and cooking, and woodworking. Analysis results indicate that these assets are highly beneficial for children’s development; (2) Social assets: Brubuh Hamlet has an active hamlet leader who strongly supports community activities, a child development psychology counseling service, and a Qur’anic learning center (TPQ). The analysis shows that these social assets have strong potential to support the realization of a child-friendly environment. The hamlet leader serves as a community mobilizer, the counseling service provides a space for parents to consult about their children’s development, and the TPQ offers children religious education and moral development; (3) Physical infrastructure assets: These assets include wide roads, spacious house yards, and generally large homes. Analysis indicates that these features can be used as venues for community activities to share experiences and knowledge about child growth and development, and as safe and comfortable spaces

for children to engage in physical activities such as cycling and playing; (4) Natural resource assets: Brubuh Hamlet has a lush, green environment with many trees and open spaces. The analysis reveals that these assets can be utilized to develop play areas and create children's games using natural materials; (5) Cultural assets: The residents of Brubuh Hamlet maintain a strong sense of community (*guyup*) and uphold traditional values. This asset presents significant potential for fostering a supportive atmosphere in which residents help care for each other's children, allowing them to grow up in a safe and comforting environment; (6) Religious assets: Brubuh Hamlet is highly conducive to the development of religious values. Children regularly attend TPQ in the afternoons to learn the Qur'an. This religious environment provides a strong foundation for children's moral and spiritual development.



Figure 3. Environmental condition analysis activities

Stage 4: Action planning and implementation

Based on the operational framework of the ABCD method, the fourth stage involves connecting and mobilizing assets, as well as action planning. In more detail, this stage includes linking assets and mobilizing the community; action planning, which involves selecting programs based on asset strengths that can bring about change in community life, building institutional structures to support the continuity of program success, and establishing social systems and community member commitments to sustain change; and finally, implementation or action, which entails managing the change process by developing and executing programs.

In this community service activity, this stage was carried out by referring back to the asset mapping conducted in the previous stage. In linking assets and mobilizing the community, all identified and mapped assets were connected to one another to develop an action plan, while community mobilization was done through both personal outreach and group gatherings to facilitate dialogue in planning actions.

Action planning was a critical step to guide the implementation process, and thus, the formulation of the action plan involved all participants in the activity. The following points were formulated during the dialogue on action planning: (1) Providing a play area for children equipped with various facilities that support their growth and development; (2) Appointing one of the Posyandu cadre mothers to be responsible for overseeing the play area, in collaboration with Pilar Jiwa Psikologi, which serves as one of Brubuh Hamlet's social capital assets; (3) Institutionalizing awareness of child development and gadget-free parenting by establishing a collective commitment not to use gadgets in child-rearing. This step is also supported by disseminating information on stages of child development through brochures and references, in collaboration with "Pilar Jiwa Psikologi"; (4) Planning follow-up activities to accommodate children's potential, such as competitions, fishing, cooking classes, storytelling, and Learning English for Children sessions; (5) In terms of utilizing economic opportunities, mothers can apply their skills by selling healthy food that children can enjoy while playing. On the savings side, mothers will no longer

Child-friendly village: Promoting growth without devices in the digital age

Sri Muniroch, Siti Masitoh, Rina Sari, Aulia Mar'atussolekhah

need to spend money on buying toys for their children, which helps reduce household expenses. The action plan that has been formulated has taken into account all previously identified assets and all dynamics in the dialogue.



Figure 4. Action planning

The next step in this stage is implementation, action, or execution. Based on the planned activities, the actions that have been successfully carried out include providing mothers with insights on the importance of creating a gadget-free environment for child development, creating games for children, and establishing a play area for them.

Raising awareness among mothers

This activity utilized one of Brubuh Hamlet's individual assets, expertise within the community. In this case, a psychologist who also runs the psychological counseling center "Pilar Jiwa Psikologi," whose expertise is highly relevant to the goals of this community service initiative. The session addressed topics related to children's psychological development and the importance of creating a gadget-free environment for child growth in today's digital age. The materials covered included: the negative consequences of gadget use in early childhood, developmental milestone evaluations, child growth and development, play as a means of stimulation, designing environment-based learning programs, and creating educational play media. This activity drew significant interest from the mothers and increased their awareness of the importance of understanding child development and guiding their children to grow in a healthy, gadget-free environment.

Another related action involved collaboratively creating children's games and preparing healthy food, with PKK cadre mothers serving as facilitators.



Figure 5. The activities included sharing insights on child development, creating games for children, and preparing healthy food for children.

Construction of a play area

This activity was carried out by local residents with carpentry skills, assisted by other community members. The play area features various facilities designed to support children's growth and development, specifically games that stimulate sensory aspects. These include colored sand to train fine motor skills through tactile stimulation, beaded boxes to train motor skills and color recognition, colorful macaroni for tactile and visual motor development, a balance board to improve coordination, tire games for crawling movements, swings to train balance, a climbing board for coordination, library books to strengthen mother-child bonding, sea sand media for tactile differentiation, pebbles and small stones for fine motor training, herbal plants (*toga*) for learning about plants and nature, wet flour play to stimulate the nerves, rubber rope games for physical growth, variously shaped and colored paving stones for shape and color recognition, traditional *dakon* games for counting and competition, and a fish pond to provide a natural setting that enhances comfort during play. Additionally, at certain times, the mothers will create games using locally available materials to introduce children to traditional games, which also help support various aspects of their development.



Figure 6. Play area

Stage 5: Monitoring and evaluation

In this stage, the researchers monitored and evaluated each phase of the implemented activities, observing significant changes as a form of reflection. The evaluation was conducted using pre-test and post-test assessments. The analysis employed the Wilcoxon test to determine the difference in scores between the pre-test and post-test. Based on the results analyzed using the SPSS program, there are some results gained.

Table 1. Rank pre-test and post-test

	PreTest - PostTest 1			PreTest - PostTest 2			PreTest - PostTest 3			PreTest - PostTest 4		
	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank
Negative Rank	0 ^a	.00	.00	0 ^d	.00	.00	0 ^g	.00	.00	0 ⁱ	.00	.00
Positive Rank	40 ^b	20.50	820.00	40 ^e	20.50	820.00	40 ^h	20.50	820.00	39 ^k	20.00	780.00
Ties	0 ^c			0 ^f			0 ⁱ			1 ^l		
Total	40			40			40			40		

Description: (1) Negative ranks, or the negative differences between pre-test and post-test scores from sessions 1 to 4, were recorded as 0 for N, Mean Rank, and Sum of Ranks. This value of 0 indicates that there was no decrease in scores from the pre-test to the post-test; (2) Positive ranks, or the positive differences between pre-test and post-test scores, show that in sessions 1 to 3, there were 40 positive data points (N), meaning all 40 respondents experienced an improvement in their understanding of the material. The mean rank for sessions 1 to 3 was 20.50, while the sum of ranks totaled 820. In session 4, there were 39 positive ranks, indicating that 39 respondents showed improvement. The mean rank for session 4 was 20.00, with a sum of ranks of 780.00; (3) For sessions 1 to 3, the value of ties was 0, indicating that there were no identical scores between the pre-test and post-test. However, in session 4, the ties value was 1, meaning that one respondent received the same score on both the pre-test and post-test.

Table 2. Test statistics

	Post Test 1 – Pre Test 1	Post Test 2 – Pre Test 2	Post Test 3 – Pre Test 3	Post Test 4 – Pre Test 4
Z	-5.584 ^b	-5.556 ^b	-5.560 ^b	-5.493 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000

(a) Wilcoxon signed ranks test; (b) Based on negative ranks.

The results of the difference test showed that the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) values for sessions 1 to 4 were 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This indicates a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. These findings demonstrate that there was no decline in understanding; instead, the difference in scores reflects an increase in participants' comprehension before and after the intervention. The first test focused on the concept of a child-friendly village, targeting understanding of its definition, supporting aspects such as children's rights, involved stakeholders, and the potential impacts. With improved understanding of child-friendly villages, participants were more motivated to help create and be a part of such an environment. The second test addressed child growth and development, including developmental aspects, sensitive periods at different ages, and especially the impact of gadget use on child development. This shared understanding was crucial for forming a supportive community.

The third test assessed knowledge of mindful parenting. To build a child-friendly village, the adults, particularly parents, around the children must first change. Therefore, parents need to learn to be mindful in raising their children. The pre- and post-test results showed an increase in understanding in this area as well. The fourth test covered how to detect developmental issues in children and how to stimulate development through play. This knowledge is expected to help participants identify early signs of developmental delays and understand the extent to which they can address issues independently and when to seek professional help. In this test, one participant had the same pre-test and post-test score. Overall, the results indicated a significant improvement in understanding across all sessions.

Discussion

The implementation of activity identification generated awareness and ideas among all stakeholders, including the Village Head, Village Secretary, PKK mobilizers, cadre members, and residents, regarding the importance of creating a supportive environment for children's growth and development. It also revealed the existing potential within the community and environment as foundational assets, including individual assets, social assets, physical infrastructure, natural resources, as well as cultural and religious

values. These assets represent a significant capital for community development and empowerment, demonstrating that progress does not have to rely on external forces; instead, internal strengths can become powerful drivers for communities to grow more rapidly and effectively. This aligns with the ABCD concept (Ansori et al., 2021), which posits that communities possess great potential, they are not weak groups, and their existing capacities can lead them to become empowered and capable of improving their quality of life.

From the conducted FGD, it was found that the mothers in the community possess understanding, knowledge, and experience in implementing community empowerment activities. The PKK cadre members are accustomed to conducting activities focused on empowering women and improving maternal and child health. The women actively participate in these activities, and according to the Village Head, the women of Brubuh Hamlet are the most active participants in such programs within Kalipang Village. Regarding a child-friendly, gadget-free environment, the mothers expressed a strong awareness of its importance and demonstrated a high level of motivation and enthusiasm to realize it. They each possess unique potential that can contribute to achieving this goal. Within the ABCD framework, this reflects the concept of "dreams," which serve as a driving force that fuels the community's motivation to turn aspirations into concrete actions (Haris et al., 2022).

In the process of mapping to organize the strengths of individual skills within the Brubuh Hamlet community, several existing assets were identified. In the ABCD method, individuals are considered crucial assets because each person possesses unique skills, knowledge, and experiences that can be utilized for community development. Within the ABCD framework, individuals are regarded as valuable human capital and play a vital role in building communities (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). By leveraging individual assets, ABCD helps communities become more self-reliant and sustainable. This approach also fosters self-confidence among community members and aids in developing their existing potential (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

In Brubuh Hamlet, the individual assets identified include community figures actively involved in mobilizing community activities, expertise in psychology, skills in creating traditional games, preparing healthy food, English proficiency, and carpentry. The community leaders, such as the Head of the Hamlet and his wife, play a significant role in supporting community activities by providing facilities and using their home as a venue for meetings such as Posyandu outreach sessions. Additionally, one of the residents is a psychologist who can assist both the community and local government in raising awareness about the importance of mental health and the risks associated with gadget overuse.

From the individual skill mapping, it was found that the PKK cadre mothers possess skills in creating traditional games, preparing nutritious food that stimulates children's motor development, and some mothers are proficient in English and serve as English teachers. These potentials can become community assets to promote the development of interests and skills without relying on gadgets. Furthermore, carpentry skills among residents enable them to create children's play equipment from recycled materials, such as swings and other toys, which directly support the child-friendly village program.

To move forward, this activity is closely related to the role of associations (social capital) within the community, specifically the direct involvement of PKK and village institutions, as well as the indirect influence of other villages and the Blitar Regency, since this activity serves as a pilot project expected to inspire surrounding areas. For the PKK, this activity can produce cadres who understand the concept of child development free from gadget influence, thereby enabling them to raise awareness among their members. Meanwhile, the village can take on a guiding role and initiate programs that prioritize this issue, ultimately forming a child-friendly village.

Furthermore, the establishment of the Pilar Jiwa Psychology Bureau in Brubuh Hamlet, owned by a local resident, can support the community by providing insights into the importance of protecting children from gadget dependency. Within the ABCD framework, all available community potential must be empowered to achieve community welfare (Adisasmita, 2013).

Another asset possessed by Brubuh Hamlet is the availability of sufficient physical infrastructure and natural resources, including spacious, natural, and unpolluted land, a safe and uncongested environment, wide and quiet roads, and an abundance of vegetation that can be used to make traditional games. Additionally, the hamlet has access to clean irrigation water, which can serve as a fishing area. In the ABCD concept, the potentials that can be utilized include the community's ability to harness natural wealth, socio-cultural resources, existing infrastructure, and characteristics that are unique to the local area (Ramadhani et al., 2023).

In terms of economic opportunity assets, residents can open up opportunities to improve their household economy, for instance by selling healthy food at the play area or by creating their own toys to reduce costs and even selling them to neighbors. Lastly, the community still maintains strong cultural and religious values, so gadgets have not yet become the main focus for children; typically, only parents own mobile phones, not the children. Traditions such as neighborly interaction and afternoon naps remain strong, and children are still commonly fed without the presence of gadgets. The community upholds religious values, which helps them regulate gadget use to avoid exposure to harmful content.

Environmental condition analysis using the "low hanging fruit" approach shows that the utilization of the assets, potentials, and strengths possessed by Brubuh Hamlet can serve as a foundation for community empowerment. Regarding asset utilization, Green & Haines (2016) emphasize that community development through asset building is a process of identifying, developing, and utilizing existing assets within the community to improve quality of life, increase self-reliance, and enhance participation.

In Brubuh Hamlet, in addition to the previously mentioned assets, another notable asset is the availability of open land that can be used as a space for play and gathering. This land can become a venue for mothers and children to engage in various activities such as playing, holding discussions, or even hosting small community events. In the context of village development, gathering spaces like this play an important role in strengthening social ties and community networks. Simple activities like traditional games between mothers and children or educational programs can be facilitated in this space, which in turn enhances social cohesion among village residents, especially the mothers responsible for child-rearing. This aligns with the concept of sensory integration, which states that children under the age of four should interact more with their parents and avoid screen exposure to stay active in the real world (Scarf & Hinten, 2018).

In addition, the abundance of trees and vegetation around the village offers great potential as natural and creative play media. For example, tree branches can be used to make swings, wood for seesaws, used car tires for tunnels, and stones, sand, and various other natural materials can be transformed into safe toys for children when used effectively. Playing in a natural environment like this not only enhances children's creativity but also allows them to connect more closely with nature and develop a sense of environmental care. These kinds of activities offer a low-cost and healthy alternative to modern games that often require expensive equipment or technology.

Moreover, children's interaction with nature supports their physical and mental development through more direct and immersive play experiences. In child development theory, interaction with the real world is essential for healthy growth. Motor activity is a vital component of children's development

and learning because their understanding of the real world is validated by the development of the vestibular system. This system enables children to ensure proper sensorimotor integration, meaning that the less they move, the less accurate their perception of the external world becomes (Noel & Angelaki, 2022). Ultimately, this leads to a decline in their metacognitive abilities.

At the action planning stage, several plans were formulated as outlined previously. These action plans were based on the identified assets, potentials, environmental analysis, and community aspirations. This stage is crucial in the ABCD implementation process because it determines the feasibility and execution of the activities by taking all aspects into account. Action planning is important because it helps communities achieve goals more effectively and efficiently, enhances impact, sets priorities, boosts motivation, and facilitates evaluation (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). From these plans, actions have been carried out and can be summarized as the following implemented initiatives.

Mentorship program

An activity involving a discussion with a psychologist, who is also an individual asset of Dusun Brubuh, about child development provided insights into the importance of recognizing the developmental phases of children and giving them opportunities to grow optimally through outdoor play, which in turn helps reduce or eliminate the habit of using gadgets. To stimulate children's optimal development, two key elements must be prepared: the "prepared adult", an adult who has understanding and affection to create a rich and engaging environment filled with positive influences for the child's soul; and the "prepared environment", a setting that supports child development, not necessarily through purchasing stimulation tools, but by utilizing what nature provides. Delivering this understanding through a mentorship program yields better results due to the close and intensive communication among all participants involved.

Skill development workshop

By utilizing the skills of the PKK mothers in creating traditional children's games and preparing healthy meals, the mothers and the community collectively learned and developed the abilities needed to prepare themselves and their environment to support children's growth and development. Through this activity, the mothers learned how to create children's games using materials from their surroundings and how to cook healthy meals with natural ingredients available nearby, which in turn sparked their creativity to develop their own variations of games and meals.

Cultural event

An activity held to commemorate a special occasion typically celebrated by the community. This time, it was in celebration of Indonesia's Independence Day by organizing a fishing competition for fathers and their children. The event was attended by fathers and children, while mothers helped prepare all the necessary arrangements. This activity provided an opportunity for the entire community to participate together and strengthened the bonds among its members.

Community service project

This action involved a collaborative effort to build a children's playground by utilizing the assets and potential of Dusun Brubuh. The playground took advantage of the village's physical infrastructure, which greatly supported its development. The spacious land offered ample room to construct a play area with various types of games. The natural, uncrowded environment allowed children to play in a healthy setting, free from traffic hazards. The abundance of plants and natural materials was beneficial

in creating safe and nature-based games for children. Individual assets were also utilized, with mothers taking on the responsibility of maintaining the playground to ensure that all equipment remained safe and in good condition. As a form of social capital, Pilar Jiwa contributed by providing guidance on games that support children's growth and development. Pilar Jiwa also played an institutional role by promoting early childhood development through information sharing and offering consultation services for mothers.

The entire set of activities was strongly supported by cultural and religious capital. The *cultural capital*, which includes the still-limited use of gadgets and the strong tradition of neighborly interaction, allows children to play outdoors safely and comfortably. This is because the residents know one another and are familiar with each other's children. The habit of feeding children outside the house also helps them become more familiar with their surroundings and comfortable playing outdoors, reducing their dependence on gadgets. Meanwhile, the *religious capital*, represented by the community's strong adherence to religious values, plays a vital role in supporting this program. These values encourage parents to avoid exposing their children to gadgets as a way to protect them from inappropriate content.

Throughout the community service activities, the ABCD method proved to be an effective approach in mobilizing community participation for self-empowerment. Each stage, from asset identification, mapping, and environmental analysis to action planning and implementation, aligned with the goal of creating a child-friendly environment, all rooted in and driven by the community itself with inclusive participation from all components of society.

The effectiveness of the ABCD method has also been demonstrated in other studies. [Agdal et al. \(2019\)](#) found that community activities applying ABCD principles at a high level also achieved high levels of participation from children, youth, and schools. These projects were supported by adult facilitators who created learning environments that helped children and youth develop participatory skills. Another study by [Chen et al. \(2024\)](#) on the ABCD approach's effect on poverty reduction in rural northern Ghana concluded that the use of local resources, asset mobilization, and citizen participation significantly contributed to rural poverty alleviation. These two studies are in line with the outcomes of this community engagement project using the ABCD framework.

In addition to the outcomes already achieved, there are promising opportunities for follow-up programs aimed at sustaining the impact of previous actions. These follow-up plans are designed to ensure the continuity of implemented initiatives and are led by local cadres and residents who possess the relevant skills identified during the asset mapping process. For instance, cooking classes will be facilitated by mothers skilled in cooking, while Learning English for Children will be supported by those with English language proficiency. In this way, the diverse assets of Dusun Brubuh continue to contribute meaningfully to ongoing community actions.

The implementation of these actions has led to several outcomes: (1) Community engagement: Residents, especially mothers and posyandu cadres, actively participated in every activity, demonstrating a high level of involvement; (2) Skill development: Mothers learned how to create children's games using materials available in their surroundings, which stimulated creativity and the development of new games; (3) Community strengthening: Social cohesion increased due to collective participation and a shared commitment to creating a nurturing environment for child development. The involvement of village officials and local institutions, particularly Pilar Jiwa Psikologi, further reinforced community ties; (4) Sustained interest: As the program concluded, residents, especially mothers and posyandu cadres, expressed a strong commitment to maintaining, preserving, and continuing the outcomes and efforts established through this initiative.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The community service program in Dusun Brubuh, Kalipang Village, Sutojayan Subdistrict, Blitar Regency, has achieved significant success in engaging the local community to create an environment that supports children's growth and development without dependence on gadgets. By applying the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) method, we were able to identify and utilize various local assets, such as individual skills, physical infrastructure, and abundant natural resources. Through this initiative, we successfully carried out various actions, including the physical result of building a safe and educational play area for children that stimulates their motor, cognitive, and social development, allowing them to learn through play. In addition, the program raised awareness among mothers about the importance of parenting without gadgets and the potential negative impacts of excessive gadget use on children. Overall, this program not only supports children's physical and mental development but also strengthens the community's social network, making Dusun Brubuh a positive example of a child-friendly environment. Through close collaboration between residents, community leaders, and relevant institutions, we believe the sustainability of this program will have a broader and deeper impact on future generations. This community service program, which applies the Asset-Based Community Development method, demonstrates that a strength-based approach focused on community assets can effectively address challenges and drive positive change. By relying on local potential, the program succeeded in uniting the community to collectively create a gadget-free environment for child development in today's digital age, utilizing locally available materials to create traditional games that help shift children's attention away from gadgets and support their optimal growth.

The program to create a child-friendly environment without gadgets faces several limitations. The first is resource constraints, including limited funding and human resources. This program requires substantial funding to support children's activities and enhance community capacity, as well as sufficient human resources to manage and develop these initiatives. To address this issue, it is recommended to seek alternative funding sources, such as donations, sponsorships, or grants, and to optimize existing community resources, such as using public facilities or involving volunteers. The second challenge is limited community participation, particularly the lack of awareness among residents and limited involvement of parents. Some community members are not aware of the importance of a child-friendly environment without gadgets, and some parents are unwilling to participate due to time constraints or a lack of understanding. This limitation can be overcome by providing continuous education through local leaders and PKK cadres, and by developing engaging and enjoyable activities for both children and parents. Another challenge lies in addressing the problem of gadget dependency and external environmental influences. Children are already accustomed to using gadgets, making it difficult to break the habit. Additionally, external environments such as playgroups, schools, or peers may still encourage gadget use. This issue can be addressed by developing alternative activities that are more appealing than gadget use, and by providing ongoing training for parents.

From the activities and actions carried out, it is hoped that the community will continue sustaining all the initiatives that have been implemented, strengthening social ties and communication among residents to maintain a gadget-free, child-friendly environment that supports optimal development. Furthermore, the service team hopes this program will continue with future targets, focusing on older age groups to instill character education. More broadly, the recommendations that can be drawn from this program are: (a) communities should fully utilize their own assets and potentials, (b) communities should continuously foster togetherness, and (c) communities should establish strong collaboration among members and the human capital they possess.

REFERENCES

- Adisasmita, R. (2013). *Teori-teori pembangunan ekonomi: Pertumbuhan ekonomi dan pertumbuhan wilayah*. Graha ilmu.
- Agdal, R., Midtgård, I. H., & Meidell, V. (2019). Can asset-based community development with children and youth enhance the level of participation in health promotion projects? A qualitative meta-synthesis. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(19), 3778. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16193778>
- Ansori, C., Raharjo, P. D., & Kusyumiadi, I. (2020, June). Diversity of geological and non-geological sites in spatial planning of the North Geopark Karangsambung-Karangbolong Area. In *International Conference on Regional Development*, 1(1), 77-87.
- Basir, B., Kamaluddin, A. A., Janna, T. A. S., Toding, A., Abdullah, S. S., Langi, R. T., Rusli, U. A., & Subhan, A. M. B. (2024). Edukasi bahaya gadget dan pembagian mainan edukasi sebagai upaya menurunkan intensitas penggunaan gadget pada anak. *PROMOTIF: Jurnal Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat*, 4(1), 33-43. <https://doi.org/10.17977/um075v4i12024p33-43>
- Chen, H., Xu, Y., Agba Tackie, E., & Ahakwa, I. (2024). Assessing the impact of asset-based community development approach on rural poverty alleviation in Ghana: The moderating role of government policies. *Sage Open*, 14(1), 21582440231226020. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440231226020>
- Fitrianto, A. R., Ahmadia, O., Madinah, S. H., Iin, C., Nur, M. F., & Nadhifa, Z. (2020). Optimalisasi potensi desa wisata edukasi di Ledug Prigen. *Jurnal Pengabdian Untukmu Negeri*, 4(2), 276–284.
- Green, G. P. & Haines, A. (2002). *Asset building and community development*. Sage Publications.
- Haris, H., & Nur, N. H. (2022). Pemberdayaan KPM-PKH dan sosialisasi perilaku makan untuk pencegahan kejadian stunting pasca pandemik Covid-19. *Locus Penelitian dan Abdimas*, 1(1), 24-31.
- Jayadi, A., Ikawati, H. D., Awar, Z., & Hastina, T. (2021). Teknik mengawasi anak dalam penggunaan gadget. *Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat Cahaya Mandalika (Abdimandalika)*, 2(1), 17-22. <https://doi.org/10.36312/abdimandalika.v2i1.376>
- Kretzmann, J. P., & McKnight, J. L. (1993). *Building communities from the inside out: A path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets*. ACTA Publications.
- Marulis, L. M., & Nelson, L. J. (2021). Metacognitive processes and associations to executive function and motivation during a problem-solving task in 3–5 year olds. *Metacognition and learning*, 16(1), 207-231. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11409-020-09244-6>
- Mathie, A., & Cunningham, G. (2003). From clients to citizens: Asset-based community development as a strategy for community-driven development. *Development in practice*, 13(5), 474-486. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0961452032000125857>
- Noel, J. P., & Angelaki, D. E. (2022). Cognitive, systems, and computational neurosciences of the self in motion. *Annual review of psychology*, 73(1), 103-129. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-021021-103038>
- Piaget, J. (1965). *The child's conception of number*. W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Ramadhani, T., & Saputra, P. P. (2023). *Pemberdayaan masyarakat dalam perspektif sosiologi (I)*. Jejak Pustaka.

- Santika, E. F. (2023, February 16). *Hampir separuh anak usia dini sudah gunakan HP dan mengakses internet pada 2022*. Databoks. Retrieved from: <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/teknologi-telekomunikasi/statistik/f561c07efa4d0ce/hampir-separuh-anak-usia-dini-sudah-gunakan-hp-dan-mengakses-internet-pada-2022>
- Sarini, S., Lismayanti, D., Desrianti, C., & Asih, M. P. (2024). Pengabdian masyarakat sosialisasi bahaya gadget & strategi mediasi orangtua untuk mengendalikan penggunaan gadget pada anak Generasi Z di SD IT Sehati Bina Insani Karawang. *E-Amal: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, 4(2), 935-942. <https://doi.org/10.47492/eamal.v4i2.3537>
- Scarf, D., & Hinten, A. E. (2018). Television format and children's executive function. *Pediatrics*, 141(3). <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2017-2674>
- Smirnova, E. O., Matushkina, N. Y., & Smirnova, S. Y. (2018). Virtual reality in early and preschool childhood. *Psikhologicheskaya nauka i obrazovanie*, 23(3), 42-53. <https://doi.org/10.17759/pse.2018230304>
- Suhardoyo, S., Sudrajat, A., Bunga, R., & Roni, F. (2023). Penggunaan gadget sehat terhadap anak-anak pada Yayasan Hikmat Berkarya Mandiri. *Karya: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, 3(2), 29-35.
- Tina, A., Harahap, R. A., Katharina, N., Pasaribu, L. N., Ginting, K. E. D., & Amir, A. (2023). Sosialisasi penggunaan gadget terhadap anak-anak usia dini di Panti Asuhan Pelita Harapan. *Jurnal Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat Nusantara*, 4(3), 2078-2080. <https://doi.org/10.55338/jpkmn.v4i3.1329>
-