



Literacy Culture as a Way of Manifesting Quality Educational Institutions

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Abstract:

The quality of education is closely related to the literacy culture of the community. The low literacy culture in children is alleged to have been the cause of the low quality of education in Indonesia. The purpose of this study was to determine the role of literacy culture in improving the quality of education, to find out how to increase the literacy culture of students, and to determine the supporting and inhibiting factors in improving the literacy culture of students. The method used in this research is a qualitative approach. The results showed that literacy culture is very influential in education, especially to absorb information and increase the skill level of students. Efforts to increase literacy culture include the Literacy Awareness Movement program and collaborating with various elements to increase literacy awareness.

Keywords: *education quality, literacy culture, students.*

INTRODUCTION

Education is a systematic process to achieve perfection and balance between individuals and the community through learning development activities (Wardana & Damayanti, 2017). Education becomes a progressive activity in an effort to realize superior human capabilities through development and learning activities without losing its rights as a social being in society as a fully individual being.(Nurkholis, 2013).

Education is a conscious process of effort in determining the human personality

to become a better, more mature, and more useful person. The hope is that with education, someone will be able to distinguish which one is good and what is bad, which one must be fought for, and which part must be left behind.(Hamalik, 2002).

Weak The quality of education at every level of school and education unit is a problem in itself for Indonesia (Wina, 2013). This can be seen from the low level of education services in Indonesia, the low quality of education, to the low literacy culture of children in Indonesia.(Baswedan, 2014). This is a real problem because the

low quality of education will have an impact on the low quality of graduates produced. Thus, the low quality of education becomes a separate problem for the nation to be able to adapt to the era of globalization and modernization(Widodo, 2015).

Various efforts to improve the quality of education have been carried out, starting from forming the leadership of school principals, involving and increasing the active role of teachers in learning, improving curriculum units, to establishing cooperation with several parties concerned. (Saifulloh et al., 2012). Improving the quality of education can not only be done by improving certain sectors, because there are other sectors that have a major influence on the quality of education, namely literacy culture.

Literacy culture is the ability to read and write or simply known as literacy or literacy (Permatasari, 2015). UNESCO noted that the Indonesian reading interest index was only at 0.001, which means that if there are 1,000 people, there is only one person who has an interest in reading. In addition, it turns out that Indonesia's literacy level is only ranked 64 out of 65 countries surveyed. One other sad fact to know is that the reading level of Indonesian students is only able to rank 57 out of 65 countries (Republika, 12 September 2015).

The quality of education will be determined by the level of intelligence as well mastery of knowledge while the level of intelligence is determined by how far the mastery of knowledge is obtained, meanwhile knowledge is obtained from a variety of information both obtained orally and in writing. Thus, literacy culture is the most obvious key to improving the quality of our nation's education. This study seeks to reveal various things as follows: (1) knowing the role of literacy culture in improving the quality of education (2) knowing how to increase the literacy culture of students (3) knowing the supporting and inhibiting factors in improving the literacy culture of students.

METHOD

This research was conducted through a qualitative approach to literature study, namely by reading and analyzing various documents that are directly related to the research topic, sorting and classifying texts, documents and books that are relevant to the research theme and then explaining them descriptively. This qualitative approach was chosen because it is the most appropriate to be used in revealing social phenomena that are happening naturally(Wardana & Damayanti, 2017). Through this research, it is hoped that it can provide detailed information and descriptions related to the issue of literacy culture and its role in improving the quality of the nation's education by looking at the problems or conditions that are happening in the current environment.

The data obtained from this study were sourced from secondary data from various literatures, do observations, and match the real conditions in our environment. Literature study serves to obtain data or information related to the literacy culture that develops in students. This research focuses on the role of literacy culture in improving the quality of education in Indonesia.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Quality of Education

Quality is an important thing in an educational process. The quality of education is the quality assessed from the graduates as well as satisfactory service from various parties related to education(Rahayu, 2016). The quality of education will always be associated with satisfactory and good grades from various aspects ranging from cognitive, psychomotor, and affective. With good quality education, later graduates will be accepted at a higher school level which is of course high quality and will have a good personality.(Fadhli, 2017).

Currently existing education in Indonesia requires re-assessment related to quality assessment. Assessment in the field of education can be studied based on two models. The first model consists of a sectoral assessment covering facilities, infrastructure, facilities, and financial aspects management. Meanwhile, the second type of model is an essential assessment which means the overall aspects of the running of a school institution, such as teaching techniques or strategies, the curriculum applied, and the supporting programs that are applied. The model will be directly proportional to the quality of education where a good assessment model will produce a good quality of education as well (Tilaar, 2006).

2. The Importance of Literacy Culture

The term literacy can be defined as the ability and skills to read and write. Reading is the spelling of language symbols until finally understanding is obtained. Meanwhile, writing is defined as the expression of thoughts by symbolizing language to form understanding (Mustafa, 2014). Literacy also cannot be interpreted as merely a reading and writing movement, but it is much more than that. Literacy is an individual's ability to use all his potential and skills during his lifetime (Pratiwi, 2016).

According to the Prague Declaration, literacy is currently defined as information literacy which consists of 5 components, namely, library literacy, basic literacy, technology literacy, media literacy, and visual literacy. So, according to this definition, the government can provide the widest possible access to increase literacy, especially in the school environment through the presence of library reading rooms, or online libraries. With the presence of this reading room, it will increase students' interest in reading independently and freely (Alwasilah, 2012).

Free reading is defined as the activity of reading all kinds of books you want without any pressure to complete assignments or answer questions (Hidayah, 2017). With

free reading habits can help in improving children's language development and literacy. So that later children will be able to absorb more information and increase their level of intelligence (Krashen, 2004).

3. School Literacy Movement

One of the programs that have been compiled and launched by the Indonesian government through the Ministry of Education and Culture is the School Literacy Movement which is now known as GLS. The GLS program is under the coordination of the Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education (Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education, 2016). GLS is an activity that is participative in nature by involving all education stakeholders to contribute. Those involved include all school members including teachers, students, principals, school committees, school supervisors, academics, and all participants who want to care, both from community leaders and those who are directly involved in policy making, stakeholders in under the auspices of the Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education, Ministry of Education and Culture.

As explained by (Ferdman, 1990) that cultural diversity has significant implications for the creation of literacy processes. He explores this relationship by analyzing the relationship between literacy and cultural identity in a multiethnic society in America. Ferdman emphasized that literacy is culturally framed and defined; therefore, members of different cultures will differ in what they perceive as literate behavior. This, in turn, can affect how individuals engage in literacy acquisition and activity. He further argues that the type and content of literacy education that individuals receive can affect their cultural identity.

Reading habits is an important activity in the learning process. In the movement of human society, reading has been given an important position and has become one of the main aspects of human life, which is collectively involved in community

regulation and exposure of knowledge to achieve a literate society. Reading involves community participation in fostering a literate society. So, reading forms a good personality, correct ideas and thoughts, and changes in attitudes. So, people who are involved in the habit of reading will create a knowledgeable society. This discussion reveals how important the habit of reading is and for creating a literate society, which fosters development in any country. It can be said that the habit of reading is an essential and important aspect of creating a literate society in this world. This shapes a person's personality and helps them develop appropriate thinking methods and create new ideas. At present, due to the influence of Mass Media, people cannot show interest in reading books, magazines and journals etc. Hence, there is an urgent need to develop reading habits among individuals in society (Palani, 2012).

Indonesia seems to need to make serious efforts so that society as an environment determines the birth and creation of quality educational institutions to care and be responsible for the formation of a literacy culture. The GLS program itself is a program that requires real collaboration of various elements which is carried out in stages.

The following are the stages in implementing GLS, namely:

- a. Habit
The first stage in literacy is habituation. This stage emphasizes growing reading interest through a variety of activities for 15 minutes.
- b. Development
The next stage after cultivating a habit is development. This activity is aimed at improving literacy skills through activities to respond to various enrichment books.
- c. Learning
The third stage is the learning stage. This stage is intended to be able to improve skills in all subjects. In addition, participants are also

expected to be able to read all strategies in all existing subjects.

The GLS program in more detail can be seen in Figure 1.



Image: GL stepsS
(source: Ministry of Education and Culture, 2016)

The range of stages that must be carried out from the GLS program will differ depending on how the conditions of each school are and will be carried out in stages according to the readiness of each school. Readiness refers to the physical capacity of the school which consists of the availability of facilities, facilities, system readiness, literacy infrastructure, institutional support, and other policy tools. (Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education, 2016).

4. Factors affecting literacy culture

Reading is a fun activity or job. Reading can help students understand and recognize text automatically, so that in the end they can appreciate and appreciate reading more (Parida, 2012).

The following are the factors that influence the improvement of literacy culture in school students:

- a. Physiological factors
The first factor that affects the improvement of literacy culture is

physiological factors. These factors include children's neurological development, physical health, fatigue in children, stress, and motivation given to children.

b. Intellectual factor

The next factor that influences is the intellectual factor. In this factor it is not only fully influenced by the intelligence of the child but, rather, the positive relationship between IQ and also the redemial average.

c. Environmental factor

The third factor that also affects children's reading interest is environmental factors. This factor includes the child's experience at home or at play(Parida, 2012).

5. Literacy Expectations in Indonesia

The term literacy is not only defined as the ability to read and write, but must be interpreted to form critical thinking skills in understanding everything in various fields. By being able to think critically, then someone will be able to become a knowledgeable human. Realizing literacy as a culture is not only a skill in spelling or the ability to write a language symbol. The use of this literacy culture must also be adjusted to its implementation in an academic environment. This can be done by supporting various efforts such as the success of the GLS program or other relevant programs(Wiidiarti, 2016).

Another effort that can be done is to cultivate awareness of all parties or elements to appreciate and elevate the image of the book in its true form. The reason is, the books that are currently idolized are authentic textbooks and various kinds of media practitioners(Safrudin & Prayitno, 2004). For example, in the realm of entertainment, people know tend to provide something easy, namely entertainment on the internet, learning that is easy to do by utilizing technology, and other examples. This is done solely to control the media that is in the hands of all of us. So that people will be more aware that the use of all things is only seen from the

level of need and not exaggerated(Musthafa, 2014).

CONCLUSION

From the observations and analyzes that have been carried out, the following conclusions can be drawn: (1) literacy culture plays an important role in producing quality education quality through the creation of competencies in understanding all things and being able to think critically (2) Improving the quality of education can continue to be done through increasing the cultivation of literacy culture by implementing various programs such as those that have been carried out through the Literacy Awareness Movement (3) factors that can influence awareness of literacy are physical, intellectual, and social environment factors.

Suggestion

Efforts that need to be continued are: (1) awareness to local governments from the provincial, district to RT / RW levels to provide understanding and provision of facilities and infrastructure so that people love reading. (2) holding discussions and deliberations related to the topic of noble cultural values that have been held by the Indonesian nation so far. (3) Increasing literacy culture by rebuilding pride and love for reading.

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