



UNDERSTANDING LITERACY LEVEL IN VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS IN PADANG PARIAMAN REGENCY

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ABSTRACT

Responding to the low interest among Indonesian students has prompted the government to formulate strategic policies to guarantee the future success of national education. One of the strategies is emphasizing the establishment of literacy programs at schools. This research is expected to see the execution of the program and find out the obstacles in handling the program. The subjects of this research were the literacy teams of the schools that consist of the administrators, the teachers, and the principals of the vocational schools in Padang Pariaman Regency. Ten schools, both private and public, were selected as the focus of this study. The data was collected through interviews and observations through the stages of implementing the literacy movement guidelines from Kemdikbud. The result showed that the literacy movement in Padang Pariaman regency was still at the habituation level and needed further government' attention. The obstacles were found from the lack of the headmaster and the teams' understanding in comprehending the movement. Hence, the government needs to do accompaniment to implement the program successfully.

Keywords: Vocational Schools, Understanding Literacy, Strategic policies

1. INTRODUCTION

The literacy movement has been an endeavor for many years in Indonesia to the International survey results of Indonesian students in literacy. When the 2013 curriculum (K-13) was officially launched nationwide, not all schools adopted it. Some schools, including several in Padang Pariaman Regency, were still using the 2016 curriculum. This meant that the scientific approach was new for the school component. Surprisingly, even before schools had implemented the new curriculum, the

government introduced an enrichment program in teaching, namely the school literacy movement. Consequently, it was challenging for schools to adjust to or adopt this new movement.

One of the reasons this program rose was because the literacy rate and reading interest of the Indonesian people were low. The results of a survey conducted by several institutions such as the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) stated that the literacy culture of Indonesian students was in the 57th

position out of 65 countries studied. Another example was the UNESCO statistical data in 2012 stated that the reading interest index in Indonesia has only reached 0.0001. This means that for every 1,000 residents, only one person has an interest in reading. It was a serious problem for the school to solve immediately. This activity was considered to be able to help sustainable development such as eradicating poverty, population growth, reducing mortality, and others in Indonesia.

A low score on the PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) initiated by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), in which Indonesia participated in 2000, shows that the Indonesian score on that test is unsatisfactory. This is the study to assess the education system followed by more than 70 countries around the world. Every 3 years, 15-year-old students are randomly selected to take tests in the main subjects of reading, math, and science. This test is diagnostic to provide useful information for the improvement of the education system.

According to data published by the OECD from the 2009-2018 survey period, Indonesia is consistently in the bottom 10 (OECD, 2003)(OECD, 2016)(OECD, 2013)(OECD, 2010). From the three competency categories, Indonesia's score is always below average. For reading ability category, Indonesia is ranked 6th from the bottom that is 74 out of 80 countries with the average score is 396. In mathematics, Indonesia is ranked 7th from the bottom (73) with an average score of 379. In the science performance category, Indonesia is ranked 9th from the bottom (71) with an average score is 396 (Tohir, 2019).

Indonesia has participated in this assessment for more than 20 years. However, during that time the students'

ability scores have never been above average. Some of the education supervisor states that the low rating score Indonesia got in PISA was caused by the curriculum implemented. These situations led the Indonesian government to realize that Indonesia still uses the Lower-Medium Order Thinking type method and that the literacy skills of Indonesians need to be improved in some ways and encouraged the school literacy movement throughout the schools in Indonesia with the Higher Order of Thinking method. The program started from students at an early age until the senior high including vocational school.

Based on the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 23 of 2015, the school literacy movement aimed to strengthen the student's character. As introduced by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2015 (Antasari, 2017), the literacy movement was initiated by the implementation of the K-13 revised curriculum to strengthen the students' character (Antoro, 2017). It needs a comprehensive effort from all school members (teachers, students, parents) and the community, as part of the ecosystem. The students as the people who test, cannot stand alone without good cooperation from teachers and principals of the school to be literate in the future

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Some of the guidelines, regulations, and books were launched to equip the schools' stakeholders with a strong foundation in literacy. These resources were intended to provide teachers, administrators, and students with the necessary tools and strategies to improve literacy skills effectively. The guidelines outlined best practices for teaching literacy, while the regulations ensured a

standardized approach across schools. Additionally, books and other educational materials were provided to support the literacy movement, offering a wide range of reading materials to engage students and foster a culture of reading.

Besides, other efforts also exist in each school before the school year from experts in the form of in-house training, or workshops. These activities aim to help the schools to get knowledge, and skills to effectively implement literacy programs and support student learning. In addition, these also offer opportunities for professional development, allowing teachers to exchange ideas, explore innovative teaching methods, and collaborate on improving literacy outcomes.

Despite these efforts, the transition must be full of challenges. At least the schools had two problems at the start of the school year, the implementation of the new curriculum, and the integration of the literacy programs. The study aims to comprehensively analyze the literacy levels among students in vocational schools within the Padang Pariaman Regency. This task examines and assesses teacher documentation in addition to infrastructure and preparation. Examining lesson plans, curricular alignment, and teaching resources utilized in literacy programs are all included in this.

Theoretically, according to (Susanto, 2013), there were three stages of implementation of the Literacy Movement at school starting from elementary schools up to the senior or vocational schools. They are (1) the habituation stage by growing interest in reading through 15 minutes of reading activities, (2) the development stage by increasing literacy skills through activities responding to the enrichment books, and (3) learning by improving literacy skills in

all subjects. These stages collectively aim to build a robust literacy foundation, progressively enhancing students' reading and comprehension skills through structured and systematic practices.

In its pocketbook, the ministry explained the stages in detail. For the habituation stage, (Pangesti Wiedarti, 2016) proposed several considerations. There is a 15-minute reading activity done every day and it should be running for at least one semester. The school literacy team, including teachers and the education staff, become models by participating in reading at the moment. Besides, the team has text-rich material like posters of reading campaigns or the habit of living clean, healthy, and beautifully displayed in each class, corridor, and other areas of the school. It is used to broaden the understanding and determination of school members to become lifelong learners. Other than that, the library should be a comfortable reading area with a collection of non-lesson books (fiction and non-fiction) of literacy activities to expand their knowledge in certain subjects. Last but not least, the transformation of school gardens, canteens, and health units into clean, vibrant, and well-resourced environments represent a significant milestone in holistic education.

The next stage is the development stage to improve literacy skills. Literacy activities at this stage aim to develop abilities to understand reading and relate it to personal experience, think critically, and cultivate communication skills creatively through activities responding to enrichment reading (Anderson, 2001). The students have a daily reading journal (write the title of the reading and the page) as well as a portfolio containing a collection of reading response journals (non-lesson books). Journal of student

responses from reading books and/or textbooks displayed in classrooms and/or school corridors.

The last stage is the literacy-based learning stage which has various follow-up activities in all subjects. Firstly, generating oral and written responses of 15 minutes of reading at a habitual level as part of the non-academic assessment. There must be a reward from the principal and the team committed to the achievement of students in literacy activities regularly. The rewards are in the form of academic activities that support school literacy culture, for example: library tours or mobile library visits to schools. Others are celebrating activities like performances with the theme of literacy. It could be critical thinking skills and creativity in communicating verbally, in writing, visually, or digitally on a certain day. The other activities involve the public in developing literacy activities. The parents, alumni, and community elements become the school network to the professional development of school residents on literacy.

According (Mulyo Teguh, 2017) there are some strategies to create a positive literacy culture in schools. The school principals along with the teachers should prepare many things to make the students literate for life. This literacy activity is carried out to foster student interest and reading culture. (Dirjen Dikdasmen, 2016) stated that literacy activities are carried out to improve reading. The reading material contains moral values, in the form of local, national, and global wisdom that is delivered according to the stage of student development. This important breakthrough should involve all stakeholders in the education sector, from the central, provincial, and district, to education units. The involvement of

parents and the community is also an important component of this movement.

The literacy movement has drawn a lot of attention lately as a crucial strategy to improve educational outcomes. The research done by (Nuryatin, 2020) about Literacy Movement for Leading Schools: Best Practice and Leadership Power in 2020 showed positive impacts on reading interest and literacy achievements across various academic domains at Muhammadiyah School in Yogyakarta. It provides valuable insights into the effective practices and leadership required to foster a culture of literacy in educational institutions. Another was (Ulfa, Khaira., Mohammad, Amir, Wan, Harun., Rajab, 2019) who focused on The School Literacy Movement program's impact on reading habits, interests, and comprehension varied among grade X students, not reaching maximum levels, with scores falling in moderate to good categories. The other is Bellina et al mention that the School Literacy Movement program aims to enhance students' reading interest and comprehension skills through various literacy activities, fostering a strong foundation for literacy development in students.

While previous research highlights the positive impact of literacy programs on student reading skills, these studies often focus on single schools, limiting the generalizability of their findings, and predominantly involving well-established schools, potentially overlooking challenges faced by smaller or less-resourced institutions. This paper aims to fill these gaps by examining the level of preparation for literacy program implementation in Padang Pariaman, a region newly adopting both Kurikulum 2013 (K-13) and literacy initiatives simultaneously, thus providing broader

insights into diverse educational settings. (Melda, Rumia, Rosmery., Simorangkir, 2023) mention that the School Literacy Movement in high schools in Karawang, Indonesia, has been effective in increasing literacy activities and fostering students' love of reading, as per the research findings

By recognizing the importance of the literacy movement for national education, each of the schools needs to implement it. Dealing with this condition, the vocational schools in Padang Pariaman Regency which was new to the program, also new to the curriculum 13 which integrates the scientific approach in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, they found it was a big challenge for the school principals to adjust to or adopt this new movement. This study aims to comprehensively analyze the current state of literacy and the challenges these students face in those vocational schools based on the guidelines of Kemdikbud given.

3. Research Method

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to evaluate the level of preparation for implementing the literacy program in curriculum 2013 (K-13) and the obstacles faced in implementing the new program. It is used to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the implementation. The subject of this study was the literacy team of the schools that consist of teachers, administrators, and the principals of the vocational schools in Padang Pariaman Regency. A total of 30 participants were selected through purposive sampling from the representative schools provided, public and private schools.

The data was collected through interviews and observations through the stages of implementing the literacy

movement guidelines from Kemdikbud. It used the school literacy instrument which consists of three stages of literacy movement implementation to build and develop the school literacy cultures. The quantitative data from the surveys was distributed to teachers and school administrators to assess their readiness and identify potential challenges. The qualitative component includes interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders to gain deeper insights into their experiences and perceptions regarding the implementation process. This comprehensive methodology ensures a robust analysis of the preparedness and the contextual factors influencing the literacy program's effectiveness.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results showed that there were differences in literacy habits among public schools and private schools of vocational schools in Padang Pariaman Regency. In public schools, the literacy habitus was not fully formed because the schools did not have sufficient preparation to implement the literacy movement yet in some schools. The 15 minutes were used only to recite the Al-maul Husna or reading Qur'an at the beginning of the lesson every day. There were no examples from the team and the teachers to read the book. Even, when the students recite together, the teachers prefer to come late to the class. Therefore, the students were not trained to read at the habituation level.

The other evidence was about the text work on display. There wasn't any display on the corridor of the schools or even in the classroom. There were not any posters for reading campaigns to broaden the understanding and determination of school residents to become lifelong

learners. The organizational structure of the class or the schedule of the class was the ornament of the wall of the public school. Besides, the library in the schools was not a comfortable reading area for the students to enrich their knowledge. It was because the collection of the books was only lesson books. There was almost no collection of non-lesson books that were used for various literacy activities.

These situations could make the implementation stage of the literacy movement hard to continue to the next level. It was because the indicators of the stages didn't fulfil the implementation of the movement. For example, if the students didn't have a habit of reading the books how could the students have a journal of reading for the next level?

Meanwhile, the literacy habitus in several private schools in Padang Pariaman Regency was a little bit formed. The literacy team prepared almost all of the preparation properties like the display or the text work on the wall. Each of the classes has its posters like the Indonesian hero, the inventors of science or in medical health, and others. The other posters are also available in the corridor of the school as a campaign to broaden the student's literacy.

Besides, the library books were varied in the book provided. The students' books were not completely in the library, some of the books were with the students to read and do school tasks. From the book display, the fiction and non-fiction book were available for the students.

However, the first 15 minutes were similar to the public schools. They are reading the Quran and reciting the Al-maul Husna to foster a spiritual and reflective start to the day. Unfortunately, evidence shows that several students arrive late, missing out on these activities regularly. This pattern not only disrupts their

routine but also diminishes the collective experience of the class, highlighting the need for measures to encourage punctuality and full engagement.

From this condition, the private school was still in the habituation level. They still cannot go through the development stage and the follow-up activities. The literacy team has limitations in developing abilities to understand reading and relate it to personal experience, think critically, and cultivate communication skills creatively through activities responding to enrichment reading of the students. Automatically, there was no performance level for the students to generate oral and written responses to their 15 minutes of reading habit.

The main obstacle found from both of private and public school in accommodate the program was the school principles' understanding on the literacy movement program. When the principals understand the importance of the movement, they will prioritize the program as the main program of the school. They will put the literacy movement activities in School Activity Plan and Budget (RKAS) to accommodate the needs of the program well. Automatically, the school's component can run the program well.

The principles should have their strategy to run the movement and put some target to achieve. The target can be seen from the characteristic given of literate school. According to (Pangesti Wiedarti, 2016) the literate school have five characters. They are fun and students-friendly, thus fostering enthusiasm citizens in learning; all its citizens show empathy, care, and respect for others; foster a spirit of curiosity and love of knowledge; enabling its citizens to be proficient at communicating and able to contribute to their social environment;

and accommodate the participation of all citizens and the external school environment.

5. Conclusion

The execution of the program is far from the expectation. The schools do not get used to the activities of the literacy movement. It seems the school's components including the principles, the teachers as well as students focus on delivering the material stated in the syllabus. Because this movement was already launched several years ago, and the implementation of the program should be already above the average, the government needs to do accompaniment for the school. This assistance is an effort to ensure the sustainability of the school literacy program is continuously implemented (Pangesti Wiedarti, 2016) concludes that the assistance is carried out in two ways, namely technical assistance and operational assistance. technical assistance means strengthening the capacity of teachers and education staff through training and workshops, as well as improvement teacher's reading interest and literacy skills. Meanwhile, accompaniment operational activities mean visiting the schools to see directly about the implementation, and do discussion to the principals, teachers as well as librarians in term of giving suggestions, program improvements, troubleshooting, and/or hands-on instructions given as part of daily literacy movement activities.

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