The Development of Literacy Culture To Improve Students’ Understanding of Islamic Religion Subject

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the efforts to develop a literacy culture in SMA Negeri 1 Batu in enhancing students' understanding of PAI learning materials, as well as the benefits gained by students with the existence of a school literacy culture. This research method uses a qualitative approach to the type of case study research. Data collection techniques using observation, in-depth interviews and documentation. The results of the study show: (1) the implementation of the literacy culture development program at SMA Negeri 1 Batu is largely in accordance with the design of the government's main about GLS. By implementing mandatory reading activities for 10 minutes before learning, the availability of literacy corner facilities in every corner of the classroom, as well as adequate libraries as the main source of literacy in schools. (2) there are many benefits obtained by students with the existence of literacy activities in schools to improving their understanding, especially on PAI subjects

Keywords: Literacy Culture; PAI Material: Literacy Activities
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**Abstrak**

budaya literasi di SMA Negeri 1 Batu dalam meningkatkan pemahaman peserta didik terhadap materi pembelajaran PAI, serta manfaat yang diperoleh peserta didik dengan pembudayaan literasi sekolah. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian studi kasus. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan observasi, wawancara mendalam dan dokumentasi. Hasil dari penelitian menunjukkan: (1) pelaksanaan program pengembangan budaya literasi di SMA Negeri 1 Batu sebagian besar sesuai dengan desain induk pemerintah tentang GLS. Dengan menerapkan kegiatan wajib membaca selama 10 menit sebelum pembelajaran, tersedianya fasilitas pojok literasi di setiap sudut ruang kelas, serta perpustakaan yang memadai sebagai sumber literasi utama di sekolah. (2) banyak manfaat yang diperoleh peserta didik dengan adanya kegiatan literasi di sekolah untuk meningkatkan pemahaman mereka, terutama pada mata pelajaran PAI.

**Kata Kunci**: Budaya Literasi; Materi PAI; Kegiatan Literasi

**Introduction**

The newest data of the study “Most Literate Countries in the World” conducted by Central Connecticut State University on March 2016 showed that Indonesia was still in the 60th position from 61 countries in terms of reading interest (Putra, 2018). The data was not much different from a survey conducted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2012, which noted that the reading interest index in Indonesia only reached 0.001. In other words, out of 1.000 residents, there was only one person who really had a high interest in reading (Kasiyun, 2015; Permatasari, 2015; Nurchaili, 2016; Triatma, 2016). This showed that the literacy culture is still not deeply rooted in the minds of the Indonesian people.

Literacy culture is one of the important components needed in the world of education, so that every change in the literacy culture curriculum is always emphasized in it. The application of the terms given is always different, but reading and writing are never omitted (Putra, 2008). Education in the 21st century requires every student to have skills in understanding information analytically, critically, and reflectively. These skills can be obtained by carrying out literacy activities well, so that the current 2013 curriculum (K-13) emphasizes literacy culture in the learning process (Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education, Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017). Literacy activities in schools can be internalized or integrated with character education habituations. This can be done through the creation of a literacy culture that is based on activeness, creativity, innovation, effectiveness, and enjoyment. So, students can apply the knowledge in a real-world problem or everyday life. So that this knowledge can be helpful deemed more directly by students (Hasnawati, 2016).
The command to read (literacy) was also explained in the Qur’an, in the first revelation of Surah Al-Alaq, verses 1 to 5. The verses are about an order to read for all (Iqra’), including the explicit and implied verses (Nurchaili, 2016; Rohman, 2017). Iqra’ means istiqra’. It also means to study or to research. It is then followed by “educating through literacy” (‘allama bil qalam). This shows that reading is very important for every individual. In addition, its implementation is highly emphasized in everyday life. Through reading activities, students can gain a lot of knowledge, both in terms of attitudes and skills. Similarly, according to Kuhlthau (in Ristanto et al., 2017). He stated that good literacy skills will familiarize students not only to learn to read, but to read to learn and have the ability to understand a reading.

Islam once controlled a third of the world by reading, writing, and learning (literacy culture). Many Muslim scholars and scientists are known to the world for their writings. Even the Qur’an and Hadith can reach us through written media. That is the strategic role of literacy culture in Islam that will not be separated and eroded by the progress of the times, because basically reading and writing are sunnatullah that accompany the success of the people (Gustini, Dede and Imani, 2016). Based on these facts, in PAI material, students really have to emphasize literacy so that they can understand that the material taught in PAI subjects comes from various views.

The main problem with literacy culture in schools is that there is no habituation or effective implementation of literacy culture in the school environment. This causes the need for reading only aims to support the material. Is so that students are able to answer questions, not as an interest or need and curiosity for minimal understanding. Students are now expected to be able to answer some complex questions. Not only that, students are also expected to be able to make their own interpretations, as well as criticize and evaluate the texts they read (Ortlieb, 2013). This will be achieved if the school provides full motivation for the growth and development of a literacy culture. Giving motivation can be done in various ways, for example: accommodating the physical and social environment of students, as well as an academic environment that has a literacy culture in the good category. (Alfarikh, 2017).

Teew explained that, historically, literacy culture has existed since 3000 BC and since then, it had changed oral culture into textual culture. However, in reality, it still has not affected Indonesians. Oral culture has taken root and has its own values, so changing it requires time and an approach that is able to influence people’s thinking (Syahrani, 2013). According to Norton, literacy is not only an ability to read and write, but also the relation between both skills and the environment, both in the local, regional, and transnational scope (Musfiroh, 2016). In addition, literacy skills are an approach as a process in social situations in the context of structural strength in society and institutions or the surrounding environment. (Rutten and van Dienderen, 2013). That is to say, people who have
a high literacy culture can affect the structure of their environment. Likewise in an institution.

Furthermore, the literacy components that must be mastered by students consist of basic literacy, library literacy, media literacy, technology literacy; and visual literacy (Nurchaili, 2016). All of those literacy components are to be integrated based on their respective stages. Every component is related each other and cannot be separated, so that it can prove that literacy is not just reading and writing, but also a more detailed understanding of the information obtained in order to be able to interpret knowledge well. Literacy culture can be interpreted as a habit of thinking followed by a penchant for reading and writing, which in the end produces a work. This cultural activity is related between educational institutions and the intellectual world (Damayanti, 2016). Both influence each other and need each other in order to create a literate generation, and this requires a long process and conducive means. Therefore, this process starts from the family institution, then is supported and developed in school institutions, and in the community in general (Permatasari, 2015).

The demands of the literacy culture must be followed. This is important to meet the demands of the era and the development of science. The more the literacy culture is embedded in students, the more individuals will be accustomed to think critically and logically, and act creatively. Being the next generation of the nation cannot only rely on technology, but must become a generation of civilized science practitioners by cultivating literacy. In addition, through a literacy culture, it will facilitate the transfer of knowledge between one country and another optimally (Syahriyani, 2010).

The development of a literacy culture has recently become the main focus of the government, because the general public’s attention to literacy is still very minimal. Many efforts have been made to instill a literacy culture, one of which is by growing people to like reading (Permatasari, 2015). To make Indonesia win global competence, all Indonesian people must be literate (Nurchaili, 2016). This is because the progress of a nation is reflected in the spirit of the literacy culture among its people (Damayanti, 2016).

Anies Baswedan once stated that literacy culture is one of the important components that must be possessed by students. The literacy component is not only defined as the ability to read and write, but also includes the ability to interpret information sources obtained in printed, visual, digital, and auditory forms. (Alfarikh, 2017). UNESCO declared four learning pillars of the education in the 21st century. Those are learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together in peace. These four learning principle pillars are completely based on the literacy skill (Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education, Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017).

In 2015, Ministry of Education and Culture issued Ministerial Regulation Number 23, Year 2015, about Character Development. The regulation of Ministry
of Education and Culture it contains efforts to develop the potential of students as a whole, which includes literacy culture. Also, the program launched by the government is the School Literacy Movement (GLS, or Gerakan Literasi Sekolah) copy of the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, 2015) GLS is a comprehensive effort that involves all school members (teachers, students, parents/guardians) and the community, as part of the education ecosystem to be able to access, understand, and use information intelligently through various activities (Faradina, 2017). These efforts aim to foster a culture of reading fondness, so that with a lot of reading can produce an article.

GLS is carried out and applied through the stages of habituation, development, and learning. The first stage is habituation, an activity that can be done by the school, namely getting used to reading non-lesson books for 10-15 minutes before the implementation of learning begins. The second stage is development. This stage requires students to show the involvement of their thoughts and emotions in the literacy process without any academic assessment. And the third stage is learning, this stage emphasizes the implementation of literacy in all subjects, both in the use of various literacy strategies in learning and in the development of the physical environment. (Puspito, 2017).

The application of the GLS must also be in accordance with the principles, in accordance with the stages of children’s intellectual and emotional development, balanced, integrated with the curriculum, carried out anytime and anywhere, and develop oral culture, for example in strengthening to discuss (Rohman, 2017). Based on the description above, it is natural that a literacy culture should really be launched. The government itself targets that literacy culture becomes one of the characters possessed by students and it is hoped that they will be able to apply it, so that all elements of society are also responsible for continuously developing a literacy culture for students, especially in the school environment (Syahrani, 2013).

Problems in developing a literacy culture are not only the duties and responsibilities of the Ministry of National Education (Gustini, Dede dan Imani, 2016). All elements of society must participate in tackling this problem, both in the scope of education and non-education. Among all the elements above, which are more effective for instilling a literacy culture in students are educational institutions. Thus, educators are responsible for continuously developing a literacy culture for their students (Syahrani, 2013).

In addition to the GLS which has been declared and implemented by several schools in Indonesia, the government itself has begun to map the literacy conditions nationally, especially literacy for students. The map captures the literacy skills of students, which are not only emphasized on aspects of reading, but also the understanding of the digital world. The Agency for Language Development and Development of the Ministry of Education and Culture, in the
technical briefing activities for data collection for the preparation of policy materials, said, as a joint movement, the National Literacy Movement (shortened to GLN in Indonesian) requires accurate data and information related to the achievement of the national average literacy level. GLN itself is required to grow as a massive joint movement. The literacy movement launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture moves through three main axes, namely family, school and community (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017).

Literacy culture certainly has its advantages; those are, (1) Increasing vocabulary, (2) Optimizing brain work, (3) Adding new insights and information, (4) Improving interpersonal skills, (5) Sharpening oneself in capturing the meaning of an information being read, (6) Develop verbal skills, (7) Train thinking and analytical skills, (8) Improve one’s focus and concentration, (9) Train in writing and assembling meaningful words (Purwanti, 2018).

There are two research questions that the researchers want to discuss. (1) How is the development of a literacy culture in increasing the understanding of students in SMA Negeri 1 Batu towards PAI subjects? (2) What are the benefits that students at SMA Negeri 1 Batu get from developing a literacy culture in improving their understanding of PAI subjects?

**Research Method**

This research uses a qualitative approach with the type of case study research. Case studies were chosen because the focus of the research lies on contemporary or present-day phenomena in real-life contexts (Yin, 2008). The researchers can describe naturally, in detail and in depth about the literacy culture development program in improving students' understanding of PAI subjects at SMA Negeri 1 Batu, as well as the benefits that students get from literacy activities at school. Researchers chose SMA Negeri 1 Batu as the object of research because this school has reached the second stage of the GLS, namely the development stage.

The informant of this research was Mrs. Mustaghfiroh, the teacher of Islamic Religion (PAI) subject at SMA Negeri 1 Batu. Through observations and interviews with informants, researchers obtained data related to the GLS program at SMA Negeri 1 Batu. The informants also indicated several research subjects, including: the chairman of the The Implementation Team for Literacy Activities at SMA Negeri 1 Batu, librarians at SMA Negeri 1 Batu, and students who were the subjects of this study.

Data collection was carried out in a natural, holistic and in-depth condition, using the following techniques: observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The three techniques are carried out in stages according to the needs in the field to produce credibility.

The analysis of qualitative data in this study was carried out inductively and interactively, and continued continuously until it was completed, thus
providing relevant final data. Consistent with the choice of research type, the data analysis technique also used Yin theory which was carried out through three steps: pattern matching, explanation generation, and time series analysis. These three techniques are interrelated, continuous and carried out sequentially.

To check and evaluate the validity of this study, procedural criteria and triangulation techniques were applied (Moleong, 2014; Creswell, 2015). The first technique requires researchers to always adhere to the principles of the choice of research type, and in data collection. While the second technique, in checking the validity of the data, this research utilizes something else, other than the data used for checking purposes or as a comparison against the data. The triangulation process itself is carried out continuously throughout the data collection and data analysis process, until the researcher is sure that there are no more differences, and there is nothing more that needs to be confirmed to the informants. (Bungin, 2010).

**Results and Discussion**

**The Development of a Literacy Culture In Increasing the Understanding of Students**

The results of research on the development of literacy culture at SMA Negeri 1 Batu show that most students already have the urge to be involved in literacy activities. This is in accordance with the efforts made by the school in developing a literacy culture, so that students' interest in literacy habits increases, namely by: 1) improving the quality of schools, both in terms of infrastructure and superstructure (HR); 2) improve school library management; 3) carry out follow-up programs in the school environment; and 4) building a literate civilization for all parties in the school environment.

Another effort made by the school is implementing several programs that provide many benefits and motivation to students in familiarizing the literacy culture in schools, namely by emphasizing the principle of literacy that is adapted to the stages of development of students, and is balanced and integrated with the school curriculum. This principle gives important meaning to students so that they do not feel bored with reading activities that have been boring.

SMA Negeri 1 Batu is one of the educational institutions that has implemented the GLS program for students. How does the development of literacy culture at SMA Negeri 1 Batu have implications for the teaching and learning of Islamic Religion subject? In this case, the efforts made by the school can be noted as below.

Reading Obligation. Compulsory reading activities are integrated into the learning curriculum. This activity is carried out every morning for 10 minutes after praying and singing the Indonesia Raya anthem and before learning activities begin. This activity requires all students to read books other than school
textbooks. Reading sources from compulsory reading activities do not have to come from books, but can also come from magazines, newspapers, articles, journals, novels, short stories, holy books, and other sources.

The implementation of literacy activities carried out every three days a week is determined by the school. On Tuesday, students are required to read the holy book according to their respective religions and beliefs. On Wednesdays, students are required to read knowledge books other than educational books. On Thursday, students are required to read magazines/newspapers/novels/short stories/articles/pepak (Javanese grammar and vocabulary book)/foreign language dictionaries (English, Korean, German, Arabic, Javanese, or others).

This compulsory reading program is in accordance with a copy of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 23 of 2015, which includes a culture of literacy by requiring students to read books other than subject books (every day) for 10-15 minutes before learning begins. The material that must be read by students at SMA Negeri 1 Batu is determined by the school with the following criteria: contains moral values, in the form of local, national, and global wisdom.

This activity has been carried out since the early stages of the habituation process until now. Thus, students are accustomed to reading activities carried out every morning. Although SMA Negeri 1 Batu does not do this activity every day and is only carried out for 10 minutes in each implementation, the students look enthusiastic in carrying out these activities. Although some of the students sometimes do not do this activity, but they do not interfere with other students.

Literacy Corner in Every Classroom. This program is one of the efforts made by schools to meet the needs of literacy resources for students. By making a Literacy corner or Mini Library in the classroom, it is hoped that students will find it easier to access reading sources so that a culture of love for reading is embedded in each student more quickly.

The reading resources contained in the Mini Library are obtained from donations of students who are required to bring books from home and place them in their respective classes. It is hoped that each student can read various kinds of books that have been provided by his friends. The books contained in the Mini Library are also properly recorded by the school librarian who is assisted by the class secretary in supervising them, so that a good and collective administrative system has been implemented.

Based on the results of observations made by researchers, the condition of the literacy corner in each class is still not well organized and has not received intense treatment from students. The cupboard as a Mini Library is still not fully functional, so it is not surprising that the cupboard is also a place for storing things for students, such as mukenah, LCD, laptop, and so on. In addition, during free time or break time, students rarely approach the Mini Library to read books. Even with such conditions, the researcher sees that having a literacy corner in
each class or Mini Library is an effort that should be maintained and developed by the school. With a collection of books from various sources, students’ insight and knowledge can increase.

Library as the Main Source of Literacy at School. The library is a place that is the main factor in the success of a literacy culture in schools. The library of SMA Negeri 1 Batu has the following functions: as a means of education, as a place to obtain information, as a place to learn, as a place for fostering students who will take part in the olympiad or competitions, and serves as a place to refresh the brain. Because the library has so many functions, the school and the librarian are trying to improve the structure and infrastructure of the library. The goal is to make it able to serve students in a comfortable and orderly manner.

Apart from these various functions, the library also plays an important role in supporting the success of the literacy movement in schools. The SMA Negeri 1 Batu library has programs implemented in developing a school literacy culture. These programs include: promotion to the new students, the program called “my library my knowledge”, procurement of library materials.

The Benefits From Developing a Literacy Culture

The implementation of GLS in SMA Negeri 1 Batu is also based on positive strategies, so as to create a positive literacy culture in the school environment. The strategies are: schools condition a literacy-friendly physical environment, maintain good communication and interaction between fellow school members in developing a literacy culture, and strive for schools as a literate academic environment. (Rohman, 2017).

The benefits that students get from the existence of a literacy culture in schools are as follows. Adding new information and insights apart from learning materials in the classroom. Increasing students’ reading interest. With literacy activities, students try to get used to it so that they can foster a love of reading. Improve students’ understanding of the subject by interpreting the information being read. Training critical thinking and analytical thinking skills. Through compulsory reading activities, students try to analyze the learning material they have learned. With the literacy of reading the scripture on Tuesday, students feel that there is free time to read and understand its meaning. Especially in the subject of Islamic Education, students are getting easier to understand the content of the verses of the Quran, especially those related to learning materials.

The benefits of the literacy culture described by the students above are in line with what was described by Purwanti (2018). Those are: Increasing vocabulary, optimizing brain work, adding new insights and information, improving interpersonal skills, sharpening oneself in capturing the meaning of an information being read, developing verbal skills, practicing thinking and analyzing skills, increasing one’s focus and concentration, training in writing and assembling meaningful words.
Most of the benefits of literacy culture presented by Defi Soo Mi are in accordance with what is felt by students at SMA Negeri 1 Batu. Literacy culture at SMA Negeri 1 Batu can help students improve students’ understanding, especially in the subject of Islamic Education.

**Conclusion**

Based on the data analysis and the discussion above, it can be concluded as follows: The development of literacy culture at SMA Negeri 1 Batu is carried out through various efforts, starting from asking students to read, providing literacy corners, and providing adequate library infrastructure to supporting activities. It is not enough to develop activities and infrastructure, but to develop a supportive school environment, applying the standards that must be met to become a literate school. The results also show that students are enthusiastic about the GLS program, although most of the implementation process must be accompanied by educators. In PAI subjects, students also feel that their understanding of the material increases when they read books that match the material being studied.

The benefits of literacy culture felt by students in improving understanding of PAI lessons are: Adding insight through new information that is widely obtained; Increasing their reading interest; Increasing their understanding of the lesson; Improving interpersonal skills; Training the ability to think and analyze; and making them feel to have free time to read the scriptures.

From the description above, the researcher hopes that SMA Negeri 1 Batu is able to maintain and even improve the GLS program in schools. Through programs that are already running and programs that have been planned, hopefully SMA Negeri 1 Batu can become a model school in the application of literacy culture. It is also recommended to researchers that it is worth trying to find different research loci with cases that may be the same, or almost the same. Even if literacy is at this locus, on the development of literacy culture and its implications for PAI, other literacy has not been recorded in this study, for example digital literacy, and scientific literacy.

**References**


Khozin, Saidah and Haris, *The Development of Literacy Culture*……


