

Innovative Literacy Development: The Impact of the "Pohon Buku" Program in Elementary Schools

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Abstrak

Inisiatif pengembangan masyarakat ini berfokus pada peningkatan literasi membaca di kalangan siswa sekolah dasar melalui penerapan program "Pohon Buku". Tujuan utamanya adalah untuk menciptakan kecintaan membaca dan meningkatkan kemampuan literasi di kalangan siswa di lingkungan pendidikannya. Program ini merupakan bagian dari rencana pengembangan literasi sekolah yang lebih luas, yang berupaya membangun budaya membaca yang berkelanjutan. Skema "Pohon Buku" memerlukan penempatan "Pohon Buku" yang ditunjuk di ruang kelas atau lokasi utama yang dapat diakses oleh siswa. Pohon tersebut menyajikan berbagai buku cerita yang mencakup tema-tema pendidikan, agama, linguistik, cerita rakyat, dan binatang dalam berbagai bahasa. Upaya yang cermat dilakukan untuk mencocokkan buku dengan tingkat pembelajaran anak-anak, sehingga memfasilitasi pengembangan kemampuan membaca dan motorik. Terlepas dari permasalahan yang ditimbulkan oleh epidemi COVID-19 saat ini, dimana pembelajaran online telah menjadi standar, peluncuran program "Pohon Buku" tetap penting. Meskipun koneksi tatap muka terbatas, aplikasi beradaptasi dengan mengajarkan Pohon Buku secara elektronik, dilengkapi dengan buku cerita grafis yang baru diproduksi. Tujuannya adalah untuk meningkatkan motivasi dan minat membaca siswa dalam suasana pembelajaran daring saat ini.

Kata kunci : *Lit Pengembangan Eracy, Pendidikan Sekolah Dasar, Program "Pohon Buku".*

Abstract

This community development initiative focuses on boosting reading literacy among elementary school pupils through the adoption of the "Pohon Buku" (Book Tree) program. The major purpose is to create a love for reading and enhance literacy skills among pupils in their educational environment. The program is a part of the broader school literacy development plan, seeking to establish a sustainable reading culture. The "Pohon Buku" scheme entails the placement of a designated "Book Tree" in classrooms or key locations accessible to pupils. The tree presents a range of storybooks covering educational, religious, linguistic, folklore, and animal-related themes in numerous languages. Careful effort is paid

to match the books with the kids' learning levels, facilitating both literacy and motor skill development. Despite the problems created by the current COVID-19 epidemic, where online learning has become the standard, the launch of the "Pohon Buku" program remains crucial. While face-to-face connection is limited, the application adapts by teaching the Book Tree electronically, supplemented by newly produced graphical storybooks. The purpose is to enhance motivation and interest in reading among students in the current online learning setting.

Keywords : *Literacy Development, Elementary School Education, "Pohon Buku" Program.*

INTRODUCTION

In the educational setting, literacy does not only refer to the ability to read and write. Literacy comprises a profound comprehension of material, critical thinking abilities, and communication skills. Therefore, numerous related terms in the context of developing a reading culture need to be defined to better grasp the concept of literacy. Reading Literacy: A person's capacity to comprehend, analyze, and evaluate texts effectively. This involves the ability to understand the meaning of words, phrases, sentences and texts as a whole. Writing Literacy: A person's capacity to transmit thoughts, ideas and information through writing. This encompasses the ability to structure sentences, paragraphs, and words coherently and cohesively. Critical Literacy: The ability to recognize, analyze, and evaluate information from a range of sources. Critical literacy encompasses the capacity to identify bias, grasp differing points of view, and develop arguments based on sound evidence (Han, 2020).

Digital Literacy: The capacity to use digital technology successfully in accessing, assessing, and creating information. This involves skills in using digital gadgets, applications, and the internet. Literacy Climate: The atmosphere or conditions in the educational setting that foster the development of a reading culture. It requires communal efforts to provide pleasant reading places, provide literacy tools, and increase interest in reading among pupils. Literacy Facilitator: Teacher or educator who performs a role in directing and helping pupils in literacy development. Literacy facilitators have a role in designing learning activities that inspire interest in reading and build students' literacy abilities. Introduction of Reading Corners: Concrete efforts to create distinct locations in schools dedicated to reading. This includes offering quality literature, suitable space arrangements, and inspiring reading activities. School Literacy Movement (GLS): A program or movement aiming at increasing literacy in schools. GLS involves numerous initiatives, including boosting book collections in school libraries, teacher training, and efforts to increase kids' interest in reading (Gerde, 2018).

A deep understanding of these words is vital in establishing effective strategies and policies to enhance literacy in Indonesia. By developing a strong reading culture, it is intended that each individual can develop literacy that incorporates critical, creative and relevant components, in line with the demands of the present period. In tackling the worldwide challenges of the 21st century, literacy is a crucial ability that every human must acquire. Education plays a critical function in developing pupils into literate humans, able to process information, and have a thorough awareness of varied topics. Therefore, fostering a

reading culture among students is a vital problem for promoting literacy at the national level (Prayuda et al., 2023).

Unfortunately, challenges relating to literacy are still a hurdle in the school system in Indonesia. The lack of spaces to carry out reading activities that are easily accessible, lack of time efficiency, and low enthusiasm in reading among students are the key difficulties that need to be overcome. Apart from that, lack of mentoring by teachers, insufficient appreciation, and inadequate appraisal of students' talents also contribute to low literacy levels. In solving this difficulty, the School Literacy Movement (GLS) Program is recommended as a method that can improve kids' interest in reading and develop a literacy climate in schools. However, problems faced in implementing GLS include a lack of desire and support to change current conditions. Therefore, changing people's views, especially in the realm of education, is the key to establishing enough support (Prayuda et al., 2022).

Not only that, having proper facilities is also a vital factor in extending access to education for all populations. In this approach, every individual, without exception, can obtain great education and build strong literacy. Concrete initiatives, such as building comfortable reading rooms, offering excellent books, and integrating teachers as literacy facilitators, need to be implemented to achieve good changes in expanding literacy in Indonesia. It is vital to remember that literacy is not just about the capacity to read and write, but also the ability to interpret, analyze and apply information in diverse life circumstances. Therefore, attempts to promote a reading culture are not just about generating students who are strong at reading, but also students who are able to think critically, creatively and have a broad perspective into the world (Sum, 2018).

In this environment, the role of the teacher is highly crucial as a learning facilitator who may inspire and encourage pupils in developing their literacy. Support from multiple parties, including parents, educational institutions and the government, is also a significant factor in the success of building a reading culture. With strong synergy between all relevant parties, it is believed that Indonesia can overcome the difficulty of low literacy levels and give birth to a generation that is superior and able to tackle the complexity of the future (Prameswari, 2019).

The education supplied should be able to generate literate pupils who are able to confront future obstacles independently, contribute to their parents, and help construct the nation's future. One stage to construct a reading culture among students is through suitable and consistent administration, so that it can be a sustainable culture development and carried out in a pleasant atmosphere. However, the implementation of education is still not optimal in preparing 21st century literacy skills amidst problems such as the lack of places to carry out reading activities that are easily accessible, lack of time efficiency, low interest in reading, lack of mentoring by teachers, less than optimal teacher appreciation and assessment of students, as well as a lack of monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the reading culture development program (Rachmadtullah, 2019).

The reading literacy level in Indonesia is rated very low based on the literacy test performed by the IEA in 2011 (PIRLS data) and PISA statistics for 2009 and 2012. PISA 2015 data shows that the literacy level in Indonesia has grown slightly, but is still very low. This shows that the education process in Indonesia has not fully developed students'

competency and interest in knowledge. Therefore, the author tries to propose a solution by presenting the School Literacy Movement (GLS) Program as an effort to stimulate kids' interest in reading and develop a literacy climate in schools. However, there are still barriers in implementing GLS due to a lack of desire and support to change current conditions. Therefore, changing people's ideas, especially in the sphere of education, and providing suitable facilities are solutions to enhance access to education for all groups (Lee et al., 2016).

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METHOD

A model of community service activities, specifically adapted for primary school kids, is executed through a learning support program. The execution venue for these activities can vary, either at home or in a dedicated learning facility. The process of adopting learning assistance activities involves several critical steps. During the first planning phase, coordination with important stakeholders is essential to organize learning assistance activities within a specific timeline. This level comprises in-depth observations to identify the educational challenges experienced by elementary school children. Additionally, learning materials are carefully crafted to match the individual needs of the participants.

Following the preparation, the core activities begin with an introduction to the participants and the formulation of a schedule for the implementation of tutoring. These exercises are conducted based on a specified timeline and can take place at home or in a convenient public venue. The duration and location of the activity are tailored to minimize disturbance to the children's school hours. As the activities advance, the closing phase

entails preparing collaborative events, such as competitions or interactive activities, for all tutoring participants. An evaluation is undertaken to completely analyze all areas of the activity, ranging from preparation and procedures to the achieved results.

Community service is accomplished within a particular time frame, starting from the observation stage to identify difficulties, advancing to the implementation stage of learning support activities, and terminating with the compilation of reports for documentation and evaluation. Flexibility in the location and timing of implementation is vital to maximize the efficacy and participation of children in learning assistance activities. In this community service activity model, learning support is primarily directed at elementary school-age children, with a focus on flexibility as a vital determinant for success.

The initial preparation stage entails partnering with key stakeholders to rigorously organize the learning mentoring activities scheduled over a particular period. Thorough observations are undertaken to identify educational obstacles experienced by children in the community, and learning materials are carefully created to ensure relevancy and alignment with participant requirements. The major component of the activity includes introducing the participants to the program and scheduling the tutoring activities. Following the specified timetable, activities are held at an appropriate site, whether at a residence or a public facility accessible to participants. Timing is also examined to prevent conflicting with school schedules and can be accommodated in a mosque atmosphere.

The culminating element of the exercise involves a group action that incorporates all tutoring participants. Competitions or other participatory activities are created to allow participants to display their learning achievements. A detailed evaluation is done to analyze the extent to which the initial objectives were achieved, appraise the process, and highlight successes made during the learning assistance efforts. This community activity spans a time, commencing with the observation stage to identify obstacles, followed by the implementation of learning aid activities, and terminating with the assessment and report preparation stage. Sustainability and adaptation to community needs are the key focus in building a model of activity that is sustainable and favorably influences the education of elementary school-age children.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This program is specifically created to be applied in elementary schools, with the main purpose of enhancing reading literacy in each school. In this framework, these activities are included in the school literacy development program, which strives to make a good contribution to pupils' reading skills. This community service is carried out by exhibiting the "Book Tree" concept in the corner of the classroom or other important spots in the school. This Book Tree is a place where students may effortlessly take up books and read them. The books given in this program are carefully picked, encompassing many genres such as educational, religious, language stories, fairy tales, legends, as well as narrative books that introduce numerous sorts of animals in several languages.



Figure 1. Disemination to teachers

Apart from delivering entertaining illustrated stories, the selection of books is also matched to the learning level of pupils in elementary school. This seeks not only to develop reading skills, but also increase kids' motor skills through reading activities and enjoying the visuals supplied. Of course, in the current conditions caused by the Covid-19 epidemic, the establishment of reading corners cannot be carried out directly by pupils at the school. Along with the advent of online learning, this program continues to be implemented by offering Book Trees and new picture story books. Even though direct engagement is limited, the distribution of books and the installation of the Book Tree is projected to boost the motivation and interest in reading of kids at the state elementary school. Thus, despite the exceptional situation, this program nonetheless strives to have a good impact on the development of reading literacy among primary school pupils.

Even while online learning conditions impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic limit the potential of direct introduction of reading corners by students in elementary schools, this program nonetheless provides a positive contribution. The adoption of the "Book Tree" concept and the availability of new picture tale books are imaginative initiatives to sustain the spirit of reading literacy among pupils. The Book Tree as a symbol of a place to pick up books provides pupils with easy and visually attractive access to the world of literacy. Even if it cannot be physically touched, the virtual welcoming and introduction of the Book Tree is nonetheless a memorable experience for kids. They can view the interesting and different books provided, plan to read, and improve their interest in literacy.



Figure 2. Explaining steps in accommodating Book Tree program

Carefully picked picture books also play an important part in constructing this program. Students' involvement in stories that span various parts of life, from education, religion, language, to fairy tales and legends, gives entertaining and instructional variety. Selecting books that are suited to students' learning levels ensures that the material offered is relevant and can be grasped by each student, so enhancing their reading ability and understanding. Even though online learning inhibits direct interaction, this program nonetheless strives to enhance pupils' desire and interest in reading at the state elementary school. In these peculiar circumstances, reading literacy programs in elementary schools not only focus on supplying books, but also create an enjoyable and encouraging atmosphere for reading. Thus, the program serves a vital role in creating a strong literacy foundation among pupils, even in varied learning contexts.

The program to introduce "Book Trees" and give image narrative books in primary classrooms aims to promote reading literacy at each school level. Even in the setting of online learning created by the Covid-19 epidemic, this program is able to make a positive contribution to the spirit of reading literacy among students. "Book Tree" as a symbol of a place to pick up books is a unique idea that has succeeded in integrating the concept of reading into online. Even though students cannot interact directly with the reading corner, the "Book Tree" depiction gives them quick and intriguing access to the world of books. Virtual or not, an introduction to Book Trees still delivers a memorable experience for students, developing reading plans, and increasing their interest in literacy.

Carefully picked picture books also play a crucial part in constructing this program. Engaging kids in stories that span diverse elements of life gives entertaining and instructive variety. Using books that are suited to students' learning levels ensures that the material offered is relevant and can be understood by each student, enhancing their reading ability and comprehension. This tool also offers an enjoyable and inspiring atmosphere for reading, considering that online learning inhibits direct interaction. Through Book Trees and picture story books, this initiative has succeeded in offering a novel and enjoyable reading literacy experience for pupils at the state elementary school.

Thus, this reading literacy program is not only about giving books, but also about building a climate that promotes and motivates pupils to read. In the middle of an atypical learning situation, this program performs a crucial role in creating a strong reading foundation among children. The outcomes are supposed to be obvious by strengthening kids' reading skills and enthusiasm in the field of literacy. This curriculum illustrates that reading literacy may be implemented with creativity, even in varied learning circumstances.

CONCLUSION

Through the establishment of a reading literacy program employing the "Book Tree" concept in primary schools, it can be stated that this endeavor has a good impact on students' reading literacy. Even while online learning conditions owing to the Covid-19 epidemic are a hurdle in offering direct engagement, this program is able to overcome these obstacles by providing engaging and unique access to the world of reading. The "Book Tree" program not only gives kids with access to books, but also becomes a symbol of ongoing literacy in the midst of atypical learning conditions. Virtual or not, this program works in generating a nice climate and pushing children to read. Even while online learning continues, students' interest in reading literacy remains to be maintained and even increases.

Selecting picture story books that are suited to students' learning levels is a critical aspect in the success of this curriculum. Material that is relevant and presented in an entertaining way boosts students' understanding of numerous facets of life. This initiative not only offers books, but also promotes meaningful reading literacy experiences. In addition, this tool makes a positive contribution to developing student creativity in designing reading plans and interacting with books electronically. Even if learning occurs at home, "Book Tree" offers an element of enjoyment and a new challenge to reading.

Thus, establishing reading literacy through the "Book Tree" program in elementary schools not only gives a unique method in dealing with online learning, but also creates a strong basis for future literacy development. It is envisaged that the continuation of this program would continue to have a good influence on enhancing children' reading skills and literacy interest. This program is an illustration that innovation in reading literacy can emerge in diverse learning environments.

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