

The Role of the Rangkang Pustaka Reading House in Improving Cultural Literacy in Elementary School Age Children in North Aceh Regency

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Abstrak

The Rangkang Pustaka Reading House is an educational activity for children in North Aceh which provides a frame/hut containing books like a library and is equipped with a learning place such as an open meeting hall which can be used for all youth activities that are positive for education and self-development. Therefore, reading houses and libraries play an important role in introducing reading and writing activities from an early age. The research method used is a qualitative approach carried out objectively in the field. The types of data sources used in this research are primary and secondary data sources. The results of the research show that there is quite high motivation and facilities in the form of learning frames provided by the Rangkang Pustaka Reading House to improve literacy from an early age. This is proven by various activities carried out in terms of providing quality education-based learning and promoting lifelong learning in the form of fun, quality learning for free. However, children's awareness of participating in learning activities is still limited by time. Therefore, this has an impact on children's low literacy levels, especially in reading and writing activities. Literacy culture can develop well if children receive encouragement and motivation both from themselves and their parents, internal and external motivation

Kata Kunci: Rangkang Pustaka Reading House; Literacy Culture; Primary School Children

A. Introduction

Literacy can be said to be an activity of reading and writing which is the main thing that every child must have. According to UNESCO (in Purwati, 2017) literacy is a manifestation of real, specific skills such as cognitive skills from reading and writing, which are independent of the context in which the skills are obtained. Literacy is closely related to how to obtain knowledge and skills that are useful in improving the quality of human resources (Rika & Nisa, 2023). Through literacy, it is expected to increase interest in reading in the community, especially for children so that they will love reading and writing activities more.

The sooner a child is introduced to books, the more it will match his or her readiness (Rika & Nisa, 2023). Therefore, a child with high literacy skills is expected to be able to solve various problems and make decisions based on what he knows and learns. Thus, the benefits of literacy activities are the ability to analyze and think and be able to improve critical thinking and focus (Munawar & Mahendrawanto, 2019). However, unfortunately, the literacy of Indonesian children is still low, such as in Kudus (Misriyani, 2019) where children play with gadgets rather than books, making literacy activists in the area feel uneasy. This is due to the lack of motivation to read. Findings from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2019 stated that Indonesia is 1 of 10 countries with low literacy levels, while according to the 2015 version of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), Indonesia is in 62nd position out of 70 countries surveyed. Not only that, but Indonesia also ranks 60th out of 61 countries surveyed by the World's Most Literate Nations announced in March 2016.

UNESCO research in 2017 revealed that the Indonesian State is second from the bottom regarding world literacy, which can be interpreted that the Indonesian nation's interest in reading is very low, and from the UNESCO data it also shows only 0.001%, which means that out of 1000 people only 1 person reads (Qulloh, 2021). According to UNESCO data, reportedly from around 220 million Indonesians who cannot read or are categorized as illiterate, the number is around 34.5%, which means that only 65.5% are literate (Sudarsana & Bastiano, 2014). More specifically, the results of the 2018 PISA study released by the OECD also still show that the ability of Indonesian students in reading, achieving an average score of 371, with an average OECD score of 487. PISA shows the fact that poor students in Indonesia can still excel because PISA results are not just scores and rankings. Rather, PISA describes children's behavior, learning conditions, children's backgrounds, teaching methods, and so on.

On the other hand, the Government remains committed to addressing the weaknesses that PISA found. Thus, one of the recommendations is to optimize information and communication technology (ICT) for more effective learning. Students from the same socio-economic background had 40 points higher reading scores when taught by teachers who utilized ICT. This shows having ICT infrastructure is not enough, use it in learning. To improve literacy, students need to be engaged in continuous reading, ensuring students know the content, and encouraging students to engage in leisure reading activities.

Looking at these data, we must try to build a culture of literacy from an early age in the hope that it can become ingrained in children's lives. We need to change our learning culture without having to wait for instructions or projects. Learning culture is a habit that can be done by teachers and parents to improve reading skills by training students to concentrate on the content of reading, marking, or

summarizing in their own words is also proven to be effective for understanding the content of reading.

The activity of fostering reading carried out every Sunday was the beginning of this activity and continues to be consistent in realizing our ideals to educate the nation's life through the literacy movement in the village. According to Desmita (Ramadhani, 2021), elementary school children love to play, move, work in groups, and feel or do things directly. Hence, differentiated learning and fun learning include reading and writing and arithmetic assistance, mathematics classes and English classes which are the focus to improve the quality of children, tajwid classes which are held once a month, art and computer technology classes which are excellent programmed for junior high school students who are still consistently studying at Rangkang Pustaka.

Rumah Baca Rangkang Pustaka is a place that provides reading books in the form of a hall. The Rangkang Pustaka Reading House began its activities on 25 November 2021 with a community borrowed rangkang and had its own rangkang which was completed on 27 May 2022, as well as being inaugurated by village officials, traditional and religious leaders, education practitioners, literacy activists, caring teachers around North Aceh as well as representatives of DPRK and DPRA.

Initiated by 6 local youths who became the initiators of Rangkang Pustaka, namely Muhammad Ichsan Abda, S.Pd, Risky Renaldy, S.H., Muhammad Khairul Abrar, A.md.T., Misbahul Munir, Zahrul Akmal and Bima Pambudi, S.Pd. Every Sunday, at 08.30 to 10.30 WIB, this reading house always operates with a learning schedule that has been prepared by the Rangkang Pustaka Tutor Team and Mathematics Education Study Program Students, Malikussaleh University who have now joined in the fun teaching and learning process at the Rangkang Pustaka Reading House.

In addition to reading activities, the Rangkang Pustaka established in Gampong Meunasah Meucat, Nisam District, North Aceh Regency is also intended to accommodate sustainable activities in the self-development of the local community such as switching functions as a recitation hall and meeting place to welcome quality education and promote lifelong learning. The 6x4 meter hut building is a new place, a place to learn together, a place where everyone can use for the benefit of learning activities and the development of the nation's generation.

B. Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach method. According to (Moleong, 2017), qualitative research is research that intends to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by research subjects, for example, behaviors, perceptions, motivations, and actions that utilize various natural methods. The data sources for

this research come from two sources, namely primary and secondary data sources. Primary data was obtained from interviews with several teachers (tutors as they are called in Rangkang Pustaka) and library users (younger siblings as they are called in Rangkang Pustaka) aged elementary and junior high school at Rangkang Pustaka Reading House. Meanwhile, secondary data sources in this study are additional sources of information obtained by checking some existing data, such as works that raise issues related to reading houses in improving literacy culture spread across various media. This is intended as a support that is studied to be used as an addition to the data in this study. Data collection techniques only use interviews. Data analysis technique using interactive model according to Miles and Huberman (in Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018) with descriptive analysis approach. The data validity checking technique uses triangulation techniques of theory, source, and method.

This research was conducted at the Rangkang Pustaka Reading House located on Jalan Keutapang, Mesjid Hamlet, Meunasah Meucat Village, Nisam District, North Aceh Regency, Aceh 24184. Rumah Baca Rangkang Pustaka is an educational activity for children in North Aceh that provides a rangkang / cottage that contains books like a library and is equipped with a place to learn such as an open meeting hall that can be used for all youth activities that are positive towards education and self-development.

C. Results and Discussion

The activities at Rangkang Pustaka Reading House are generally the same as other reading houses that act as public libraries registered with the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia by offering various reading materials to the community in Nisam sub-district, North Aceh District. Currently, various collections of donated reading materials are utilized by the community, especially children of primary and secondary school age to foster an interest in learning that can be useful for the growth of their knowledge.

Initially, Rumah Baca Rangkang Pustaka was established to increase people's interest in reading and literacy, but the results of interviews that we continue to evaluate with the management that the enthusiasm for reading books is dominated by children aged 5-15 years who are eager to learn after being hampered by access to education due to the pandemic. Rumah Baca Rangkang Pustaka was established with the help and donations from many parties, such as donations opened through the digital platform "Kita Bisa" throughout Indonesia. Many good people care so that this children's learning place began to be mobilized on 10 May 2022 and was inaugurated on 27 May 2022 by local community leaders as a form of gratitude and thanks so that the Rangkang Pustaka Reading House has been successfully established.

Before the Rangkang was established, we initiated the idea by asking the villagers for permission to use the Rangkang/ front hall of their house to teach the local children who only numbered 3-5 children. After Rangkang Pustaka was established, only 5 children came on the first Sunday to read the books available from donations. The second to fourth week only saw 1-2 more children each week, but we were surprised to see that by the fifth week, there were about 20 children who almost filled Rangkang to come read books and study with their friends. The number increased every day until the 10th week there were about 60 children and until now Rangkang Pustaka has about 80 students who consistently come every Sunday morning to study with the tutors.

The presence of Rumah Baca Rangkang Pustaka can make it easier for students to read and write and make students more confident in presenting and expressing opinions because they are used to appearing forward when studying here. Students are increasingly confident to express ideas from their own minds. On the other hand, the presence of Rumah Baca Rangkang Pustaka is certainly not something that can be spontaneously accepted by the community, especially elementary school children. For this reason, Rangkang Pustaka Reading House shows its usefulness to the community in the form of strategies for implementing its programmed. The strategies used by Rangkang Pustaka Reading House in attracting children to read, namely:

Providing interesting reading materials, especially for elementary and middle school children, from donations in the form of money and used books. Then select books that are still worth reading.

Organizing teaching and learning activities, with the Rangkang Belajar held every Sunday. Learning is differentiated and fun learning includes reading and writing and arithmetic assistance, mathematics classes and English classes which are the focus to improve the quality of children, tajwid classes which are held once a month, art and computer technology classes which are excellent programmers for junior high school students who are still consistently learning.

Providing the best service for children and visitors as guests when carrying out service activities, sharing knowledge and happiness comfortably, to create a positive impression on the wider community.

Providing adequate facilities and infrastructure even though they only study on the terrace of the house if the main learning hut of Rangkang Pustaka cannot accommodate.

Carrying out creative and innovative activities in the form of Rangkang Camp which is held annually for tutor improvement. Rangkang Writing which will be consistent in writing articles, opinions, short stories, books, and news promoted

through the Rangkang News themed program by utilising social media features and supported by the website www.rangkangpustaka.id as a medium for fundraising and information about the implementation of various activities at Rangkang Pustaka. Rangkang Talks which contains experience and information sharing activities with experts in their fields are open to the public and Rangkang Tahfidz which is held during the month of Ramadan every year which focuses on developing the ability to memories and understand the Qur'an for each participant and is carried out for a full month.

Rumah Baca Rangkang Pustaka is a form of concern for the low interest in reading in the community. So, its existence is expected to make people able to get information sources more easily and correctly. In its role, hopefully this will be a forum to educate the nation's life to remote villages. The activities carried out are consistent with Human Resources from Malikussaleh University students, IAIN Lhokseumawe and Lhokseumawe State Polytechnic who assist in learning, while in services assisted by high school / K students who have received mentoring for 6 months and supported by North Aceh Scholarships. Thus, Rumah Baca Rangkang Pustaka succeeded in inviting the local community to love reading by providing access to library services. In fact, local students become permanent tutors in the lessons that are conducted every Sunday.

The learning process that we do also adapts to the independent curriculum or Merdeka Belajar. This curriculum is present to improve the quality of student learning that is more "Merdeka" based on equitable principles that can be applied by all educational units. In addition, Merdeka Belajar also has advantages such as its practice that can be carried out by all regions with various conditions due to its learning methods that are tailored to the abilities and needs of students, not only using textbooks as a guide for teaching materials but can be modified with various types of teaching devices, especially by using the ease of technology today. Apart from academics, Merdeka Belajar also prioritizes student character development with various types of learning, such as P5 (Project Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila) which not only outputs a product, but the character that is formed becomes better and more directed after implementing this project.

Implementation of the learning process with the children at Rangkang Pustaka, starting from PAUD, TK, SD to SMP. However, they are grouped not by grade level or age, but by looking at the learning abilities and needs of each child. We provide three levels of classes, namely Alpha (A) which is filled with children who still have not mastered CALISTUNG (Reading, Writing, and Counting). Class Beta (B) who can already read, write, and understand the reading well so that the teaching material delivered can be received well. Sigma (Junior High) class which is specially grouped for children who take formal education at the junior high school level so that the learning we present is mastery of Information and Computer

Technology (ICT) using Laptop devices from tutors for children to learn to prepare them for technological advances.

Behind that, the obstacles faced by Rangkang Pustaka Reading House in fostering literacy in the community are the lack of donation funds obtained. Thus, the human resources of tutors who are still changing (volunteers) cause a lack of time effectiveness in carrying out services and learning. As for the shortcomings, Rangkang Pustaka has a narrow place, a small rangkang so that it requires a large area of land, seen in social media accounts when the learning process is also still utilising the terrace and yard of the house.

In addition, Rumah Baca Rangkang Pustaka has the following advantages, can improve the learning process even though holidays are free, can save parents' costs without having to pay for activities such as travelling or other hedon holidays. It is a source of pride for parents and teachers when dominant children who excel have a background in learning at Rangkang Pustaka, avoid unwanted associations, and can help foster children's literacy. The most superior thing from other Libraries in Indonesia is that they have teaching tutors who are very professional and alternate every time so that students never get bored learning with diverse materials and strategies that they might not get in other libraries.

The consistent running of activities to date is due to having the same vision and mission in Rumah Baca Rangkang Pustaka to support each other's self-development and become a unifying forum for sharing and telling stories that become a golden generation circle away from drugs. So, it becomes a solution to the obstacles of lost motivation and ridicule from various parties, but we keep moving. We believe that the better people support this volunteer activity, the more impactful the benefits will be to other districts later with the same movement, fostering community literacy interest to avoid Hoax attacks. The spirit continues to colour with the presence of many education observers providing support and participating in joint activities at Rangkang Pustaka, such as the Aceh Provincial Language Ambassador, Pilar Berdampak, Yayasan Solidaritas Aksi Peduli, Library Volunteer Sekolah Sukma Bangsa Lhokseumawe, TurunTangan Aceh Utara, Komunitas Berbagia, Malikussaleh University Real Work Lecture Students, Village Youth and Volunteer School Foundation who continue to work together for various activities.

Rumah Baca Rangkang Pustaka continues to exist by sharpening collaboration through cooperation with primary and secondary school libraries, district libraries, and university libraries to work together in developing literacy. Not only that, Rangkang Pustaka tutors also participated in various workshops and training conducted by the District Library and Archives Office, Aceh Language Centre, and the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia as well as various other national events. For example, Rangkang Pustaka's founders presented

educational ideas at the 2023 Education Week organized by the All Students All Teachers (SMSG) network in Yogyakarta Special Region.

D. Conclusion

The presence of Rumah Baca Rangkang Pustaka can be a bridge to the solution for children with low interest in reading. Therefore, Rangkang Pustaka Reading House has an important role in improving literacy culture in children, especially those in elementary school. Where children who usually feel bored studying alone at home can turn to reading houses to be able to learn together while also being able to find entertainment with games. Existing strategies can be a strength to increase interest in reading, such as by providing a variety of interesting library materials, organising learning activities with quality education-based learning, and promoting lifelong learning in the form of quality fun learning for free, providing appreciation and the best service, and providing adequate facilities and infrastructure. However, Rumah Baca Rangkang Pustaka also faces obstacles in fostering interest in reading in children, such as the lack of donations obtained.

Our hope is that young people who continue to work for the homeland of Indonesia with Rumah Baca Rangkang Pustaka to continue to develop and transform according to the times by upholding faith, Islam and morals, because for us starting from a small village in North Aceh to become a quality generation for Indonesia. Other hopes from the external side, being a place for fun learning with creative tutors, hopefully Rangkang Pustaka will become one of the libraries that has creative and innovative education. The cost of education is free without having to pay private lessons with parents' pocket money, but with the existence of rangkang libraries it is easy for underprivileged students to gain knowledge in remote villages with technological creations guided by tutors in rangkang libraries. Rangkang pustaka is the most unique name for Acehnese, the characteristics of housing such as a unique recitation hall, but inside it is full of books and other technology, it remains a rangkang that has stairs, has supporting legs, because it is a symbol of the characteristics of the rangkang which is a compact and sturdy ladder that will be useful for the nation and state of Indonesia, so that outside visitors know the characteristics of the old rangkang from our ancestors (Aceh).

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