



Tanoto Foundation Partner School Literacy Exploration : Best Practice Literacy of Elementary Education Students

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Abstract: This research aims to explore the good practices of student literacy activities that have been done by Tanoto Foundation partner schools. This method of research used a descriptive with qualitative approach. The study involved informants who were at Tanoto Foundation partner schools, including principals, teachers and students. Data were collected with interviews, observations as well as documentation. Data analysis is carried out with descriptive qualitative including data collection, data presentation, data reduction and drawing conclusions. The results showed best practice that has been done by regional Tanoto partner schools in driving literacy, among others, providing literacy corners, scheduling literacy activities, reading books for 10-15 minutes, making wall magazines, bartering movements and donating books, holding and participating in literacy competitions and posting literacy activities outside. These findings offer good practice that can be an example in increasing literacy in schools.

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Introduction

Literacy cannot be separated from the world of education. Literacy is a way for students to know, understand and apply the knowledge they gained in school. Literacy is also related to student life at home and in the surrounding environment. Reading literacy is one of the most important skills children develop during elementary school. It is an essential indicator of school success in later life, and it is necessary to participate in the community (Netten et al., 2016). The essence of school literacy activities is the habituation of school residents to read and write. In addition, it can understand what is read and rewrite what is read. With much reading, eating, and writing, skills will grow automatically (Bring it, 2020). Reading culture builds a positive reading attitude among students and children over time (Dominic, 2012).

As individuals get used to reading from time to time through encouragement by teachers, librarians, and peers, reading culture becomes stronger because reading habits are instilled from adolescence, and it is expected to master reading skills to excel academically (Library & Vol, 2018). Reading is an essential component of education, training, and cultural development. It is an activity to form and develop identity, a tool for education and cultural dissemination, evidence of the formation of communicative competence and professional specialist tools to achieve success in life (Kamalova & Koletvinova, 2016).

However, in 2011 the Progress International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) evaluated the reading comprehension of Indonesian 4th graders, ranked 45th out of 48 participating countries with a score of 428 below the average score of 500. Meanwhile, a survey assessing the abilities of 15-year-old students was conducted by the Program for



International Student Assessment (PISA) which includes reading, math, and science. Indonesian students attended PISA 2009 and 2012, followed by 65 countries specifically regarding reading comprehension; Indonesia, originally in PISA 2009, ranked 57th with 396 points (OECD average score of 493). However, in PISA 2012, the ranking dropped to 396 points (OECD average score of 496) (OECD, 2013). This data aligns with a UNESCO survey (2012) on Indonesian reading habits, with only one in 1,000 Indonesians reading. This condition is concerning because understanding and reading skills are the basis of student's knowledge, skill acquisition, and attitude formation (Wiedarti et al., 2016).

In connection with the above problems, the reality on the ground is true to find problems related to building a literacy culture, including the lack of places to do reading activities that are easy to reach and time efficient, then still low visits of students to the library to read and write, and the lack of appreciation and assistance by teachers in improving literacy activities or reading culture in school (Hartiyatni, 2018). Furthermore, students' low reading interest is caused by the high price of books and limited library facilities (Pradana FAP, 2020).

Tanoto Foundation is a philanthropic institution through the SMART Program supporting the government to increase students' reading interest in schools. Through the Ministry of Education and Culture, the government organizes reading activities 15 minutes before classes begin. Tanoto Foundation also hopes to support the government program by aligning projects. Tanoto Foundation donates various books (including children's books), repairs and develops school libraries, and deploys partner schools to build reading corners. It is a real effort by the Tanoto foundation to increase the love of reading among school students. This continuous program makes Tanoto's concern for improving literacy and reading culture for the country's children. A good level of literacy will encourage the improvement of knowledge and the quality of education. With broad insights, students will get used to thinking critically and be encouraged to fight for a better standard of living.

To depart from the above phenomenon exploring best practices in applying literacy to increase interest and reading culture is fascinating. Tanoto Foundation School Partners have done a lot of practical best in improving reading culture. This research explores the good practices of student literacy activities done by Tanoto Foundation partner schools. This practical best is a reference or example of activities that can improve reading culture.

Research Method

This method of research used a descriptive with qualitative approach. The research was conducted at Tanoto Foundation regional partner schools in Sumatra, namely Jambi province, Riau Province, North Sumatra Province, and MI Nurul Iman Pematang Gajah Kab. Muaro Jambi, SD Negeri 47 Jambi City and SMP Negeri 2 Sarolangun, SD Negeri 091/IX Rengas Bandung Kab. Muaro Jambi, SDN 06 Rantau Utara North Sumatra Province, SDN 131 Jambi City, SD Muhammadiyah 019 Bangkinang, and SMP Negeri 2 Tebo Regency with the subject of the study were the Principal, Teachers, and students as well as the Tanoto Foundation team. The study lasted four months, from January 2022 to April 2022.

Data were collected with interviews, observations as well as documentation. The main instrument in the study was the researcher himself, while the supporting instrument is in the form of interview guidelines. Data analysis used descriptive qualitative research approach includes data collection, data presentation, data reduction and conclusions (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014). Explanations of these components include (1) data collection. Data was collected by interviews, observation and documentation. (2) Data reduction. The data



collected is then reduced by being summarized, selected and focused on data that has been adjusted to the research objectives. (3) Presentation of data. The data has been presented after the reduction data or summary results have been obtained. Then it is presented in the form of a description. (4) Conclusion. Conclusions have been obtained from data that have been reduced and presented (Sulistyaningrum et al., 2019).

Results and Discussion

Reading is a lifelong skill to use, both in school and throughout life. According to Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, reading is a basic life skill. It is the foundation for a child's success in school and, indeed, throughout life (Küçükoğlu, 2013). Building a reading culture among students can be done through adequately managed and consistent activities for sustainable cultural development and a pleasant atmosphere (Hartiyatni, 2018).

Factors to build a reading culture include: (1) Completing reading books, (2) Making places/bookshelves so that they look affordable, (3) Creating programs to excite readers, (4) Design spaces for reading, and (5) Building ecology for reading. This factor refers to realising the best practices in driving literacy (Loh et al., 2017). Three aspects of building reading activities that impact reading are education and semantics, good practice, and value-oriented activities (Kachak et al., 2021). Best practices that have been done by regional Tanoto partner schools in driving literacy include providing literacy corners, scheduling literacy activities, reading books for 10-15 minutes, making wall magazines, bartering movements, and donating books, holding and participating in literacy competitions and posting literacy activities outside.

- 1) Provide literacy corners in the classroom, in the park, in any library or location in the school environment

After participating in the training activities of reading culture modules, Tanoto partner school moved to build and design places considered strategic, conducive, and comfortable for reading activities. The teacher together with the class association designed the reading corner in the classroom. One of the considerations for the reading corner is that it is friendly and comfortable for students and has the latest collection of books. Furthermore, some schools build reading saung or reading places together in the schoolyard as established by MI Nurul Iman Pematang Gajah Muara Jambi, SD Negeri 47 Jambi and SMP Negeri 2 Sarolangun. SDN.091/IX Rengas Bandung Muaro Jambi Regency has POCA POLI (Literacy Tree Reading Corner), which is made for teachers and students to be comfortable in improving reading culture in schools.



Figure 1. POCA POLI SDN.091/IX Rengas Bandung Kab. Muaro Jambi



Students at State Junior High School 2 Tebo Regency, Mualida expressed their feelings of pleasure with the literacy movement.

"The literacy movement in schools supported by the reading corner in the classroom makes my reading interest increase"

Reading corner as a means of growing up reading culture, growing interested in reading and proven to be effective in the exploitation of children's reading power in elementary school (Aswat H et al., 2020) (Ramadhanti NN et al, 2019) (Ramandanu F, 2019) (Rofi'uddin MA, 2017) (Kurniawan, AR, 2019). The library is made of literacy corners equipped with reading books, both fiction and nonfiction, that are arranged and arranged using existing bookshelves made of used materials around the school. Key features in the library that are central to strategies to build a reading culture include: allocating the best location in the library (next to greenery) for reading angles, building a multipurpose space such as a performance space that can also be used for reading, providing beanbags for reading more comfortably while relaxing; and complete a careful book and real fascinating book look (Loh et al., 2017). The library should have a library view with a good selection of fiction and nonfiction books reviewed at the end of each year (Loh, 2015).

2) Schedule literacy activities

To support literacy activities, Tanoto partner schools schedule days to visit the school library and regional library. Scheduling a visit to the library is also parked by Thomas Adewumi International College Oko, Kwara State, during the library staff library to supervise students in reading. It is done as a strategy for improving the reading culture in Nigeria (Igwe, 2016).

Furthermore, there is a school to make a schedule of literacy activities alternately for each class to do activities in the corner of literacy such as reading, writing, storytelling, playing drama, drawing, and making crafts that all activities support school literacy. Like the activities carried out by Sarolangun State Junior High School 2, it encourages reading fiction and non-fiction books that are in the reading place regularly every week in each class; teachers and students read together in the reading place after reading filling the instrument table related to the summary of reading books that have been read. From this activity, the Principal of Sarolangun State Junior High School 2 mentioned that this literacy activity forms students' character. This literacy activity was formed because of government programs and Tanoto Foundation cooperation. SEKAM 06 is a literacy reading program on Thursday conducted by SDN 06 North Region of north Sumatra Province; SEKAM 06 does reading activities with a different theme or reading in the hope that what is read by students can be presented and parodied to provide information for their friends. Read books for 10 minutes-15 minutes before lessons begin in their respective classes.

Before the lesson begins, the teacher directs and motivates students to do reading activities in the reading corner of each class. Some teachers direct reading materials according to the subject to be taught, and some teachers release reading books that students read, both fiction and non-fiction. Following what was said by Teacher SDN 131 Kota Jambi related to the habituation of reading for 15 minutes in his school mentioned that "when the material makes a mind map, I invite students to look for preferred reading materials in the reading corner of the class, then after reading, I ask students to make a mind map, but not every day is done to make this mind map adjusted to the subject only."

Habituation of literacy by reading together before learning is carried out continuously by Tanoto foundation partner schools. The results of the literacy movement observation conducted by Muhammadiyah Junior High School Almujaiddin Gunung kidul began with a 15-minute reading activity in the morning; its development positively affected the growth of students' reading interest (Nuryana et al., 2020). Reading books together can also be an excellent context for strengthening reading awareness and writing skills (Gettinger &Stoiber, 2016).

3) Make a wall magazine

Some schools make wall magazines as a support for school literacy activities. Wall magazines are used to paste the works of students' writing so that they are read by school residents and appreciate students' work. The student's written work taped to the wall is replaced and arranged periodically so that all students get a turn for his work affixed to the wall magazine. As did Muhammadiyah Elementary School 019 Bangkinang made wall magazine class, class madding is filled by student study groups; each group is given a schedule and responsibility to fill the madding with the student's work according to his interests and talents. In madding classes are provided columns of Al-Islam, Science, Poetry, and short stories and works of art. Every work that successfully passes the selection and is displayed in the madding class gets star achievements to motivate students.

As an effort to support literacy in SDN 47 Kota Jambi school makes a beautiful wall magazine flickering decorative lights in the classroom hallway to bring reading materials closer to students who pass while waiting for class or during recess. Wall Magazine material is replaced every two months according to the theme. The work of students is also displayed as a form of appreciation and a sense of responsibility to continue to work in reading and writing. The principal of SDN 47 Kota Jambi said:

"After partnering with Tanoto Foundation, of course, there are many new things that we continue to grow, partner with parents and continue to develop reading culture programs."



Figure 2. Wall Magazine SDN 47 Kota Jambi

4) Barter movements and book-contributing

The most crucial factor in school literacy programs is the availability of reading books (Jansje Syulty Timporok, 2020). Partner schools give various child-friendly books to fulfil reading books in the Tanoto foundation. In contrast, the efforts made by Tanoto foundation partner schools get reading books by buying fiction books and applying to related parties, among others, regional libraries, to donate books. Tanoto partner schools interestingly do something to support literacy programs by bartering books



between students. Students bring reading books that have been read and then are welcome to exchange the book with their friends. As done by SMP Negeri 2 Tebo Regency to support literacy activities in schools, some reading books are centered in the classroom to fill the books in the reading corner. Then students are also required to bring books in rolling of each class so that the book is not monotonous. In addition, there are also alumni contributions by making book donations to add to the reading collection. There are even teachers lending books from private collections.

5) Hold and participate in literacy competitions

School competitions to support literacy activities, for example, are carried out every semester, among others, students who diligently visit and read in the library, wall magazines of students, writing and read poetry, reading fairy tales, and reading books that students read. Literacy competitions help motivate students to do literacy activities spiritually and continuously. Literacy activities must be carried out continuously and make culture in children in school. To improve literacy in Tanoto, partner schools also hold reading corner competitions in each class supported by the principal, classroom guardians and class committees so that literate classes run well (Maulida & Suriansyah, 2019)

6) Posting literacy activities on social media

Tanoto foundation also supports literacy activities at its partner schools, facilitating Facebook social media groups through educational quality improvement forums. This forum posts good literacy practices conducted by Tanoto partner schools. The work of literacy activities published in various media provides confidence and enthusiasm for literacy activists.



Figure 3. Facebook Group Forum for Improving the Quality of Education

Literacy is currently a benchmark for the progress of a nation (Indriani, 2017). To support literacy skills need to continue to be carried out, literacy support activities in the form of good practices must continue to be done in schools. Literacy activities must be supported by school residents ranging from principals, teachers, school committees and even students. The implications of a literacy program can increase students' passion, interest, and interest in reading.

Conclusion

The conclusions obtained from this study are the Best practices that have been carried out by regional Tanoto partner schools in ordering literacy, including providing literacy corners, scheduling literacy activities, reading books for 10-15 minutes, making wall magazines, bartering movements and donating books, holding and participating in literacy competitions



and posting literacy activities outside. The good practice of school literacy held by Tanoto Foundation School partners can be used as an example or model to implement literacy programs in schools instead of other Tanoto foundation partners. The expertise of the Tanoto Foundation Smart Program as well as the principals and partner teachers in organizing good literacy practice activities in partner schools need to be appreciated, therefore, this program allows the school to cooperate with other partners both domestically and from abroad. With the implementation of good literacy practices, the quality of education and practice in Indonesia tends to be easy to compete internationally. When the school literacy movement is well managed and carried out continuously will have a tremendous impact on schools in Indonesia.

Recommendation

Based on the results of this study, several suggestions can be given, namely (1) literacy activities in schools are packaged more attractively so that students do not get bored carrying out literacy activities at school, (2) all parties related to the implementation of literacy programs in schools in order to provide support and cooperation, (3) it is hoped that Tanoto Foundation partner managers will implement literacy programs in schools and become an example for other schools.

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