

Strengthening The School Literacy Movement: The Utilization Of Literacycloud.com Technology To Improve Students' Interest In Reading

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Abstract.

A great nation is a nation that not only utilizes its natural resources but also develops other potentials such as reading and writing as a bridge of civilization from one generation to another. Nowadays, technology is commonly used in all fields, including education, to increase the reading interest among students that are still very low. The School Literacy Movement (Gerakan Literasi Sekolah or GLS) is part of the implementation of the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 23 the Year 2015 concerning "Business Character Development." It aims to foster a literacy culture and increase interest in reading, critical thinking, and problem-solving. This study aims to reveal the use of technology to support the policy of the school literacy movement using Literacycloud.com at SDN Nglumber II Kepohbaru Bojonegoro. The method used is descriptive qualitative with data sources in the form of interviews, literature reviews, field notes, and observations. The results showed that using Literacycloud technology synergized with the GLS policy program at SDN Nglumber II Kepohbaru Bojonegoro could improve students' reading interest. In addition, there are also inhibiting factors for the GLS program at SDN Nglumber II Kepohbaru Bojonegoro, including inadequate books and library space, the absence of a GLS bureaucratic structure, and low student awareness of reading.

Keywords: Literacy Movement, Literacycloud.com, Reading Interest.

I. INTRODUCTION

In 2015, the Ministry of Education and Culture launched a significant program, namely Gerakan Literasi Sekolah (GLS or the School Literacy Movement). This movement is an implementation of the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 23 Year 2015 concerning in character growth. The government realizes that every school should be a comfortable place for students and teachers. It could be attained if students, teachers and the school's community get used to positive attitudes and behaviours as a reflection of Pancasila people with noble character (1). The teaching process can be in the form of strengthening humans towards maturity, either intelligent, rational, or ethical humans. The demand for education is vast because the flow of world development is accelerating. Individuals must prepare self-potential such as capacity, state of mind, and positive behaviour. Furthermore, religion also recommends that people should study or read (2). The 21st century is known as the era of information and technology that brings new life paradigms to society. The rapid flow of information causes no distance barriers due to the connectivity of technology and information in the form of the internet. Wherever we are, we can quickly access information in various countries regardless of the time and place we are in. Various conveniences in accessing information today are due to the broader reach of the internet from cities to villages. Moreover, the price is gradually becoming affordable at all levels of society. Based on a survey conducted by the Internet Service Providers Association (APJI), internet users in Indonesia in 2018 amounted to 196.71 million (3). The rapid flow of information and the development of technology have made it easier for people to get various kinds of information. However, it sometimes becomes a boomerang for society, such as using the internet to spread hoax news, criminal acts and others.

The integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in various sectors, including education, changes our relationship with information and knowledge. In this global era, the digital world gives numerous benefits and opportunities for individuals and society. For instance, the benefits of integrating technological progress with life caused some individuals to become more knowledgeable and insightful. On the other hand, the challenges and obstacles in the era of sophisticated technology as it is today cannot be avoided. Countless information and contents might come from verified and unverified sources,

including information about education. Digital learning resources or e-resources can be easily accessed via the internet. Therefore, valid and legitimate information is needed as part of the skills to use information sources to support learning. The use of technology today is a must. For example, during the Covid-19 pandemic last year, students were forced to study using a remote system. It, of course, requires the use of information and communication technology such as mobile phones to access a variety of readings or learning media. However, most students only use their mobile phones during study hours, while others prefer to use them to play games and social media. Therefore, it has become a challenge for parents, teachers and schools to fortify students from the negative impacts of using information technology in their daily lives. The rapid flow of information and technology will inevitably affect education. The unwise use of mobile phones caused students to have limited time to read and study using information and communication technology. In fact, literacy skills in the form of reading and writing are essential for students. On the other hand, students need to keep up with the abreast of the times, especially related to their education.

The use of technology in education and learning is one form of innovation that aims to keep pace and keep up with the times. The results of field observations found that students' reading interest, in this case at SDN Nglumber II Kepohbaru Bojonegoro, is still low. Especially during the Covid-19 pandemic with distance learning, students did not use digital literacy resources to seek knowledge and support their learning process using mobile phones. The availability of internet access is often used for playing games and social media. Based on these conditions, this study seeks to offer an interesting activity to foster reading interest in students, especially at SDN Nglumber II Kepohbaru Bojonegoro. It aims to improve literacy skills based on information and communication technology with Literacycloud.com, primarily through reading mentoring activities. With this, it is hoped that students will be able to develop understanding and stimulate their reading literacy skills, creativity, imagination and knowledge.

II. METHODS

This research used a subjective approach to get things from what is experienced by the research subjects (4). In using the question and answer, the researcher used a graphic strategy to analyze the status of a group of individuals, questions, conditions, frameworks or series of events in the present (5). In addition, content analysis was used to get the data. The research was conducted by identifying the problems in students at SDN Nglumber II Kepohbaru Bojonegoro about understanding digital literacy. The social conditions were online learning media, teachers, students and school equipment. They became the result of this study. Then the information collected, analyzed, and concluded following the needs that will be used as material in understanding the problem in the form of a development methodology using a literature study.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Strengthening the School Literacy Movement

One indicator to determine the development of a nation can be seen through the reading culture. Reading is the most important part of the learning and teaching process. It could be said that learning and reading have a mutually influencing relationship because reading could broaden knowledge. Reading is the spirit of learning. Islam also demands its people to read, as the first revelation *Iqra* which means read. By reading, people open their horizons and increase their knowledge and intellectual and critical thinking abilities. By reading, someone will know the world. Thus, it is not mistaken to call reading as a gateway to a nation's civilization. The development level of a nation is usually directly proportional to the ability or interest in reading of the people (6). By reading, someone will know and be able to explore the world, knowing various information and other unknown things. With knowledge, someone will be able to distinguish good and evil. Also, by reading, someone will contribute his knowledge to the development of his country. Nowadays, the world of education must be able to keep pace with the rapid development of information and technology. Educators must respond to this condition with various innovations. Even though today's educators are born in an entirely conventional era, they have to comprehend various computerized advances. If not, they will be left behind and seem to be teachers who are only good at telling the past. The flow of globalization has given birth to the digital era, a term used to mark the birth of the development of

the millennial era. The digital era is more accurately defined as the sophistication of innovative information technology, so people's lives are constantly in contact with the technology. So that people are familiar with high-tech equipment to be an inseparable part of their lives (7).

People's interest in reading or literacy is shallow in this modern era. Though reading activities are part of a literacy culture that has many benefits, our society has not made literacy, in this case reading, a culture and a critical need. According to a survey conducted by UNESCO, Indonesia's reading literacy level is ranked 60th out of 61 countries worldwide (8). The national reading index in 2013 stated that the reading rate throughout Indonesia is meagre at 0.01. It means that out of 100 people, only one likes to read. Based on the research results through PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) in 2012, Indonesia is ranked 64th out of 65 countries. The low interest in reading in our society indicates the quality of human resources. At the end of the day, it can cause the quality of education in Indonesia to be stagnant and even tend to retreat. ICT-based learning (Technology, Information and Communication) is an appropriate strategy to respond to the developments and demands of today's era of using information and communication technology. In education, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, more advanced, effective, and exciting learning formulations are necessary. Hence learning objectives can be achieved without leaving the ethical element in learning. In the education field, the internet can be used as a source of learning in the form of e-learning (9). One of the learning media that uses the internet is Literacycloud.org. It was created by Room to Read (RTR), an organization whose goal is to support literacy and gender equality in education. Two hundred digital books in Indonesian and English are available by writers from Indonesia and neighbouring countries. In addition, students can also use the read-aloud feature that can be used to listen to fairy tales through videos. On the Literacycloud.org page, an offline save feature is also provided. This feature seeks to reach as many users as possible so they can comfortably use books, videos and other content to cultivate children's reading habits. In addition, this offline save feature can be accessed by readers when the internet network is unstable or unavailable. It also can store up to twelve books that can be viewed in the digital library.

The Utilization of Literacycloud.com Technology

This paper aims to increase students' reading interest by utilizing information technology, the Literacycloud.com platform, to improve students' literacy skills. Literacycloud.org is a platform that provides digital books to develop students' reading interests. Today, digital books are a must because students are already familiar with mobile phones. Literacycloud.com platform is an alternative learning media that students and teachers can use. Digital books available on this platform can be read anytime and anywhere. Literacycloud.com Platform can also prevent the excessive and useless use of mobile phones. The integration of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) in various sectors of life, including education, is changing our relationship with information and knowledge (10). Therefore, the skills of using ICT in growing a digital reading culture need to be improved.

The Ministry of Communication and Information (Kominfo) survey stated that Indonesian people's digital literacy index has increased from 3.46 in 2020 to 3.49 in 2021. The digital literacy index consists of the pillars of digital culture recorded with a score of 3.90 on a scale of 5, the pillar of digital ethics with a 3.53 score, digital skills with a 3.44 score, and the pillar of digital safety with a 3.10 score (11). From this data, the use of internet media in education, such as the Literacycloud.com platform, must be increased to prevent students' misuse of information and communication technology. Today's education system inevitably has to be directed to use information technology in the form of making teaching materials or other needs using the internet. E-learning media must be maximized to support the learning process to meet the demands of the times. One of the benefits of the Literacycloud.com platform is facilitating students to learn inside and outside the classroom. In addition, it is to meet the competence of both cognitive, psychomotor, and affective, so that the quality of student literacy will increase.

Strengthening School Literacy with the Literacycloud.com Platform

ICT-based learning (Technology, Information and Communication) is one of the right ways that can be applied to respond to the rapid development of the times. Collaborating education with technology is the right strategy because it aligns with technological developments and demands. As we know, all students

already have adequate access to technology in learning, even though several areas have not supported it. Utilizing technology with learning provides a more advanced, effective and interesting impact on achieving learning objectives (12). The development of information and communication technology, which is growing rapidly, must be maximized, especially in education. It is usually indicated by the increasing need for computerized information systems in education. The push in information and communication innovation can bring cyberspace into reality before us. Currently, the virtual world (cyber) has been born in all corners of life. All activities in the world today are more accessible and faster. With a touch of technological innovation, the learning that initially relied on face-to-face has turned into a learning framework without the hindrance of space, time, and distance. The relationship between students and teachers could happen anytime and anywhere (13). Therefore, Indonesia must transform the education field by utilizing the sophistication and advancement of information and technology. With this, our education will be of a higher quality. As implementers, educational institutions and teachers are required to always be innovative by utilizing digital reading sources that can be obtained anywhere and anytime (literacy cloud).

In the future, utilizing the internet, i.e. e-learning could become a learning structure to deliver knowledge to students. These policies and programs must be supported by all components, from the government as a policy maker to educational institutions, especially teachers as the spearhead of the learning process. Teacher must be able to utilize and use e-learning that has been facilitated by the school, following the needs and desires of students. Therefore, students can study the material presented again and learning objectives can be achieved. In addition, the competencies targeted and charged to students will be achieved, both cognitive, psychomotor, and affective in participating in learning. With the fulfilment of these competency targets, the quality of education will increase, especially for schools and their students. This study aims to determine whether using the Literacycloud.com platform increases students' reading interest. This platform can be accessed using the internet on a mobile phone. In order to strengthen GLS and increase student interest, researchers conducted research at SDN Nglumber II Kepohbaru Bojonegoro, which has several programs to increase students' reading interest. These literacy-related programs include routine and incidental (supporting) programs. The routine program starts with,

first, simple writing. Before beginning the learning process, students are asked to write diaries. They could write down student activities, such as when learning at school, playing indoors or outdoors, doing sports, or even on vacation. The school's principal said that the writing activities aim to sharpen students' mindsets to express ideas in oral and written form, even though the writing theme is related to the student's experiences in daily activities. It is hoped that students will like to write and read through simple writing, even if it is only in simple sentences.

Second, religious literacy or understanding. Religious literacy is part of student activities at SDN Nglumber II Kepohbaru Bojonegoro by reading the al-Qur'an, short letters, juz amma, and daily prayers. In these *tadarus* activities, the students of SDN Nglumber II Kepohbaru Bojonegoro were asked to read short letters, juz amma, and daily prayers after finishing Dhuha prayer in congregation and then continued with religious literacy activities. This activity applies to all classes with assistance from their respective homeroom teachers. After that, the teacher will deliver a *tausiyah* regarding the meaning of the verses that the students have read.

Third, joint reading. This activity is participated by all elements at SDN Nglumber II Kepohbaru Bojonegoro, such as the principal, all teachers, students and employees. This activity is carried out whether inside or outside the classroom. They will read non-lesson books for 15 minutes together, and then several students and teachers are asked to tell the results in front of the class. This activity aims to foster interest in reading among students, especially at SDN Nglumber II Kepohbaru Bojonegoro.

Besides the routine programs, SDN Nglumber II Kepohbaru Bojonegoro has incidental or supporting programs to improve student literacy and interest in reading. There are several supporting programs for the School Literacy Movement (GLS). *First*, literacy competition. It is only carried out during certain events, such as the independence day celebration in August or Language Month activities in October. The purpose of this literacy competition activity is to actualize students' potential in the field of literacy. It is also to appreciate students who have succeeded in making literacy works in which their works will be displayed in

the competition. There are many categories of literacy competitions, such as poetry, madding, short story writing, speech, picture story, and others. All students from grades I to VI will attend this activity.

Second, reading corners. At SDN Nglumber II Kepohbaru, all classes already have a reading corner (mini library) with several reading books such as folklore, fairy tales, and others. Students will be given 15 minutes every day to read in the mini library. Besides that, the school also provides computers to access books or digital knowledge resources from the Literacycloud.com platform. Using and utilizing digital sources increases students' interest in reading because they can access these digital books anywhere and anytime, not only at school.

Third, utilizing the reading terrace. Besides the reading corner, SDN Nglumber II Kepohbaru has a library and reading terrace. It can be used by parents and the surrounding community who want to read books inside and outside the library. The purpose of having a reading terrace in every corner of the school is to create a literate environment and make it easier for students to read anywhere in their free time. Thus, students are not bored.

IV. CONCLUSION

The conclusion that can be drawn from this paper is that the use of information and communication technology these days is an unavoidable necessity. Globalization has a broad impact on society, especially in the use of technology. Nowadays, almost everyone has mobile phones and access to the internet to support all sectors, including education. By utilizing the internet, activities and learning processes can be easily carried out because students are already familiar with information technology. Literacy socialization activities for students must continue to be echoed either manually with books in library or by utilizing digital technology using e-learning with the Literacycloud.com platform. Using this digital platform still has to be monitored and provided with assistance because sometimes students do not maximize its function. Utilizing the Literacycloud.com platform makes it easier for students to enrich learning resources that can be accessed anywhere and anytime. It will increase students' reading interest and literacy skills at SDN Nglumber II Kepohbaru Bojonegoro.

The utilization of the Literacycloud.com platform is considered successful, marked by the responses of students and teachers to visit and open the available pages. Guidance for continuous reading activities also needs to be carried out to foster student interest in reading by using other digital books. The implementation of the School Literacy Movement activities at SDN Nglumber II Kepohbaru Bojonegoro has been going well, of course, through the support of various parties, such as school principals, teachers, staff, parents, the surrounding community and students. Through the support of several parties, it is hoped that the School Literacy Movement activities at SDN Nglumber II Kepohbaru Bojonegoro can run well under the direction of the ministry of education and culture. Strengthening the School Literacy Movement will be more effective by using information technology in the form of digital platforms such as Literacycloud.com. This platform can be easily accessed using mobile phones, making it easier for students to find information and knowledge. The Literacycloud.com platform can also maximize the use of mobile phones, which are now inseparable from students' lives. Therefore, students will benefit more from using mobile phones primarily to increase their reading interest.

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