

Literacy Movement

Character Education Strengtheners Based on Literacy

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Abstract: School Literacy Movement (SLM) is implemented as an effort to overcome the student low interest of reading, and become part of character education in school. A number of schools in West Java implement SLM through reading challenges with the students' routine activities of reading, writing book reviews, book presentations and discussions, and uploading book reviews to websites. This study aims to explore and review information about the implementation of School Literacy Movement by applying reading challenges in a number of Junior High Schools in West Java, in the context of strengthening character education. The research used qualitative approach with phenomenology method. The results showed that students' activities in carrying out the reading challenge gave strengthening to character education, especially the value of like to read, discipline, creative, independent, confident, curiosity and appreciative character. Actually, strengthening of the student's character values is also influenced by the type of book they read. It is therefore important to make sure the book reads inspire and have a positive effect on the students who read it.

1 INTRODUCTION

Education has an influence related to the growth or development of the soul, character, and physical abilities of individuals (Kneller, 197). However, in reality the education in Indonesia has not been able to realize the educational objectives as stipulated by the law. In the context of school, character education practiced so far the effect is still far from expectations (Budimansyah, 2010). Some factors that cause character education can not be effective and optimal, namely: weaknesses of aspects of learning in the classroom, learning system in Indonesia, curriculum, and limited facilities and infrastructure (Wibowo, 2012).

On the other hand, the literacy ability of Indonesian students is still very low compared to other countries. The results of the PISA survey on reading, math and science skills in 15-year-old learners, followed by 65 countries, showed Indonesia ranked 57th with a score of 396 (OECD average score: 493), while on PISA 2012 Indonesia is ranked 64th with a score of 396 (OECD average score: 496). Other data presented by UNESCO in 2012 that of 1,000 Indonesians, only 1 person has read interest. Such conditions are clearly apprehensive because reading skills are the basis for the acquisition of

knowledge, skills and attitude of learner (Wiedarti, 2016). It also indicates the importance of growing a positive mental attitude towards reading and reading activities early (Suwandi, 2007), so that learners do not experience literacy poverty (Moon, 2014).

In order to answer the backwardness, the Indonesian government issued a policy in the form of Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 23 of 2015 on the Cultivation of Character, which mandates the implementation of daily, weekly, monthly habituation activities. One of the habits to be done is to use 15 minutes before learning time to read books other than textbooks. This movement has been widely implemented at elementary and secondary education units. In fact, the guidance on its implementation has been well developed. The general objective of the School Literacy Movement is to create generations of good character, lifelong learning, and productive learning. In the end it will produce future generations that are qualified and productive for the glory of the nation in the future (Chandra, 2016).

School Literacy Movement as a character growth (character education) due to the efforts of character development can be done by reading a variety of reading materials that contain moral values in the context of nationality and state of Indonesia as

contained in the points Nawacita: the values of character, local, national, and global wisdom delivered according to the stage of development of learners (Sutrianto, 2016). So that the Literacy Movement School can form the personality of learners in cultivating literacy activities (Chandra, 2016; Sularso, 2015). Based on the various problems above, researchers are interested to raise the issue in a problem statement "School Literacy Movement for Strengthening Character Education.

2 METHOD

Studies of the school literacy movement for character education strengthening are specific, not just open behaviors, but also unspoken processes, and are intended to understand meaningful events. Therefore, methodologically, this research uses qualitative research design with phenomenology method (Creswell, 1998; Finlay, 2008).

The purpose of this qualitative research is to understand the social phenomena from the perspective of the participants. In this case participants are people who are invited to interview, observed, asked to provide data, opinions, thoughts and perceptions. Based on the above description, the study participants included:

- a. Schools that have implemented the school literacy movement spread across five regions of West Java Province, with representation of 1-3 schools per region.
- b. A teacher of the school literacy movement.
- c. Students are participants of the school literacy movement.
- d. Parents of students participating in the school literacy movement.

The process of analyzing the data begins by examining all available data from various sources, i.e. from interviews, observations already written in field notes, personal documents, official documents, pictures, photographs, and so on. Once read, studied, and reviewed the next step is to perform data reduction, which is done by way of abstraction. Abstraction is an attempt to make a summary of the core, processes, and statements that need to be maintained so that it stays within it. After that, the reduced data will give a clearer picture, and make it easier for the writer to do further data collection, and look for it when necessary, presented in the form of brief descriptions, charts, relationships between categories, flowcharts and others. By displaying data it will make it easier to withdraw conclusions and verification.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

School Literacy Movement is rolled out by the Ministry of Education and Culture as one form of implementation of character development as mandated in the Minister of Education Regulation No. 23 of 2015. Implementation of this movement taken in three stages, namely the habituation of fun reading activities in school ecosystems, the development of reading interest to Improving literacy skills, and literacy-based learning (Wiedarti, 2016).

West Java Province developed this movement through a reading challenge called West Java Leader's Reading Challenge (WJLRC). This model is adapted from the Premiere Reading Challenge (PRC) program implemented in South Australia. On this challenge, students are required to read at least 24 books in ten months with teacher guidance. The routine activities undertaken by participants of this challenge is to read the book thoroughly, write book reviews, and discuss the contents of the book. Physical evidence generated in the form of book review script uploaded by teacher to the website www.literasi.jabarprov.go.id. As a motivation, to participants who successfully meet the challenge will be awarded medals from the Government of West Java Province. Not only students, teachers are also challenged to read 10 books in 10 months, and are encouraged to pass the guided learners to meet the challenges, with a promised medal and award (Disdik Jabar, 2016).

Implementation of WJLRC program in West Java accelerates the implementation of School Literacy Movement by implementing at least 2 steps of SLM in each cycle of activities, that is habituation (stage I) and development (stage II). In addition, at each stage there is consistent reinforcement, with the tasks periodically, so that students should target the achievement of the number of reading books, the number of book reviews, and the process of discussion followed on every week and every month. In the unchallenged conditions as in the WJLRC scenario, the school tendency to implement the SLM is only at the habituation stage, with reading activities 15 minutes before learning, without follow-up and tasks.

Variety of students' activities in following the challenge of reading consistently, indicating a process of strengthening the character education, both in the school environment and in the family environment. This is thus obtained from the observations and interviews of teachers, students and parents. The reinforcement process occurs through the overall stages of WJLRC program activities, as well as on

specific activities separately, and on the School Literacy Movement in general.

In detail the process of strengthening character education in each activity and stages can be explained as follows:

3.1 Reading

There are three forms of reading activity in the SLM-WJLRC that is reading 15 minutes before the start of learning, reading the book thoroughly, and readathon is a mass reading at certain times. Reading activities carried out consistently strengthen the reading interest. This is possible because the reading activity is done together and in a pleasant atmosphere especially on reading 15 minutes and readathon. As for reading activities in order to challenge of WJLRC, participants are required to finish reading the book within a certain period of time targeted. This gives reinforcement to the discipline character of students. In addition to this activity can appear character of accuracy, due to intensive reading is careful study, and detailed handling conducted in the classroom to a short task of approximately two to four pages every day. The multitude of opportunities to read through the SLM also encourages students to master the knowledge of book analysis of various types (Hobbs, 1998).

3.2 Writing

Writing activity is done after students read thoroughly a book, by making writing in the form of book review in a simple form. Other writings that are also made by students of reading challenge participants are diary, essay and report or activity coverage to be uploaded on the website. Through writing activities, students have the opportunity to develop creativity. Creative character is needed in writing because writing has artistic purpose (beauty value), informative purpose, that is giving information to reader and persuasive purpose that is encourage or attract reader's attention to accept information submitted by writer. Benninga (2003) states that characters can be developed through writing activities. Moreover, the recording or writing activity is the essence of the literacy movement (Lehaoux, 2013).

3.3 Book Discussion

Discussion of the book is done after the students read the book and write the review of the book, and is a forum for students to present their impression and understanding about books that have been read, also give respond each other's. Thus in the discussion

activity there is activity listening and talking. In this activity, the value of the character that gets reinforcement is self-confidence, curiosity, and appreciation. This is because listening is a process of listening to oral symbols with full attention, understanding, appreciation, and interpretation to obtain information, capture content or messages and understand the meaning of communication that has been conveyed by the speaker through utterance or spoken language that is heard seriously and attentive. In the SLM-WJLRC activities the purpose of listening is to acquire knowledge from the speaker's speech material; In other words, he listens to study. As for the type of listening conducted in the SLM-WJLRC is concentrative listening activities. The discussion also trains the students to have the courage to speak, because while talking, occurs communication which organized and developed according to the needs of the listener. Students should speak in class, so students will feel confident. Speaking and listening is the key to life skills. In addition, with this literacy, learners can be trained to perform between groups and families (Belliveau, 2012).

Strengthening the character education process through the School Literacy Movement is also supported by the public involvement in the SLM, especially in this case the parents of the students. Parents' involvement, namely, in the form of fulfilling the needs of books to read, supervision in the activities of students at home, involvement in reading activities in the home environment, and intensive communication with teachers in the school. Parents' participation is important because in the context of character education, the role of parents is greater and foremost than the role of teachers in schools (Kaur, 2015). In addition, all educators agree that character education should be integrated in the family and educational curriculum (Sewel and College, 2003) because with the synergy of various parties, we can know the basic character of child since early age.

This should be done because character education can be implemented when school can construct learners in identifying their identity through education and socialization with intervention (Pattaro, 2016). Next focus attention on the special contributions that students build with general education (Rose, 2007). The situation can be realized because the personality is partly derived from within and partly determined by culture (Friedman, 2000). Therefore it is very important that learners participate in a democratic culture (Schmidt, 2012). If it wants to renew the community, it must raise the generation of children with a strong culture. In this case character education is very important during childhood through education that integrates character values in schools (Lickona, 2012).

Student learning experience after following SLM-WJLRC shows the desire to solve the reading challenge that has been determined by the school and West Java Provincial Education Office. This is because students feel happy to follow step by step of the activity in every stage, beside the motivation to obtain awards or medals, and hope to participate in the literacy jamboree event which is reserved for students who successfully completed the challenge of reading in accordance with the provisions. This is indicated by student work of book reviews, essays in the form of poetry, short stories or other writings uploaded on the literacy website, or published either in schools or by publishers. This happens because students have a positive and supportive relationship with the teacher, they have higher self efficacy and greater intrinsic motivation to learn to solve the challenge. Such success can occur because learners remember strongly when they are involved (Perry and Medina, 2011) throughout the series of activities of the literacy movement.

Furthermore, teachers should be able to guide and build a positive image by continuing to evaluate the learner's literacy (Flewitt, et al, 2014). This is because character can be developed through reflection of morality, character ideas in didactic instruction and main instruction approach (Smagorinzky and Taxel, 2004: 113). In addition, teachers should develop a democratic atmosphere in the literacy movement, because the school can develop the character of learners, if implemented in a democratic community atmosphere (Althof and Berkowitz, 2006; Lee, 2004), plus teachers should also develop religious values because religious affiliated institutions can be a method for developing educational capacity to provide character education in schools (Milson and Mehlig, 2002)

There are several factors that become obstacles in the implementation of SLM-WJLRC in West Java. The main factor is the lack of the books that are relevant to the interests and needs of students, so the provision of reading books is often the burden of students and parents. Another factor is school readiness in implementing SLM-WJLRC with regard to library facilities and infrastructure, arrangement of teacher assignment tasks, and arrangement of activity schedule in between dense school activity agenda. Another constraint that is also found is the lack of support and guidance of educational institutions in the region to the school literacy movement and WJLRC.

School initiatives and creativity with leadership support at the school level are a major force in overcoming these obstacles and problems. It is important for schools to be able to develop character education programs by applying reading materials that can inspire inner reflection and ideal behavior (Hudd, 2005). Furthermore, schools should use

additional tools to mobilize effective teaching of character strengths by motivation orientation in the form of sustainable good efforts in the form of academic challenges through the principle of the effectiveness of character education constructed by the cooperation of character education organizations (Lapsley and Woodbury, 2016; Ghamrawi et. Al. 2015).

4 CONCLUSIONS

School Literacy Movement through the reading of West Java Leader's Reading Challenge (WJLRC) in West Java is a form of SLM implementation that can accelerate the implementation of SLM stages that have been programmed by the Ministry of Education and Culture. This activity also contributes positively to the strengthening of character education of students at Junior High School. At each stage of the activities of the students in following these challenges, that are reading, writing book reviews, and book discussions, indicating the process of strengthening the character education of students, especially on the values of the character likes to read, discipline, creative, independent, confident, curiosity and respect.

The success of strengthening character education through School Literacy Movement can be built by the mutual commitment among various parties namely schools, learners, parents, community and government. The synergy of various parties is important to overcome obstacles and problems in the implementation of SLM. Parental involvement in this case is very important in maintaining consistency and aligning student activities in schools with day-to-day activities in the home and neighborhood.

School Literacy Movement developed in West Java through the challenge of reading (WJLRC), is an effort to strengthen character education, towards the embodiment of the government's Nawacita that expect mental changes of the nation's generation better. Although there are various obstacles and problems that must be addressed, the movement is expected to be one effort as well as solutions in the development of character education for students in schools.

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