

FOSTERING AN INTEREST IN READING AND THE CREATIVITY OF ORPHANAGE CHILDREN THROUGH STORYTELLING AND THE LIBRARY CORNER

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ABSTRACT

Creativity should be developed as early as possible since the child is born. The world of children and teenager is a world of creativity, where they need space to move, think and be emotionally guided. One way to foster creativity is through reading activities. In comparison to other nations, Indonesians continue to have extremely little interest in reading. According to UNESCO data, Indonesia has the second-lowest rate of literacy in the entire globe. In terms of reading interest, Indonesia comes in at number 60 out of 61 nations. The public's lack of interest in reading should motivate the pertinent parties to facilitate and investigate what the reason of this is as soon as feasible. The provision of children's libraries is one way to promote creativity and reading interest among the younger population, especially children. On August 6, 2023, this community development activity was carried out to give the kids at the Hafidhin Royan Orphanage in South Jakarta City access to a little library called "Pojok Pustaka." By putting reading bookshelves in places where kids may easily access them, the service activity has been successfully carried out. When asked about their reactions, the orphanage residents' comments revealed that they were quite excited and glad to read the many picture books offered by Pojok Pustaka. The selection of books in the Pojok Pustaka will continue to be gradually expanded in an effort to prevent boredom, ensuring that kids who visit the Pojok Pustaka to read always have new books to choose from.

Keywords: reading interest, children, orphanage, library, books

1. INTRODUCTION

Creativity can be defined as the ability to think about things in new and unusual ways and give birth to unique solutions to the problems faced (Santrock, 2002). Another opinion says that creativity is a way of thinking and acting or creating something that is original and valuable/useful for that person and other people (Mayesty, 1990). Creativity is related to the ability to create, create, discover a new form and/or to produce something through imaginative skills (Gallagher in Munandar, 1999). This means that creativity is related to the experience of expressing and actualizing individual identity in an integrated form in relationships with oneself, nature and other people.

Compared to other nations, Indonesians still have extremely little interest in reading. According to UNESCO data, Indonesia is the second-least literate country in the world, which indicates that reading interest is very low (0.001 percent), or that out of 1,000 Indonesians, just one is a dedicated reader (Bustomi, 2022). In terms of reading interest, Indonesia comes in at number 60 out of 61 nations. Both adults and kids have this poor interest in reading. Given the broad and simple availability of books today, this condition is unquestionably quite troubling (Widianto, 2017).

The lack of interest in reading in Indonesia is a result of a number of reasons (Widianto, 2017). The social environment is significant since it influences one's habits subtly. The closest environment, the family, frequently discourages reading habits. Even book purchases are restricted by parents due to a variety of factors, most notably expense. Additionally, if the younger generation's circle of friends doesn't enjoy reading, it is nearly certain that they will prefer to imitate their friends' bad behaviors.

The younger generation of today also has a propensity to quit enjoying the process and to demand everything to be instantaneous. Reading a book demands persistence to fully comprehend each page. However, because they are not persistent to read in order to understand the book's contents, the younger generation finds it difficult to go through and enjoy this reading process (Warsita, 2008).

The public's lack of interest in reading should motivate the pertinent parties to facilitate and investigate what the reason of this is as soon as feasible. In order to obtain reading materials, cooperation between authors, publishers, and the government is obviously crucial (BPKP, n.d.). First and foremost, the public needs writers because they are authors and information searchers who will disseminate ideas and knowledge. To help writers publish their works, publishers are also required. Because, barring really significant funding, it is quite difficult for a writer to print and publish his own work. Third, the government must play a crucial role in providing subsidies for books, particularly expensive textbooks.

The government ought to allocate a specific budget to enhancing library services so that they are more accessible to everyone, particularly the younger generation, and, of course, more effective for those who have little money to spend on books. It requires a keen interest in reading and knowledge of the most up-to-date local information sources to boost the love of libraries. Creating a micro library, starting a school library, office library, or national library are a few actions that can be taken (Jatinegara & Luna, 2009).

2. METHOD

Offering mini-libraries in locations where kids congregate, such as playgrounds, schools, or other public spaces, is one way to foster young people's reading interests and creativity as well as inspire them to love reading. It is impossible for all social classes to provide a little library, but it would be wonderful if some people with higher standards of life and the means to donate could just start one with the size of a neighborhood unit (Mangkoesapoetro, 2004).

Various management strategies for tiny libraries are suggested by Muhsin and Supriyanto (2009), including the issuance of membership cards at reasonable prices and, if necessary, without other borrowing fees. To limit the risk of losing books, however, complete personal information is required for every borrower who visits if the average living standard of the locals near this tiny library is below the poverty line (Mudhofir, 1992).

In order to keep people coming to the library and prevent it from serving only as a community showcase, it is imperative to keep administrative expenditures as low as possible (Warsita, 2008). Children's micro libraries are excellent resources for enhancing students' knowledge outside of the classroom and supplying new information to those who are unable to attend school (Noerhayati, 1986). Children have a place to spend their time doing productive activities as well (Munir, 2009). Of course, this mini-library is also accessible to adults, who can utilize it as their closest free reading space and get the current information they require to compete in their associations and places of employment (Warsita, 2008).

It is important to establish a small library in the children's neighborhood in order to encourage reading among young people, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds (Mudhofir, 1992). The small library offers a similar selection of books to other libraries, ranging from those for young readers to those for the elderly, with the exception that there are fewer books available due to space constraints. However, since this community service project is intended to be carried out in an orphanage where children are the majority of the population, children's books are preferred for inclusion in the mini library.

Textbooks, picture books, and general information books that can broaden children's perspectives are among the reading materials that will be developed for the "Pojoyok Pustaka" micro library. Storybooks, including popular children's illustrated comic books, will be offered to pique young readers' enthusiasm in reading.

Apart from providing books through the library corner, the community service activities that will be carried out will also provide entertainment activities in the form of storytelling to children living in orphanages. The storytelling is expected to boost kids' creativity. Storytelling is a social and cultural activity of sharing stories which is sometimes accompanied by improvisation and skits. Each culture has its own story or narrative, which is told by a storyteller as a means of entertainment, education, cultural preservation or instilling moral values (Chaltin, 2003).

The location of activity will be held at the Hafidhin Royan orphanage which is under the auspices of the Hafidhin Royan Yatim Foundation, which is located on Jl. Bhakti Indah No.32, RT.2/RW.5, Ciganjur, Kec. Jagakarsa, South Jakarta City, Special Capital Region of Jakarta. The reason for choosing this orphanage as a place for implementing community service programs is that this orphanage is a well-managed orphanage but does not yet have a library as a means for the children who live in the orphanage to build their reading interests.

Choosing target audience

The Child-Friendly Integrated Public Space (RPTRA), which is a public space in the form of a child-friendly green open space equipped with various facilities that support child development, parental comfort, as well as a place to interact with all citizens from various walks of life, was another location initially considered for the implementation of this community service activity in addition to the orphanage.

The local community is involved in creating, managing, and maintaining the RPTRA. Every sub-district in the DKI Jakarta Province is where you may find RPTRA. The Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD) provided money for the construction of some of the RPTRAs, whereas donations from Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) monies were used for the construction of other RPTRAs. The benefits of RPTRA can be reaped by neighborhood inhabitants because it is public and situated in the center of a residential area. The RPTRA's facilities are not just accessible for children, but also for those with disabilities. Additionally, RPTRA has CCTV (closed circuit television) surveillance, making it a solid security system and allowing parents to relax about their children's safety while they play and study.

However, based on observations made so far, several RPTRAs have provided reading books for children. RPTRA has become a good starting point to encourage the growth of interest in reading among the younger generation. Based on this consideration, the community service program that will be implemented chose the location at the Hafidhin Royan orphanage, which is under the auspices of the Hafidhin Royan Yatim Foundation, which is located on Jl. Bhakti Indah No.32, RT.2/RW.5, Ciganjur, Kec. Jagakarsa, Jakarta.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The procurement of the Pojok Pustaka mini library at the Hafidhin Royan Orphanage was carried out on August 6, 2023, through the delivery of the 'Pojok Pustaka' signboard, bookshelves, and a number of reading books to the manager of the Hafidhin Royan Orphanage. However, before D-day, a number of preparations have been made as follows:

Build contacts. One of the committee member responsible for carrying out this community task, Mrs. Marlina Irwanti Purnomo, got in touch with Mr. Syafaat, the director of the Hafidhin Royan Orphanage, to let him know about the idea of giving the orphanage's youngsters access to a small library. The management of the Hafidhin Royan Orphanage approved of this idea. He gave his approval for the September 18, 2022, micro library purchase to go forward. Mr. Morissan, the director of this community service executive, then got in touch with Mr. Syafaat once again to explain the technical strategy for carrying out the community service program. Regarding the strategy for carrying out community service, Intercession was requested to provide written consent.

Equipment preparation. Procurement of the Pojok Pustaka mini library requires equipment that includes, among others, bookshelves, nameplates, banners, small tables, and carpets with the following descriptions:

- 1) The minimalist, versatile Montessori five-level stacked shelf (measuring 60x30x75cm) was selected as the bookshelf (Figure 2). The maximum weight capacity of this bookshelf, which is built of particle board, is 50 kg. Bookshelves must first be built because they are bought from internet retailers in a disassembled state (Figures 1 and 2). The bookshelf needs to be set up on a small table because it is relatively short in height, making it easy for guests to choose books while still being aesthetically beautiful.
- 2) The required banner is 2 meters long and 1 meter wide with the words "Community Service Program. Sahid University Graduate School. Growing children's reading interest through the procurement of a mini-library 'POJOK PUSTAKA'. Jakarta, September 18, 2022. The banner displays the logo of the Graduate School on the left side.
- 3) The utilized table is a typical kindergarten classroom table and serves as a location to put bookshelves to make it look prettier. Because so much of the paint had faded, the tiny table that supports the bookshelves from the beginning was still in disrepair and required repainting to appear presentable (Figure 3).
- 4) The nameplate that says 'Pojok Pustaka' is made of white acrylic material with black writing, which is used as the name of the mini library. The nameplate displays the logo of the Usahid graduate school on the left side.

Activity Implementation

The aforementioned equipment as well as additional assistance devices were delivered on August 6, 2023, to the Hafidhin Royan orphanage, which is situated on Jl. Bhakti Indah No.32, RT.2/RW.5, Ciganjur, Kec. Jagakarsa, Jakarta. On the day of the event, Mr. Syafaat, the administrator of the Hafidhin Royan orphanage, Morissan's chief executive, Marlinda Irwanti Purnomo, a team member, and the about 20 orphanage residents were all in attendance. A bookshelf with an event banner was positioned in front of the orphanage administrator's office for the purpose of the inaugural ceremony.

The ceremonial transfer of the Pojok Pustaka nameplate from Mrs. Irwanti to Mr. Syafaat and the symbolic transfer of the library collection volumes from Mr. Morissan to Mr. Syafaat (Figure 4) signified the beginning of the acquisition of the Pojok Pustaka micro library. The orphanage youngsters who had been waiting were then invited by the committee to take a look and select the books they wanted to read. The books were eagerly selected by the kids, who then read them on the carpet that had been set up in front of the Pojok Pustaka bookshelf



Figure 1. Participant activity in placing books

Putting reading bookshelves in places where kids may easily access them as well as delivering storytelling, is expected to prompt their creativity



Figure 2. Book Handover to Partners

The orphans who reside there said they were overjoyed that the little library was available. They expressed their gratitude to the Graduate School at Sahid University for taking the effort to set up a lending library for them. Additionally, they also hope that Pojok Pustaka's book collection can continue to grow in the future. Irwanti's mother once inquired about the children's dreams from the orphanage. The children were given Mrs. Irwanti Purnomo's advice to read books carefully in order to become knowledgeable people and fulfill their objectives. A group photo was taken in front of the orphanage dormitory following the exercise.

It is intended to gradually expand the book collection and make efforts to periodically exchange books between libraries so that kids who come to read from the mini library always find something new to read in an effort to prevent children's readers from becoming bored. In the upcoming term, community service projects will be used to add collections and tiny library facilities..

4. CONCLUSION

- 1) Indonesians continue to have a very low interest in reading compared to people in other countries so the creativity is low. According to UNESCO figures, Indonesia has the second-lowest literacy rate in the world. Indonesia ranks 60th out of 61 countries in terms of reading interest. The relevant parties should be encouraged to enable and conduct an investigation into the cause of the public's lack of interest in reading as soon as is practical. One strategy to encourage reading among the younger population, especially children, is to provide children's libraries.
- 2) On August 6, 2023, this community development project was completed to give the kids of the Hafidhin Royan Orphanage in South Jakarta City access to a little library called "Pojok Pustaka." By putting reading bookshelves in places where kids may easily access them as well as storytelling to prompt their creativity, the service activity has been successfully carried out
- 3) The children's comments revealed that they were quite excited and glad to read the many picture books offered by Pojok Pustaka. In an effort to prevent boredom in the future, the library's book collection will continue to be gradually increased so that kids who visit the Pojok Pustaka to read will always have fresh books to read.

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