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The Urgency of Providing Village Library Services in Increasing Village Community Literacy and Creating Quality Human Capital

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Abstract

Lakkang Village is one of the villages in Tallo District, Makassar City, South Sulawesi. Lakkang Village is geographically located in the middle of the Makassar urban area, its location is in the delta of the Tallo and Pampang rivers, which are one of the rivers that divide Makassar City. The current problem faced by Lakkang village is the problem of low literacy or interest in reading, this is caused by a lack of public awareness about interest in reading and writing, even though if you look back at reading and writing skills, known as literacy, it is the main basis for efforts to improve community education level. One effective strategy to advance literacy culture is through the development of libraries, especially in villages. To overcome this problem, an alternative solution that can be implemented is to carry out activities to improve village library services to realize increased literacy in village communities so that it is hoped that they can create quality human resources in Lakkang Village, Tallo District, Makassar City, South Sulawesi. Therefore, the aim of this community service is to see the potential for improving village library services in realizing increased literacy in the community in Lakkang Village, Tallo District, Makassar City, South Sulawesi. To obtain the data used were observation and literature review. This service activity is an educational effort to improve village library services which are able to realize literacy in Lakkang Village, Tallo District, Makassar City, South Sulawesi. As a form of the author's thinking, several efforts and breakthroughs are offered, namely: 1.) Increasing community knowledge regarding literacy by improving village library services, 2.) The role of improving village library services for the Lakkang Village community in realizing increased interest in reading and writing in the village is to create quality human resources.

Keyword : *Literacy, Library, Village*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country with very high population growth. According to Woldometers, as of July 2023, Indonesia is ranked fourth in terms of population in the world with 2,777.7 million people (Annur, 2023). However, UNESCO states that Indonesia is second from the bottom in terms of world literacy, meaning that interest in reading is very low. According to UNESCO data, Indonesian people's interest in reading is very worrying, only 0.001%. This means that out of 1,000 Indonesians, only 1 person reads diligently (Devega, 2017). Different research entitled World's Most Literate Nations Ranked conducted by Central Connecticut State University in March 2016, Indonesia was stated to be ranked 60th out of 61 countries regarding interest in reading, just below Thailand (59) and above Botswana (61). In fact, in terms of infrastructure

assessment to support reading, Indonesia's ranking is above European countries (Heri, 2023).

The data above shows that literacy issues are still something that must be addressed in Indonesia, especially in villages. Even though books play a very vital role in human life. Only a nation with a high interest in reading is a prerequisite for an information society which is a characteristic of modern society. Qualified human resources (HR) are very necessary for Indonesia's progress (Putri, 2023).

The presence of information has now become a basic need for every individual and society in general. This variety of information which is a basic need can be used as a means to fulfill various activities that require information in order to achieve certain goals. In order to meet the need for information as a basic need, the presence of information technology devices and various digital-based information media such as social media in the current digital era has provided various easy access to information which of course, without us realizing it, has led to dependence on information. In everyday life, people are faced with a variety of diverse information. This diversity of information causes an explosion of information (information explosion) which contains various information which is useful facts or may contain incorrect information (hoaxes) which can be detrimental to the recipients of the information (Prasetyo, *et al.*, 2021).

The aim of the Indonesian nation as stated in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution is to improve the nation's standard of living. The government has made various efforts to realize this goal, including providing education at various levels. Increasing public awareness to increase knowledge will also provide important support in achieving this target (Dani, *et al.*, 2024). According to Sitorus, *et al.* (2021) reading is a form of non-formal education for individuals that provides valuable social benefits. In an academic environment, reading integrates various fields of knowledge into the reader's knowledge, thereby ultimately improving the reader's abilities and skills (Abidin *et al.*, 2021). Masitoh (2018) stated that reading and writing skills, which are often referred to as literacy, are the initial stage in efforts to improve public education. Literacy activities are one of the activities that individuals continue to do throughout their lives (Fadhli, 2021).

One way to encourage this literacy culture is through library development. Libraries are institutions that provide selected information sources to be utilized by the people who are the target of their services. Libraries must also be able to meet the information needs of users (Fatmawati, 2022). Libraries have an important social role as repositories of knowledge, educational development, and as physical community spaces that can be freely accessed. Thus, libraries must have a strategic function in people's lives. Libraries act as a means of intellectual development so that library development is ideally part of the development of education and community character (Fujiwara, *et al.*, 2019).

According to Komariah, *et al.* (2021) Libraries must provide a variety of library services because most library services are freely accessible. Apart from that, libraries must provide direct benefits to users, for example providing changes in welfare from the impact of library services on user welfare. Public libraries as libraries that serve the community at large must of course contribute to improving the quality of life of each individual, for example the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia which has developed libraries in all regions of Indonesia through various literacy programs (Nidya, *et al.*, 2019).

Village libraries have been transformed into centers for information and individual self-development, as well as functioning as a source of informal education and meeting the needs of village communities. As a learning center that provides information sources and educational facilities, libraries are very important in encouraging increased community literacy (Fernadi, 2022). To achieve this goal, public libraries in Indonesia must transform to focus more on social inclusion. The village government is responsible for activating village libraries to increase the literacy level of village communities so that libraries can provide maximum benefits to the community (Nanda, *et al.*, 2022).

According to National Library Director Regulation Number 6 of 2017, a village library is a body that professionally manages collections of written works, printed works and recorded works, by following a predetermined system (Mawardah, 2023). The main purpose of a village

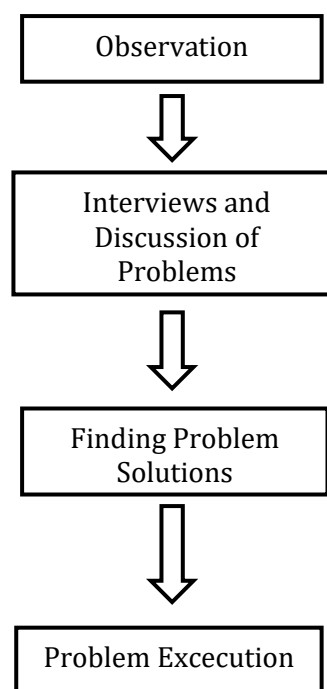
library is to fulfill various needs such as education, research, preservation, information and recreation for its users. Its main role is to increase community knowledge, empower villagers, develop their skills, and support other educational activities. For example, village library management is carried out efficiently. In this case, the library will act as an easily accessible source of information, community knowledge center, community education institution, literacy and entertainment venue, cultural center, and an effort to preserve village cultural heritage (Witarini, 2022).

When the author carried out his service in Lakkang Village, Tallo District, Makassar City, South Sulawesi. The author encountered problems experienced by residents in Lakkang Village, namely the lack of information and socialization that improving Village Library services could increase Village Community Literacy so that it could create Quality Human Resources in Lakkang Village, Tallo District, Makassar City, South Sulawesi.

Therefore, the author believes that by holding outreach regarding improving library services in villages, it is useful to increase the literacy of village communities who previously had minimal literacy to become literate, thus creating quality human resources in Lakkang Village, Tallo District, Makassar City, South Sulawesi.

METODE

Table 1
Problem discovery and problem solutions



During discussions with Lakkang Village Officials, South Sulawesi, the method of activity carried out was theory and direction to residents and introducing and providing direction to the community regarding improving regional library services to increase community literacy in Lakkang Village so that it could improve the quality of the community in Lakkang Village, Tallo District, Makassar City, South Sulawesi. From the observations made, it can be concluded that residents and village officials do not yet fully understand that improving village library services can increase village community literacy so that the village library is able to produce quality and literate communities in Lakkang Village, South Sulawesi. The problems presented in this method are such as:

1. Benefits of the Village Library itself for the people of Lakkang Village, South Sulawesi
2. Solutions on how to utilize village library services properly and correctly so that they can help people become literate and create a better quality of society in Lakkang Village, Tallo District, Makassar City, South Sulawesi.

The important role of improving village library services in realizing improving reading skills will not only increase people's creativity and competitiveness, but will also increase their understanding of the realities of life. Apart from that, increasing literacy is expected to help people improve their quality of life. Therefore, it is hoped that the presence of a village library can spur the growth of literacy and reading culture, and even become a lifestyle for Indonesian people. Increasing the reading literacy level of village communities is the main goal with a focus on strengthening village library facilities and infrastructure.

DISCUSSION

Literacy is an effort to seek, understand, and possess knowledge or information. Literacy is a major component in human resource development. (Dewi, *et. al.*, 2021) According to Ristanto *et. al.* (2017) The word literacy comes from "literacy" which means literacy, being able to read and write, being able to read and write. Referring to the ideological view of discourse, literacy is an individual's skills expressed in ways of thinking, communicating verbally (speaking) and writing (writing), as well as reading (Gee, 2015).

Gorzycki, *et. al.* (2020) stated that reading is a means of informal education for individuals and provides experience to society at large. In the academic realm, reading is a strategy for integrating various scientific disciplines into the reader's knowledge so as to improve the reader's expertise and skills (Moi, 2011). An effective way to improve a nation's civilization is literacy. It cannot be denied that the cultural progress of a nation is largely determined by the works of intellectuals, one of which is immortalized in written form. The more work produced, the more information will be obtained to build social civilization in that country (Jatmiko, *et. al.*, 2021).

According to Kurniangsih, *et. al.* (2021) Village libraries contain four keywords about village libraries, namely:

- 1.) Community-based library
- 2.) The library functions as a learning facility and medium
- 3.) Libraries to improve and support community education
- 4.) Libraries are an integral part of development.

If seen from these four keywords, the essential meaning of a village library is a library that was developed and established on the initiative and initiative of the village government, its implementation is also the responsibility of the village government, which is used by the community as a medium to support informal education in the community environment that is part of it. inseparable from development programs in implementing village development (Darmono, 2015).

According to data from the National Library, the level of reading interest among Indonesian people will reach 63.9 points in 2022. This score shows an increase of 7.4% compared to the previous year, which was 59.52 points. This shows that interest in reading among Indonesian people has experienced a positive increase in that period (Rizaty, 2023). The figure is already in the high category. In the previous period, Indonesia's reading hobby level was always in the medium category. This requires the existence of village libraries to support literacy awareness in the community so that it can increase, especially in areas where access to information sources is lacking or limited. Because the Village Library is the closest place to building the increased literacy culture needed by village communities. Another important role is the existence of the Village Library as an effort to eradicate illiteracy, especially for village communities (Bondar, 2024).

There are several types of libraries that have developed in Indonesia according to their implementation and objectives, including digital libraries, national libraries, provincial libraries, district or city libraries, educational institution libraries, special libraries, religious institution libraries and public libraries. Public libraries are libraries that are under the institution that supervises them, including sub-district public libraries and village or sub-district public libraries. Public libraries organized by the government, provincial governments, district or city governments, sub-districts, and villages or sub-districts develop library service systems based on information and communication technology which aim to help people learn throughout

their lives (Lianasari, *et. al.*, 2022).

The Republic of Indonesia is the country with the second largest number of libraries in the world after India with 323,605 libraries while Indonesia has 164,610. With a total of 164,610 libraries divided into 42,460 public libraries, 6,552 university libraries, 2,057 special libraries, 113,541 school libraries. However, Indonesia's ranking in having the 2nd largest library in the world is not comparable to the reading ranking of the people in Indonesia. The reading ranking of the Indonesian people is increasingly being taken into account by the world because it is at number 16. This ranking is far from India, which is consistent with its ranking for library ownership and the reading ranking of its people (Sheeran, 2024).

The village is a government institution with legal jurisdiction which is located in a position that deals directly with the community. As an organizing government, development and services to the community really need to be equipped, facilitated and supported by the establishment of various public service or social service institutions. The aim of which is none other than to provide services and meet the needs of the community, one of the social service institutions or public services is the village library. Village libraries can also function as places for non-formal education, places for research, as well as sources of information and provide an impact on improving the abilities of the lives of the people concerned (Mahmuda, *et. al.*, 2022).

Lakkang Village is on a small island located in Tallo District, Makassar City. Lakkang Village is geographically located in the middle of the Makassar urban area, its location is in the delta of the Tallo and Pampang rivers, which are one of the rivers that divide Makassar City. The program to improve village library services in Lakkang Village, South Sulawesi has 4 stages, namely the first is the Counseling stage, the second is the Education stage, the third is the Training and Implementation stage. As in the interview conducted by the author with the Head of Lakkang Village, Tallo District, South Sulawesi, namely, the community's knowledge of the importance of developing a literacy culture is not widely known by the local community and is not yet recognized as an important factor influencing the quality of human resources in Lakkang Village, South Sulawesi. Next, the community is introduced to the benefits of literacy development which aims to promote libraries and encourage people to visit them. However, the evaluation results show that information technology is one of the challenges in increasing the reading literacy of today's society. On the one hand, proper use of information technology can help people access information and knowledge quickly and easily. But on the other hand, the presence of this technology also has the potential to make people feel that reading is a monotonous activity. The younger generation mostly prefers information in visual form, so this phenomenon can reduce people's interest in reading books. Therefore, based on the results of the evaluation of activities that have been carried out, the village government must consistently provide information about the village library at every village event.

When the author carried out his service in Lakkang Village, Tallo District, Makassar City, South Sulawesi. The author found a problem experienced by the people in this village, namely the lack of knowledge and information regarding the use of the village library which can develop literacy skills for the village community, resulting in the interest in coming to the library to hone writing and reading skills in the village not being utilized properly and properly. Efforts to utilize improved village library services are one of the breakthroughs that can realize interest in developing reading and writing skills so that it is hoped that they can improve the quality of community resources in Lakkang Village, Tallo District, Makassar City, South Sulawesi.

CONCLUSION

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that this service activity has increased the insight of local village residents in knowing that village libraries are able to improve the quality of human resources in Lakkang village, Tallo District, Makassar City, South Sulawesi, so it is hoped that interest in reading and writing will be high and village residents will become literate. , although there are several things that still need to be improved for the progress of the community in Lakkang Village. The current implementation of Lakkang village library services still has many obstacles such as:

1. The lack of knowledge and information regarding the benefits of village libraries which can

2. The Lack of awareness among the public regarding the use of existing library facilities because the younger generation mostly prefers information in visual form, so this phenomenon can reduce people's interest in reading books.
3. It is hoped that the government can consistently promote and play a role in providing information about village libraries at every village event so that people's interest in reading and writing does not disappear.

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