


Fostering Literacy Culture at SD Negeri Tanah Merah: Success of Educational Seminar and Its Positive Impact on the Community

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ABSTRACT

Pengabdian masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kesadaran dan penerapan budaya literasi di SD Negeri Tanah Merah, Aceh Tamiang. Dengan diselenggarakannya seminar satu hari pada tanggal 10 Januari 2024, program ini mempertemukan peserta dari berbagai pihak, baik guru, siswa, maupun orang tua, dalam upaya bersatu untuk menciptakan kesadaran akan pentingnya literasi sebagai landasan utama pendidikan. Kuliah utama dan diskusi interaktif dalam seminar menyelami lebih dalam konsep literasi, yang tidak hanya mencakup keterampilan membaca dan menulis tetapi juga keterampilan berpikir kritis, interpretasi, dan pengetahuan menyeluruh tentang berbagai jenis teks. Temuan evaluasi dan refleksi mengungkapkan bahwa kegiatan ini berhasil memberikan perubahan positif dalam sikap dan pemahaman, dengan penghargaan yang diberikan di akhir acara sebagai apresiasi atas komitmen peserta. Dengan mengungkapkan kesimpulan hasil pengabdian ini, maka abstrak ini menunjukkan keberhasilan langkah awal dalam meningkatkan budaya literasi di Sekolah Dasar Negeri Tanah Merah. Hal ini bertujuan agar semangat dan pemahaman yang muncul dari kegiatan ini dapat menjadi katalisator perubahan baik yang berkelanjutan di tingkat sekolah dan masyarakat setempat.

This community service aims to increase awareness and implementation of literacy culture at Tanah Merah State Elementary School, Aceh Tamiang. By holding a one-day seminar on January 10 2024, this program brings together participants from various parties, including teachers, students and parents, in a united effort to create awareness of the importance of literacy as the main foundation of education. Keynote lectures and interactive discussions in seminars dive deeper into the concept of literacy, which includes not only reading and writing skills but also critical thinking skills, interpretation, and thorough knowledge of various types of texts. Evaluation and reflection findings revealed that this activity was successful in providing positive changes in attitudes and understanding, with awards given at the end of the event as appreciation for the participants' commitment. By expressing the conclusions of the results of this service, this abstract shows the success of the initial steps in improving literacy culture at the Tanah Merah State Elementary School. This aims to ensure that the enthusiasm and understanding that emerges from this activity can become a catalyst for sustainable change at the school level and in the local community.



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INTRODUCTION

The basis to organizing a one-day seminar on the relevance of literacy culture at Tanah Merah State Elementary School, Aceh Tamiang, alludes to the urgent need to reinforce the foundations of education at the elementary level. Even though literacy plays a very crucial role in children's intellectual and academic development, literacy culture is still a struggle in many schools, including Tanah Merah State Elementary School. Factors such as limited resources, lack of knowledge, and lack of strategy implementation lead to a poor literacy culture among pupils. Therefore, this seminar is aimed to provide more awareness to all stakeholders in schools, including educators, students and parents, about how crucial it is to develop a culture of literacy. By offering a platform for exchanging knowledge, experiences and ideas, we seek to change the paradigm and stimulate the development of a strong literacy culture at Tanah Merah Elementary School, producing a more exciting learning environment and boosting children's intellectual progress (Chen, 2021; Han, 2020).

In the reality of education at Tanah Merah State Elementary School, Aceh Tamiang, literacy culture is still an area that needs to be strengthened. With limited resources and environmental limitations, implementing literacy activities is typically a challenging task. Educators are challenged with pressure to establish learning settings that encourage the development of reading and writing abilities, yet students often do not have adequate access to literacy materials. This creates a situation where literacy skills among students may not be optimal, and their creative potential in distributing ideas and knowledge may be limited (Gerde, 2018).

In responding to this challenge, a comprehensive awareness of the role of literacy culture becomes highly relevant. Literacy culture does not only comprise the capacity to read and write, but also includes processes of critical thinking, interpretation and reflection. Therefore, this one-day seminar intends to be a vehicle for mutual awareness and collaborative thought on how to develop a strong reading foundation at Tanah Merah State Elementary School. By presenting lectures that understand the basic concepts and benefits of literacy culture, as well as holding interactive seminar sessions to share experiences and develop strategies together, we hope that this seminar can be the first step to changing the paradigm regarding literacy in this school. Involving all parties, including teachers, students and parents, is crucial to developing an inclusive and sustainable literacy culture in the future. Therefore, this seminar is not simply an educational event, but also a cooperative endeavor to reinforce the foundation of literacy and improve the quality of education at Tanah Merah State Elementary School (Sum, 2018).

A strong literacy culture can be a crucial driver of enhanced academic achievement, creativity, and critical thinking among kids. Therefore, presenting this seminar also seeks to inspire active collaboration between educators, students and parents in establishing a learning environment that stimulates and supports the development of literacy abilities (Prayuda et al., 2022). The value of this seminar is not only in an academic context but also as a strategic move to equip students with the abilities needed to meet the challenges of an increasingly complicated world. In a global world that is constantly connected and information is increasingly accessible, literacy is the key to comprehending and actively engaging in continual development and transformation (Prayuda et al., 2023).

This session also provides a chance for educators to discuss and receive insight into the latest ideas and strategies in teaching reading. In addition, students will be encouraged to active their involvement in the learning process and create a sustainable enthusiasm in reading. By organizing this program at Tanah Merah Elementary School, we intend to pave the path towards building an atmosphere that is more suitable to literacy development at the elementary level. Through shared knowledge and commitment to change, we can establish a literacy culture that empowers and has a beneficial impact on the development of education in our school. We hope that this seminar will be an early milestone in developing a strong foundation for literacy at Tanah Merah Public Elementary School, creating a generation of children that are skilled, think critically, and are ready to face the future.

METHOD

The activity plan for a one-day lecture on the importance of literacy culture at Tanah Merah State Elementary School, Aceh Tamiang, is meticulously developed to accomplish the stated goals.

This activity will begin with an official opening at 08.00 WIB, where the school principal will give a speech to establish direction and objectives for the event. This opening will be a momentum to create a good and enthusiastic atmosphere, creating enthusiasm among attendees. The first session will comprise a presentation with the theme "Why is Literacy Culture Important?" which will be presented by a literacy education expert. This lecture seeks to offer a theoretical and contextual framework for the importance of literacy culture in the educational context. This workshop is expected to extend till 10.00 WIB, with the intention of offering in-depth insight to participants.

Next, we plan a short break at 10.00 WIB, which will be filled with a literacy exhibition. Participants will be given the opportunity to observe literacy work that has been generated by students, including writing, artwork, and other literacy projects. This will create a forum to praise the work of students and bring inspiration to seminar participants. The second session, which is planned from 10.30 to 12.00 WIB, will be the highlight of the event by hosting an interactive seminar entitled "Strategies for Implementing a Literacy Culture". In this session, participants will be separated into small groups to examine difficulties and opportunities in adopting a literacy culture in the school environment. They will be invited to exchange ideas and experiences, as well as design concrete action plans to be implemented following the seminar.

This activity will finish at 12.00 WIB with an official conclusion and presenting certificates to participants as thanks for their participation. The closure will involve presenting the conclusions of the seminar and a reminder of the necessity of mutual work in developing a sustainable literacy culture. This entire set of exercises is aimed to create a comprehensive learning experience, incorporating elements of theory, practice and interaction amongst participants. By incorporating all relevant parties, we seek to build positive momentum that encourages changes in the literacy approach at Tanah Merah Public Elementary School.

As a follow-up effort, we have also produced a complete documentation plan for this project. The documentation crew will be tasked with recording every moment in the form of images and videos which can subsequently be utilized to generate reports and disseminate information linked to this activity with associated parties. After the activity is complete, we plan to share the findings of the seminar, such as presentation materials and discussion conclusions, through communication channels that may be accessed by the entire school community, including the school, students and parents. This strives to ensure that the information and insights gathered can continue to be applied in daily life at school and at home.

Apart from that, we are also exploring continuing talks through online forums or specific discussion groups so that contact can continue and create space for the exchange of ideas and evaluation of the sustainability of this literacy program. With this action plan, we intend to generate a good influence and leave a sustainable footprint in establishing a literacy culture at Tanah Merah State Elementary School. A spirit of collaboration and commitment to improve the quality of education will be the major forces in accomplishing this common aim.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Community service in the form of a one-day lecture on the importance of literacy culture at Tanah Merah Elementary School, Aceh Tamiang, was carried out successfully and had a big beneficial impact. A detailed study of these programs yielded a number of noteworthy findings demonstrating changes in attitudes and understanding throughout the school community. First of all, the active participation of participants, especially teachers, students and parents, demonstrates the high level of interest and knowledge of the importance of literacy culture in the school environment. Intensive interaction in interactive seminar sessions demonstrates that this platform has succeeded in creating a space for sharing experiences, ideas and tactics in promoting literacy culture.



Figure 1. Initial program of community service

In terms of knowledge, the primary lecture on "Why is Literacy Culture Important?" succeeded in establishing a strong theoretical background, helping attendees comprehend the significance of literacy in improving the quality of education. This material also promotes further discussion concerning concrete implementation in everyday life. The literacy exhibition presented during the break provided extra insight into students' inventiveness in expressing themselves via diverse literacy works. This exhibition is vivid evidence of the potential that students have in strengthening their reading abilities.

Positive consequences are also obvious in the results of group discussion sessions during interactive seminars. Participants were actively involved in crafting action plans to promote a literacy culture in schools, showing actual commitment to implementing the ideas they had discussed. The giving of diplomas at the end of the event is not only an appreciation for participants' participation, but also a form of recognition of their joint commitment to developing reading culture at Tanah Merah State Elementary School.

The findings of this one-day session indicated a good impact that exceeded expectations. One of the primary outcomes is the improvement in participants' attitudes and understanding regarding literacy culture. Prior to this practice, literacy would have been regarded a facet of school restricted primarily to reading and writing skills. However, through keynote lectures and discussion sessions, participants grew increasingly aware of the deeper elements of literacy, which include critical thinking abilities, interpretation, and thorough knowledge of diverse sorts of texts. The involvement of participants, especially in interactive seminar sessions, demonstrates their great excitement and commitment to change. From the findings of group talks, a real and quantifiable action plan arose to implement a literacy culture in the school setting. The existence of this program shows that participants not only receive theoretical information but are also able to relate it to real circumstances at school.

The literacy exhibition presented over the break was a major highlight, displaying students' originality and aptitude in developing literacy works. This not only boosts students' sense of pride in their own work, but also gives seminar participants with inspiration regarding numerous approaches to develop reading skills among kids. Giving a certificate at the end of the activity is not only a gesture of thanks, but also a commitment to continue this trip to the next stage. Thus, this seminar is not simply a one-day activity, but rather the beginning of a united drive to enhance literacy at Tanah Merah State Elementary School.



Figure 2. Participant of the seminar

Furthermore, in-depth review and monitoring of the implementation of the action plans created by the participants will be an important step. This will assist assess the extent to which the ideas and techniques generated at the seminar can be implemented effectively in the educational context. Continuous commitment from all parties involved, including schools, instructors, students and parents, is crucial in preserving the sustainability of this good development. Thus, the results of this community activity represent the beginning of a major change in literacy growth at Tanah Merah State Elementary School. Hopefully the passion and awareness established in this activity can continue to grow and motivate meaningful action towards promoting literacy at the school and local community level.

CONCLUSION

Community service in the form of a one-day seminar on the importance of literacy culture at Tanah Merah State Elementary School, Aceh Tamiang, has been effectively implemented and left a substantial footprint on the development of literacy at the school level. The findings of the evaluation and reflection revealed that this action not only achieved the stated aims, but also generated a measurable positive impact. First of all, this seminar succeeded in enhancing the knowledge of educators, students and parents on the relevance of literacy culture in educational progress. A paradigm shift from a restricted understanding of literacy to a broader and holistic concept was effectively achieved through keynote talks and group discussions.

Active involvement in interactive seminar sessions creates room for the interchange of ideas and methods, which subsequently formulates actual action plans to develop a literacy culture. This reflects not only grasp of the subject, but also the participant's ability to link it to practical circumstances in school. Reading exhibitions showing students' efforts not only provide motivation for participants, but also provide ideas for various ways of strengthening reading skills among kids. This is evident evidence of creative potential that needs to be acknowledged and fostered in the educational environment.

The awarding of diplomas at the end of the event is not only a statement of thanks, but also a pledge to continue this cooperative effort. Continuous dedication and cooperation from all relevant stakeholders is the key to preserving this good momentum towards sustainable transformation. In-depth review and monitoring of the implementation of the ensuing action plans will be an essential step forward. This is not just to examine the success of these ideas but also to ensure that the excitement and commitment established in this activity can evolve into a positive habit at school. Thus, this community activity is not just a one-day event, but a successful first step in building literacy culture at Tanah Merah State Elementary School. Hopefully this spirit will continue to flourish and provide a starting point for more good changes in literacy development at the school and local community level.

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