

## THE ROLE OF THE KUBU RAYA REGENCY LIBRARY IN PROMOTING A CULTURE OF LITERACY

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### ABSTRACT

The role of the Kubu Raya District Library in realizing a culture of literacy among the community can be said to have not been as effective as expected. This is based on research constrained by the availability of budget funds and human resources. The research data was obtained from observations and interviews with research subjects selected purposively. This descriptive research with a qualitative approach found that the Kubu Raya District Library has not played a role in fostering a culture of literacy among the community. This is evident in its role as a facilitator, where the Regional Library has not been able to facilitate several facilities and infrastructure that support the realization of a culture of literacy in several school libraries and Community Reading Parks (TBM) in Kubu Raya Regency. Meanwhile, its role as a public servant has been carried out in accordance with the provisions. The role as a Companion, which is essentially a partner in realizing a culture of literacy, based on the results of the research, the existing companions have never received any training, thus affecting their ability as companions. The role as a Partner, the regional library has not fully carried out its role in fostering, supporting, and collaborating in efforts to improve the community's literacy culture with existing literacy activists. Meanwhile, in its role as a funder, regional libraries do not provide assistance in the form of funds but rather act as intermediaries for literacy activists requesting assistance from the National Library. Based on the research results, the following recommendations are made: as facilitators, regional libraries can innovate in accordance with their duties and responsibilities; as mentors, they can provide motivation, support, and inspiration for literacy activists. As a partner, regional libraries can collaborate with the private sector and, in their role as funders, due to their limitations, libraries can focus on important activities that have an impact on realizing a culture of literacy in the community.

**Keywords:** *Role, Library, realize, community literacy*

### INTRODUCTION

The era of transformation demands the ability to adapt for all parties to learn and utilize technology effectively. As a large country with the largest population after China, Indonesia has considerable opportunities to develop its potential, not only in terms of its natural resources but also its human resources. With a large population, Indonesia has the potential to improve development in all areas. The knowledge of the Indonesian people ( ) in various fields greatly influences certain activities in processing information and knowledge. Therefore, to become a potential human resource in development, knowledge is needed that is not only obtained from formal education but can also be obtained through various means. One of them is by enjoying reading.

Reading will enrich knowledge, insight, and hone analytical and creative abilities, make one intelligent, shape good character and personality, and improve self-quality.

Libraries, as a means or forum for realizing the intelligence of a community or nation, cannot be separated from the world of education. Education requires individuals to learn and use libraries as a means of searching for the information they need. Frequent reading improves an individual's ability to process and understand the information they receive, interpret it, and think critically, which is known as literacy. The Ministry of Education and Culture (2016) explains that literacy is defined as the skill of reaching, exploring, and utilizing something wisely through various activities such as seeing, listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Meanwhile, according to Suyono et al. (2017), literacy is an ability that is related to thinking, reading, and writing activities, which focuses on mastering skills, understanding information thoroughly, critically, innovatively, and creatively.

Libraries play an important role in expanding knowledge, preserving cultural heritage, supporting education, and providing access to information for the community. In addition, libraries also play an important role in efforts to educate the nation/community through school literacy movements, because in libraries, the community and students can read a wide variety of books available in the library.

Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation (Permendikbud) Number 23 of 2015 (this law forms the basis of the literacy movement) concerning the cultivation of character through the habit of reading for 15 minutes before studying. In this Ministry of Education and Culture regulation, through the Language and Book Development Agency, efforts are made to increase the provision of reading books in schools and communities so that all Indonesian citizens can read and write and have the ability to interpret and think critically and use information properly.

With this role, libraries become one of the gateways in efforts to create a literate society. According to Ashidiqie (2020), roles can be viewed from the dynamic perspective of a person's position. If they have fulfilled their obligations and rights in accordance with their position, then they have carried out their role. Meanwhile, according to Arthur and Emily (in Faozan, 2013), a role is behavior aimed at realizing the obligations and rights desired by citizens/the community for a transformation or change that has a positive impact on the situation ( ). Based on the two opinions above, the role of libraries is expected to serve as a bridge for opening the minds of the community to the importance of literacy.

Kubu Raya Regency is part of West Kalimantan Province, where several subdistricts in Kubu Raya Regency have low levels of community literacy. These areas/districts include Batu Ampar District, Terentang District Kubu District, and Teluk Pakedai District. This is influenced by several factors such as geographical conditions, economic factors, social levels, accessibility to education, and a lack of public awareness of the importance of literacy.

The Kubu Raya Regency Library and Archives Office has made various efforts to promote a culture of literacy through several literacy programs such as mobile libraries, partnerships with other parties such as Community Reading Park (TBM) activists in each sub-district and school, school and community collaborations, and competitions related to literacy skills. However, these efforts have not yet had an impact on increasing the literacy culture of the community, especially in Kubu Raya Regency. This is based on research findings that indicate constraints in terms of available budget, human resource capabilities, and geographical constraints, where

some areas in Kubu Raya Regency can only be reached by water, making implementation difficult (in terms of facilities and infrastructure).

To analyze the issues under study, the author uses Sihombing's (2001) theory of the role of the library and archives department ( ), which explains several characteristics or criteria of the role that the library and archives department is expected to perform:

1. Role as Facilitator. In this case, the government essentially acts as a supporter or facilitator that is integrated with the community, friendly, able to capture the aspirations of the community, respect the community, able to pave the way, able to find opportunities, able to ease the burden of work on the community, able to provide support, and able to foster communication and community involvement without the community feeling burdened.
2. Role as Servant of the People. In this role, improving education relies on the community, where the government provides the best services for the people. Serving the people is the main guideline in advancing and helping the community to gain strength so that it can develop properly. The government, with its state apparatus and officials, needs to show itself as a servant or provider that is quick to pay attention and respond, without being complicated, and not as a party that must be served. The community is positioned as the main focus of service.
3. The role as a government companion requires the government to relinquish its role or function as the sole decision maker in improving learning activities and become a peer to the community it serves, providing various needs and activities for the community. The ability of staff to be friends, peers, and loyal colleagues in discussing, debating, helping to plan and implement activities needed by the community must continue to be pursued.
4. As Partners. If we start from the concept of empowerment that positions the community as the main subject, then the community must be viewed as *partners*. The relationship in decision-making is parallel, horizontal, and equal in the same flow. There is no desire to win alone, no desire to appear alone or to be known, and no desire to be recognized. As colleagues or partners, organizations or governments must be able to support each other, and there should be no differences with the community, nor should there be any interference that will burden the community, passively , which will ultimately destroy the creative power of the community.
5. As a Fund Provider. The government must recognize that the communities it assists are those that need assistance, both economically and in terms of knowledge. The government contributes by facilitating funds to provide all the educational activities needed by the community, which will be distributed in accordance with the recommendations of the managing agency.

With this role, the Kubu Raya Regional Library and Archives is expected to be able to play a part in fostering and realizing a culture of literacy with an interest in reading and writing, as well as the ability to interpret and analyze various issues that may be faced by the community in an era of transformation that requires the community to be literate in knowledge, technological advances, and information.

Based on the background of the above issues and in order to understand and analyze the role of regional libraries and archives, the researcher was interested in raising this issue in a study entitled "The Role of the Library and Archives Office in Realizing a Culture of Literacy in Kubu Raya Regency."

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The type of research used in this study is descriptive with a qualitative approach, which is a study that seeks to explore and describe the observed phenomena/conditions in a complete, free, and comprehensive manner. The data collection techniques used in this study were interviews, observation, and documentation. The informants in this study were selected from among those who understand and are involved in literacy activities in Kubu Raya Regency. The research locations were in several areas in Kubu Raya Regency with a focus on good literacy development in Kubu Raya Regency. The collected data was then examined by analyzing it repeatedly and interrelatedly as described by Miles and Huberman (Miles & Saldana, 2014), which included data simplification or reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The Kubu Raya District Library and Archives plays an important role in fostering a culture of literacy among the community by providing facilities and infrastructure and improving human resource capabilities as part of supporting the success of a culture of literacy, such as providing training, holding competitions related to literacy, and other literacy programs. However, this has not been fully realized due to budget constraints.

The Role of the Library and Archives Office as a Facilitator of the National Literacy Movement ( ) in Realizing a Culture of Literacy in Kubu Raya Regency

### **The Role of the Library and Archives Office as a Facilitator of the National Literacy Movement ( ) in Realizing a Culture of Literacy in Kubu Raya Regency**

The role of the Kubu Raya Regency Library and Archives Office as a facilitator is responsible for the availability of supporting facilities in the library. As a facilitator, the availability of facilities that meet standards will make library users feel comfortable and at home in the library. Based on the research results, regional libraries are places where the community can explore more information from the available book collections. however, library users/the community feel uncomfortable in the regional library due to several factors, such as the very limited size of the library room, which is only 8 x 11 meters with 46 cabinets and bookshelves, making the library room very cramped with a collection of 9,144 books. Meanwhile, the reading room measures 2 x 4 meters and the children's room has very minimal facilities and is not neatly arranged. In addition, the regional library is integrated with the Kubu Raya Regency Library and Archives Office. Some of the people interviewed by the author actually said they did not know there was a library in Kubu Raya Regency.

Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) of Kubu Raya Regency, the literacy rate of the people of Kubu Raya Regency can be said to be still low. This is in line with what was stated by the Head of the Library and Archives Office of Kubu Raya Regency, who said that the low literacy rate of the community is greatly influenced by geographical conditions. several subdistricts in Kubu Raya Regency, which can only be accessed by river (such as in Terentang Subdistrict, Teluk Pakedai Subdistrict, Batu Ampar Subdistrict, and several parts of Sungai Kakap Subdistrict), economic and social factors, accessibility to education, lack of interest in reading, and minimal public awareness of the importance of literacy. The lack of interest in reading culture, according to Saepudin (2015), is dependent on the following factors:

1. Availability of appropriate reading materials
2. Diverse collections that are easy to find again

3. Reading materials
4. Meets the needs of its users.
5. Literacy understanding

One of the problems in realizing a culture of literacy for the people of Kubu Raya Regency is the availability of budget funds, which affects the supporting facilities and does not meet the standards that can be provided by facilitators, in this case the regional library.

Similarly, several literacy activist communities and Community Reading Parks (TBM) in Kubu Raya Regency rarely receive supporting facilities for the institutions they have built. They generally struggle with the intention and enthusiasm to advance literacy in Kubu Raya Regency.

### **The Role of the Library and Archives Office as a Public Servant in Realizing a Culture of Literacy in Kubu Raya Regency.**

Services to the community are provided in an effort to improve education for the community, whereby the government offers the best services to the community. Serving the community is the main guideline in advancing and helping the community to gain strength so that it can develop properly. The government, with its state apparatus and officials, needs to show itself as a fast, attentive, responsive, and straightforward servant or provider of services, rather than a party that must be served. The community is positioned as the main focus of service.

The Regional Library, in promoting a culture of literacy among the people of Kubu Raya Regency, provides several services in the form of a mobile library, a digital reading corner at the Public Service Mall, literacy tours for preschool children, and education for parents on the importance of reading aloud to children. The library also provides a collection of books at several subdistrict offices, schools, correctional institutions, and reading parks.

In providing services to the community, the regional library offers responsive, straightforward service and does not act as a party that wants to be served. In addition, the library directs library users who want to read or borrow books (for library members), such as the POCADI (digital reading corner) service, which is a service that provides the community with access to various digital and print reading sources as well as information and communication technology facilities. The aim is to increase literacy and reading interest among the community by providing easy access to information. In its role as a service provider, the Kubu Raya District Library has carried out its duties in accordance with its regulations in serving library users.

### **The Role of the Kubu Raya Regency Library and Archives Office as a Facilitator in Fostering a Culture of Literacy**

Facilitators serve as a bridge between the community and various related organizations that are needed to expand the group. As facilitators, government officials must relinquish their position as the sole decision-makers in the advancement of learning activities and become partners of the community who must assist and provide for the various needs and activities of the community. The ability of facilitators to act as friends, companions, and loyal partners in discussing, helping to design and implement programs needed by citizens/the community must be continuously improved.

Assistants (consisting of librarians, technical staff, administrative staff, library users, and volunteers) must receive training so that they have the ability to contribute to the community in the management of library activities and

assistance/services, both directly and indirectly. However, in reality, based on interviews with the author, the assistants who are partners of the regional library in Kubu Raya district have never received any form of training from the regional library. They (literacy activists), with their noble goal of increasing the community's interest in reading and literacy, struggle with the abilities they have without ever receiving guidance and training.

### **The Role of the Library and Archives Office as a Partner in Realizing a Culture of Literacy in Kubu Raya Regency**

As a partner, the Regional Library positions the community as actors, so the community should be considered as partners in decision-making that is horizontal, equal in the same line, sharing with each other, and not wanting to win alone. As colleagues, the government can give, support, complement each other, and not oppose the community, not cause difficulties, not interfere in ways that will make things difficult, make the community passive, and ultimately destroy community innovation. To support the success in realizing a culture of literacy in the Kubu Raya Regency community, the Library and Archives Office collaborates with several agencies and regional institutions/organizations in several activities such as training in digital literacy, agriculture, fisheries, and others. In addition, regional libraries also partner with non-governmental parties such as several communities and literacy activists in Kubu Raya Regency who are very concerned with efforts to improve the literacy skills of the community in Kubu Raya Regency, such as school libraries and the Community Reading Park (TBM) community.

The existence of TBMs in the community, especially in areas that are very difficult to reach by regional libraries, can assist the government in improving community literacy through the availability of their book collections. In Kubu Raya Regency, there are school libraries and TBMs that are considered to be well-managed and effective in fostering community literacy development, such as the library at State Elementary School 22 Sungai Ambawang, the TBM in Tanjung Saleh Village, Sungai Kakap District, and the TBM "Rumah Pintar Punggur Cerdas" in Punggur Kecil Village, Sungai Kakap District. As partners of the regional library, the community and literacy activists in Kubu Raya Regency do not depend entirely on the local government. They are independent, collaborating and establishing good relationships with external parties and other literacy activists.

### **The Role of the Library and Archives Office as a Funding Agency in Realizing a Culture of Literacy in Sanggau District**

In its role as a funder, the government must know which communities need assistance, both economically and in terms of knowledge. The government contributes by facilitating funds to support all activities needed by the community, which will be distributed according to the recommendations of the managing agency.

The role of the Kubu Raya Regency Library and Archives Office as a funding agency is to facilitate and support all activities in the form of services provided. In this case, the government, in the form of the Library and Archives Office, in its role as a funding agency, does not provide assistance in the form of funds/money, but rather provides assistance in the form of resources and facilities.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that there are several roles of related agencies in realizing a culture of literacy.

As a facilitator, the Kubu Raya Regency Library and Archives Office has not fully facilitated several libraries and community reading parks in Kubu Raya Regency due to limited budget funds. Meanwhile, the facilities available in the regional libraries in Kubu Raya Regency are very minimal and can be said to be inadequate and uncomfortable as places for reading and relaxing. The Kubu Raya Regency Library and Archives Office, in its role as a service provider, has carried out its duties in accordance with the regulations in serving library users. As a partner, the Kubu Raya District Library and Archives Office has never provided guidance and training to other partners in Kubu Raya District in an effort to improve their ability to promote a culture of literacy, because these partners are an extension of the regional library in improving community literacy. As a partner, the Kubu Raya Regency Library and Archives Office has not fully carried out its role in fostering, supporting, and collaborating in efforts to improve the community's literacy culture with literacy activists in Kubu Raya Regency. This includes assistance and guidance for TBM human resources. Literacy activists, communities, and TBMs do not depend on regional libraries; instead, they establish partnerships with other parties to support their activities. The role of the Library and Archives Office as a funder does not mean that the library provides assistance in the form of funds, but rather that due to limited funds, the regional library acts as an intermediary for literacy activists to submit requests for assistance to the national library.

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