

# Lifelong Learning in Realizing the Learning Society

(The analysis of non-formal educational services of sant'egidio community toward the scavengers' children in Pemulung Village, Jogjakarta)

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**Abstract**—Nowadays, the number of scavengers is increasing. The lack of awareness of lifelong learning becomes one of the reasons why many people decide to be scavengers. They think that education can be only got in formal institutions. Whereas referring to the concept of lifelong learning, everyone can get an education, including the scavengers. This research aims to answer the question, “To what extent the services of non-formal education of San't Egidio Community in implementing lifelong learning for the scavengers' children in Pemulung Village Jogjakarta are done”. The method used in this research is qualitative descriptive analysis. In gathering data, the researcher uses an interview and observation. The subject of this research is the scavengers' children who join non-formal education while the informant subject is parents and the members of Sant Egidio community. This research indicates that the service of non-formal education given by the members of San't Egidio is concerning with tutoring for the scavengers' children. By tutoring, the scavengers' children adapt themselves to learn and develop their knowledge and creativity.

**Keywords**—*educational service; lifelong learning; scavengers' children*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Scavenging is usually done by poor people living in the city. It doesn't need a high level of skills since everyone can do it, including children. The majority of scavengers admit that scavenging is the last alternative job for them because they can't compete with so many educated people to get better jobs.

In the globalization era, basic education becomes the main qualification to get jobs in Indonesia. By getting an education, people can optimize their talents and skills to support them to meet the job qualifications. Furthermore, increasing the quality of education itself has to be considered since the qualified education will lead someone to contribute more for his/her family, society, and also the country. The education itself can be grabbed through the formal and non-formal process. There are so many educational institutions in Indonesia which carry one big vision, namely making everyone smart. As the quality of education develops, the educational fund also increases. Consequently, poor people (including the scavengers) can't send their children to school.

Facing this phenomenon, San't Egidio community decides to participate in making every child smart. In running this mission, there are so many things executed such as educational services. Pemulung Village Jogjakarta becomes the place to serve. At this village, the members of this community start to build a library and a learning house called “Sekolah Damai”. The fundamental reason why this community wants to contribute more in this village is that there is about 80% of the scavengers who didn't get chances to take 9 years of compulsory education. Consequently, there are only a few scavengers who can write and read. Furthermore, the participants of tutoring are the children who don't have chances to take a formal education and those who already dropped out of schools. Sometimes, there are also adult participants who join the tutoring.

San't Egidio is a community that engages in humanity services. The services are free of charge. Pemulung Village is one of the places that this community serves. There are so many visitations and helps from civil society organizations from a public or private partnership. Kanisius Bookstore is one of the donators that always donates books to the library in the Pemulung village.

The tutoring activities done by the members of San't Egidio community are the non-formal educational services. According to Soelaman Joesoef, non-formal education refers to every chance in which there is one-way communication outside the school so someone can get information, knowledge, training, or tutoring based on the age and life needs [1]. Besides, Soelaman emphasized that non-formal education also aims to develop skills, attitude, and values that enable someone to be a better person in his/her social life. This kind of education is given by the members of San't Egidion to the scavengers in Pemulung Village Jogjakarta as a part of the lifelong learning. The implementation of the learning activities in that village indicates that in lifelong learning, the learning process is not only done in the formal educational institutions.

Lifelong learning includes the formal and non-formal process. It can be done throughout someone's life. Based on this concept, lifelong learning must be a continuous learning. By learning on and on, people catch up with the information, especially for those who are elderly. This concept suits the

services of San't Egidio community to the scavengers in Pemulung Village Jogjakarta.

## II. RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, the researcher uses qualitative research. Margono stated that qualitative research is research to understand a phenomenon concerning with everything experienced by the research subject by describing words based on the observation conducted [2]. The method used is descriptive analysis. Descriptive analysis research is an effort to indicate the real problems or conditions so the method only admits the fact. Moreover, the result of research is emphasized to give a view objectively dealing with the real condition from the object researched. In this research, the researcher collects the data by observing and interviewing to analyze the services of non-formal education that have been done by the members of San't Egidio community to the scavengers' children. The research is conducted in Pemulung Village Jogjakarta. The participants at this research are four members of San't Egidio community, the scavengers, and their children.

## III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The importance of lifelong learning hasn't been fully realized by the middle to lower class. The main reason is concerning with the old paradigm that has grown for a long time in their mind stating that scavenging is a simple job to do; it doesn't need specific skills. Besides, the scavengers' inability to send their children to school owing to the economic matters also gives a bad impact to their children; they only think how to scavenge in order to survive. Consequently, this way of life continues.

The existence of San't Egidio community with its mission for humanity utters the concept of lifelong learning which focuses on saving the young generation, especially the scavengers' children. The community also built a library that has two functions, namely tutoring room and learning room for the children. Moreover, the members of this community alternately give learning guidance based on the schedule made. Nevertheless, there is one big inhibit for these activities. It is concerning with the schedule. It sometimes has to be adapted to the leisure time of the children who have to scavenge in the afternoon and the members of San't Egidio community that are mostly college students. The concept of lifelong learning which is initiated by the members of San't Egidio community consists of:

### A. Reading Writing Tutoring

Reading and writing is the most effective media to enhance knowledge and catch up with the information from everywhere creatively and objectively. Reading and writing will help someone to be more critical and creative in facing and solving life matters. These skills are always taught in schools. Nevertheless, not all the children can get chances to develop these skills owing to the economic matters and their parents' wrong paradigm toward education.

The guidance from the members of San't Egidio community focuses on the children's skills in reading and writing. In the educational sector, one of the aims to be reached

is the growing of learning society. The learning society refers to the changes in society from the pseudo-life (dreaming society) to be planning society. The pseudo-life is described by Freire as a situation where society feels under pressure, indifferent, and shackled in life sufferings so the society moves to be in silence culture condition [3].

The first concept of lifelong learning, emphasizing that people in a society can learn and must learn on and on, aims to increase the quality of life. In achieving the aim, the concept of learning to be and the learning society is initiated. The concept of learning to be becomes the aim of learning to think, be a productive citizen, and behave as a good citizen.

### B. Calculation Tutoring

San't Egidio community also initiates the calculation tutoring. It becomes an important part of the members' services although in the application, the members of San't Egidio only teach addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Unfortunately, many scavengers' children still haven't mastered the basic calculation. Furthermore, the passion to learn which is very low becomes another challenge for the members of San't Egidio community. They have to design interesting learning that can attract the children to learn calculation. Fortunately, simple stuffs can be used in the game that can attract the children's attention. Eventually, the children are really happy to learn using that method. It can be seen from the daily participation of the children.

Calculation is really important in every aspect. The understanding about basic calculation is a compulsory for children to master. That's why, the use of interesting method is always given in the learning process.

### C. Good Indonesian Skills

As we know, language is a means of communication; it expresses thoughts, emotions, feelings, and desires of human beings. It can be expressed spoken or written. Furthermore, language has a central role to create a civilized society. At this point, the level of politeness is determined by how someone speaks (about the intonation and information given).

Language skills don't merely refer to the grammar mastery, but also refer to the ability to express and appreciate. According to Finocchiaro, language is a system of an arbitrary vocal symbol which enables everyone in a specific culture or others who learn the cultural system, communicate with each other [4]. Generally, words used in Indonesian are correct and harmonious. It means that the words are correlated to the speakers' idea or intention or the real meaning based on the conversational situation (namely, language's improved spelling guide (EYD). According to Moeliono, a standard language has some rules which hold the dynamics stability, a definition to accept the changes of vocabularies and terms [5]. Gorys Keraf also stated that a standard language is a language which is accepted as a general standard for every speaker of that language [6]. In this case, the grammar of good Indonesian refers to the language which meets truthful and correct requirements. It means that the use of the language must be correlated to the purpose and also follow the correct grammatical rules.

Dealing with this aspect, the members of San't Egidio teach the scavengers' children to have good Indonesian skills. The use of those skills is really significant to be mastered since the scavengers don't have strong basic in Indonesian; they are used to use their local language in daily conversations with others.

At the next phase, after knowing that the learners have mastered counting, reading, and writing, the learners are directed to join the government programs such as sewing courses and other based-creativity training.

#### *D. Skills*

According to Qodratilah, the word "skill" refers to the proficiency to finish tasks given [7]. At this point, one of the skills taught by the members of San't Egidio Community is waste management. Waste is any substance which is discarded after primary use or is worthless, defective, and of no use. It can be divided into organic and inorganic waste. The utilization of inorganic waste is by recycling. Some of the examples of inorganic waste that can be recycled are plastic, bottles of aqua, metal, and paper. Dealing with this point, the members of San't Egidio Community teach the scavengers' children how to recycle the waste off daily scavenging activities. Waste like plastic and bottles of aqua collected is recycled to be flower pots and decorations in a room. This effort is done by the members of San't Egidio Community to increase and develop the children's skills.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The concept of lifelong learning for realizing the learning society can be one of the solutions to solve the problem of illiteracy for the lower class in Indonesia. Scavengers are those who seldom get chances to get an education. There are some fundamental factors, such as economic and social matters. In

the case of economic matters, the scavengers can't send their children to school so their children grow with a wrong paradigm in their mind that they have to scavenge in order to survive. At this phase, San't Egidio community targets the children who already dropped out from schools. They will be pushed to continue their formal education through government programs, namely *paket* A, B, and C. Through this way, they are expected to get better jobs after finishing their school. Furthermore, non-formal education brought by this community helps the society to access information and increase their knowledge through the library built. This community also invites society to be aware of the importance of lifelong learning for realizing the learning society.

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