

The Portrait of Reading Habit and Interest of Tangerang City's Community

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Abstract--Reading is an important activity in improving people's life quality, and therefore it needs to grow and breed into a habit. This descriptive study investigated reading habit and interest of Tangerang City community which spread throughout 13 subdistricts. To collect the data, the study utilized a questionnaire distributed to 350 target respondents. The study revealed that 40% of the people like to spend their leisure time for reading activities. They preferred reading newspapers articles about religious affairs to other topics. To get their reading need, they often bought religious books from the bookstore. In addition, they also acknowledged that the family played an important role in providing the conducive environment that contributed the growth and development of reading habits. Therefore, it can be concluded the people's reading habit is still in the low category. There must be any efforts from the family and government to help them increase their reading habit and interest so that they can be well informed.

Keywords---reading habit, reading interest, newspaper, promotion, Tangerang City

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading is a very critical thing to establish for every individual in the society to construct a high quality, a superior character and an advanced society. Reading as defined by Palani is a tool of the acquisition mind; it is the vehicle for obtaining ideas that cannot be transmitted verbally [1]. The individual who reads well has at his command a means for widening his mental horizons and for multiplying his opportunities for experience. This definition indicates the importance of reading in individual growth that leads to social influences. Gokbulut added that reading plays an essential role in the personal development of people and the progress of societies as a whole. Reading improves the manner in which people think and ensure that they can broaden their perspectives [2].

An advanced country is prominently characterized by the stability of a nation's economy, peace and the mastery of science and technology, as well as high level of education. These will be indicators for being qualified citizen. To become a qualified society, education is the main key to obtain. Education is not only obtained through formal education but can also be pursued through non-formal levels by becoming a lifelong learner who utilizes various learning facilities and

resources to enhance his knowledge and learning experience. Efforts to improve the quality of knowledge through this long-life learners' movement will be able to create information-lit society that encourages the creation of a literary environment which in turn will have intelligent, knowledgeable and broad-minded people and citizens. To make knowledgeable society, reading activities are certainly needed as a way to improve knowledge, and learning experiences that can be obtained indirectly. Reading activity certainly needs to be formed and developed in each individual so that an interest construction is created which will gradually turn into a reading habit.

In Indonesia, topic on reading habit and interest has attracted researchers to study such as Owusu-Acheaw (2004), Yusbarna (2008) and Mardiah (2014). Owusu-Acheaw (2004) mentioned on the strategic of reading in improving academic achievement. According to his study, there was positive and significant relationship between the reading capability and habits and the academic achievement among students [3]. According to Mardiah, based on the data from the Central Statistics Agency in 2006, Indonesian people have not made reading activities as the main source of information [4]. People prefer watching television (85.9%), listening to the radio (40.3%) to reading newspapers (23.5%). Meanwhile, in 2009 based on data reported by the Organization for Economic Cooperation (OECD), the reading culture of the Indonesian people was at the lowest position of 52 countries in the East Asia region. In 2011, based on the United Nations Educational Survey, the Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), this low reading interest, as reported by the reading index of the Indonesian people, was only 0.001 (out of a thousand population, there was only one person who still had a high reading interest). In 2012 Indonesia was ranked 124th out of 187 world countries in the assessment of the Human Development Index (HDI), specifically meeting the basic needs of the population, including education, health and 'literacy'.

Another study found that the ability to read of Indonesian people is in the last rank of the 27 countries studied [5]. In addition, according to Yusbarna, there was a serious problem regarding the ability to read among students at the junior and senior high school level. There was a fact that there were students at the elementary school who have not been able to read well and have not been able to understand the written message in a passage [6].

This study aims at answering the question of how reading habits and interest of Tangerang City's community, including spending leisure time, time frequency and length of reading activities, subjects and types of materials to read, and the way to get the materials. In addition, this study also addresses questions regarding the role of the family environment in building interest and reading habits and interest.

II. METHOD

The research approach used in the study of reading interest is quantitative descriptive which uses questionnaire instruments to get an overview of people's reading interest in the City of Tangerang. They were Cipondoh, Cibodas, Jatiuwung, Karawachi, Tangerang, Benda, Ceper, Neglasari, Priuk, Pinang, Ciledug, Larangan and Karangtengah. The survey was conducted in 13 sub-districts in Tangerang City, and distributed to 350 respondents. Data analysis was done using the descriptive statistics to determine the most frequent phenomena of the reading habit and interest that emerged in the target community.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study involved 350 respondents with diverse sex and age. Here are the demographic data as presented on Table 1.

TABLE 1 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

Gender	Age						Total
	< 15	16-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	> 56	
Male	2	42	34	30	10	2	120
Female	2	49	27	24	12	1	115
Total	4	91	61	54	22	3	235

Here are the data of the people's reading habit and interest as available on table 2.

TABLE 2 DATA ON READING HABIT & INTEREST

Domains	Frequency				
Leisure Time	Reading N=130 (40 %)	Watching TV N=71 (22,4 %)	Running hobby N=80 (25,2%)	Chatting N=14 (4,4%)	Others N=19 (6,0%)
Reading time/day	an hour N=142(44,8%)	2 hours N=75(23,7%)	3 hours N=45 (14,2%)	>3 hours N=25 (7,9%)	Others N=25 (7,9%)
Book/a month	a book N=140 (44,2%)	2 books N=73 (23%)	3 books N=30 (9,5%)	>3 books N=34 (10,7%)	Others N=34 (10,7%)
Frequency of Reading	Everyday N=142 (44,8%)	A week N=86 (27,1%)	2 weeks N=24 (7,6%)	a month N=21 (6,6%)	Others N=40(12,6%)
Reading Material	Book N=95 (30%)	Newspaper N=113 (35,6%)	Magazine N=46 (14,5%)	Tabloid N=8 (2,5%)	Others N=49 (15,5%)
Reading Format	Book N=123 (38,8%)	Magazine N=80 (25,2%)	Newspaper N=56 (17,7%)	Online N=45 (14,2%)	Others N=7 (2,2%)
Topic interest	Religion N=128 (40,4%)	Hobbies N=74 (23,3%)	Social-politics N=61 (19,2%)	Sport, music N=74 (23,3%)	Others
Ways to get Reading Material	Buying N=190 (59,9%)	Borrowing (library) N=65 (20,5%)	Borrowing (neighbors) N=38 (12%)	Borrowing (family) N= 24 (7,6%)	Others
Roles of family Building reading habit	Reading stories since childhood N=120 (38,5%)	Seeing parents read books N=110 (34,7%)	Asking kids to visit the library N=40 (12,6%)	Asking kids to bookstore N=30 (9,5%)	Others

Table 1 shows that 120 respondents were males (51.4%), and 115 respondents were females (48.6%). Even though males were outnumbered of female, such difference was not significantly distinctive. The data are still useful and contributive in describing comprehensively the portrait of Tangerang city people's reading habit and interest.

Different from table 1, table 2 was about the people's reading habit and interest seen from more specific domains, such as reading materials, or the ways they developed their reading habit. It is known that people of Tangerang City still spent their free time running hobbies and watching television and chatting. These were done by more than half of the Tangerang City community respondents reached 59% with a total of 187 respondents. However, spending the free time for reading was still dominant that reached 130 respondents (41.0%).

In term of the frequency and time consumed for reading, it was found that most people in Tangerang City spent on hour a day for reading. It was evidenced by 142 respondents or 44.8 % who claimed to have done it. Meanwhile, there were only 25 respondents or 7.9 % who spent more than three hours for reading every day. Table 2 also revealed that 140 respondents (44,2%) read one book a month. Newspaper was the most frequent media to read as there were 113 respondents or 35% who acknowledged it, while tabloid was the least frequent to read. There were only eight respondents (2.5%) who read it. In terms of reading material format, printed materials were more preferred to read to the digital or online materials. The table indicated that there were 123 respondents or 38,7% who like printed materials. Religion was the most popular topic to read among people in Tangerang City that reached 128 respondents or 40.4%. In addition, buying from bookshop was the main option chosen by 190 respondents (59.9%) to provide themselves with reading materials. The existing libraries or reading parks were less used by people to find books and other materials to read. There were only 65 respondents or 20.5 % choosing libraries and reading parks to fulfill their interest in reading.

Based on the description above, this finding as consistent with the results of a previous study conducted by Mardiah (2014) about the reading habits of Indonesian people. Her study found that reading activities were not the main interest of spending their free or leisure time [4]. This study was also coincided with previous research of cultural habits and practices in Spain 2010-2011 as reported by Fernandez-Blanco (2017) that Spaniard over the age 15 had not read book for leisure purposes. They preferred watching TV to reading. Television and other technology media dominate the community's choice [7]. It means that they have replaced or substituted the activities of reading. This study also acquired the same finding that Indonesian people still preferred watching TV and listening to the radio to reading.

In relation to time frequency of reading, the result of study was slightly different from Awaln (2018) stating that time spent for reading is once a month while this research found that the frequency of the most widely used time in reading was every day and a week, but this research proved that providing

time for reading regularly or in a scheduled time and adhering such a schedule was a form of reading habit that can shape reading interest [8]. However, this study was contrasted to preceding research on time consumption for reading in Spain. The time used to read book is 3 months or a quarter and the number of books consumption is on average one book. Fernandez-Blanco stated that someone can find their basic needs through reading, topics, content, subject matter, level of difficulty and the presentation which can encourage interest [7]. This supports the findings of researchers that reading topics could encourage children's desire to read, which in turn would encourage reading interest. In terms of the most interested reading materials, the result was contrasted to the discovery of the study done by Ramadhan [9] indicating that fiction has the strongest appeal among other books such as information books and reference books. Fiction collections are collections that are most often used by children. This was in accordance with Fitria's study (2018) that stated fiction collections as high choices included such as novels, short stories, magazines, and comics [10]. This is because the fiction collections suit the tastes of children with a light storyline and attractively packaged. While, this inquiry found that the highest interested topic is in the field of religion. almost all of people of Tangerang city are fond of reading in the field of religion

Related to the most preferred reading source format, this study found that books (printed materials) were the respondents liked the most. This was contradicted to the research finding of Loan's study that pointed out more students read books at lower levels whilst at higher levels, more students read electronic information [11]. Furthermore, the research also indicated that college students reading habits changed from paper-based to Internet-based reading due to the computer technology.

Meanwhile, the involving of family in reading strongly brings positive impact to form reading habit and interest. This result strengthened the previous study conducted by Yusof (2010) on the Influence of family factors on reading habits and interest among level 2 pupils in national primary schools in Malaysia. According to that study, family factors strongly and positively influence pupils reading habits and interest [12].

Other finding in this study is reading topics that encourage public interest in reading. This research found that most people in Tangerang city like topics related to religion and to obtain reading material they like most is by buying it to a bookstore. People of Tangerang city in this study have gained the development of reading habits and interest from the family through reading bedtime stories and this also encourages the growth of reading habits and interest among people of Tangerang city

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that reading habit and interest of people in Tangerang city have already grown but they are still low. The time allocation used for reading is an hour every day but it takes one month to spend one book. The community of Tangerang city has used its leisure time to read even though it has only reached 40 percent. On the other hand, 60% of the people of Tangerang city still spend their time watching television, running hobbies and chatting. The types of reading materials that are in great demand by people of Tangerang city are newspapers. Meanwhile, in relation to the types of reading sources that are in great demand by people of Tangerang city are newspapers. While the preferred reading format is printed forms such as books, magazines and others. Most of people of Tangerang city prefer the printed format to online sources, only a small percentage or only 14 percent of the urban population of Tangerang city are fond of reading through online sources.

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