

Research Article

Indigenous Students' Interest in Studying in a Christian Religious College

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Abstract.

Reading is the key in any learning process, even if it is in the context of higher education. The problem that occurs is the lack of interest in reading among the society. The purpose of the study is to comprehend both the phenomena of indigenous students' low reading interest at Christian religious universities as well as the factors that influence their interest. Descriptive phenomenology research was used in this study. Seven students at the college met the requirements for the subject, including their active enrollment in Christian religious colleges and their willingness to participate in research on a voluntary basis. Thematic analysis was used for analyzing data. The researcher identified three main themes and seven sub-themes. The first theme is internal factors that have an impact on the interest and fondness for reading, consisting of one sub-theme, namely the internal interest of students who are less fond of reading. The second main theme, namely external factors, tends to be less supportive of interest and fondness for reading, which consists of three sub-themes such as social media and the immediate environment that do not support reading interest, attitudes of parents and family regarding diverse reading interests, and reading activity having a negative image among friends and peers. The third main theme is support and obstacles from the context of religious tertiary institutions, which consists of three sub-themes such as reading due to demands from assignments given by lecturers, lack of variety and completeness of books in the campus library, and exams and quizzes forcing subjects to read books. The implications of this study are input for students, lecturers, and higher education institutions in enhancing students' enthusiasm in reading.

Keywords: Christian religious college, indigenous students, reading interest

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1. INTRODUCTION

Reading is the main key in the learning process. To get a broad insight or knowledge, namely by reading, the more reading, the more new knowledge he gets. Most people do not like to read because reading is a boring activity and can make them sleepy coupled with reading content that is less interesting and less attractive [1]. According to Harmer (in Parmawati & Yugafiati, 2017) states that, reading is a very active job, meaning that by reading we are able to understand something or in other words by reading we are able to know, feel and understand about the world.

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The problem to be studied in this research is related to the low interest and reading habit among Indonesian people. This can be seen from the results of research conducted by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) (2016) showing that around 60% of the Indonesian population has an interest in reading, and only about 0.001% of the total books published in Indonesia are read by the Indonesian people. Based on the PISA report released on (December 3, 2019), Indonesia's reading interest score is ranked 72 out of 77 countries. Among Southeast Asian countries, Indonesia is at the bottom with the Philippines which is ranked last in reading [3]. Data from the Central Statistics Agency (in Donal, 2015) published a report stating that for Indonesians, reading is not an activity to obtain information. People would rather watch television (85.9%) and listen to the radio (40.3%) than read (23.5%). This means that reading to get new information is only done by 23.5% of the total Indonesian population. People prefer to get information from television and radio rather than reading. The data proves that reading has not become a necessity for society.

According to Good (in Kustini, 2020), reading as an indicator of literacy is the art of interpreting writing. Meanwhile, habits are repetitive actions that people do often and regularly, sometimes even without realizing it. Reading habits are patterns of behavior that require constant, regular, tend to unconsciously perform repeated actions that are applied in activities carried out as part of an individual's personality. Kustini (2020) define good reading habits as repetitive reading desire behavior that becomes a natural habit. The indicators of good reading habits are fluency, accuracy, high reading satisfaction, large amount of reading, good comprehension, positive attitude towards reading, regularity in reading, having a teacher who always encourages to love reading, choosing their own books, motivation to read, wanting to receive gifts in the form of books, and regular reading after school hours. On the other hand, bad reading habits can be classified as passive, backward and aimless reading habits. Consistent interest in reading and enjoyment of reading can form a reading culture as the ultimate goal of the reading process and activities.

A summary of the results of foreign research related to Reading Studies in Indonesia, namely Indonesia scored 6 hours per week (16th place) where the first place was occupied by India with a score of 10 hours 42 minutes per week and the lowest USA (22nd place) with a score of 5 hours 42 minutes per week from 22 countries studied (in Andalita et al., 2022). Of the 78 countries studied (with 15-year-old student respondents), Indonesian students scored 371 (ranked 72nd) below the OECD average score of 487 (OECD, 2019). Data related to Reading Literacy in 2026, out of 61 countries studied,

Indonesia is ranked 60th. Still below Thailand (59), Malaysia (53), China (39), Singapore (36) and Japan (32) (in Andalita et al., 2022).

The results of the Indonesian National Library Study on the level of reading habit are based on main indicators such as reading frequency (how often reading activities in 1 week (times/week)), reading time (how long reading time in 1 day (hours/day)), the number of books read (how many books read in 3 months (books/quarter)).

From the results of observations and initial interviews (preliminary study), the three subjects who are students from this religious campus said that they were lazy and did not like reading because they were busy with home activities and college assignments. They also stated that they did not like reading because for them reading was boring. From the observations seen, at first the subject took a book then he just read the second page, his facial expression had yawned repeatedly. From the observations seen from these three subjects when they have free time they use it to tell stories and play cell phones in the classroom. The three subjects also said that they prefer to play cellphones because when they play cellphones, there is no such thing as sleepiness, but if they take a book and read, the feeling of sleepiness appears.

Based on these problems, this study will focus on analyzing the reading interest of indigenous students in Christian religious universities.

2. METHODS

This research uses a methodology with a phenomenological approach. The phenomenological approach is the foundation of thinking from qualitative research. Edmund G. A. Husserl, a German philosopher, known as the father of phenomenology, stated that subjective experience is the source of all knowledge about objective phenomena. Phenomenological research explores and discovers the quality and texture of experience (by 'what it is like' to experience the experience), aiming to understand the experience rather than discovering what actually happened or what caused social and/or psychological events. The goal of phenomenological studies is to get as close as possible to the experiences of the research participants, entering their world of experience by stepping into their shoes, and seeing the world through their eyes [7]. Phenomenological studies describe the general meaning of a number of individuals who become informants on their various life experiences related to concepts or phenomena (Creswell dalam Alifudin & Ediaty, 2019).

In this study, we will focus on using descriptive phenomenological studies in understanding the experiences and struggles of the mother subject who has to walk to sell vegetables. Willig (2013) explains that descriptive phenomenological studies capture experience exactly as it presents itself, neither adding nor subtracting from it. The selection of subjects in this study used purposive sampling technique. The subject criteria in this study are: (1) The subject is an active student at the Kupang religious campus; (2) The subject is an indigenous people in the NTT region. This is proven by the fact that he was born and raised (elementary, junior high, and high school) from the 3T area in NTT; (3) The subject voluntarily expressed willingness to be involved in the research process (interview and observation). Seven subjects who met these criteria were obtained. The data collection methods used were observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The duration of the interview time ranged from 30-60 minutes, with 3-5 meetings per each subject. Then added with observation per each subject around 30 minutes. The data analysis technique used was thematic analysis developed by Braun & Clarke (2019).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of observations and interviews, researchers managed to identify 3 main themes, and 7 sub-themes. The first theme, namely internal factors that have an impact on interest and enjoyment of reading, consists of one sub-theme, namely the internal interest of students who are less fond of reading. The second main theme is external factors that tend to be less supportive of reading interest and passion, which consists of 3 sub-themes such as social media and the immediate environment are less supportive of reading interest, parents and family attitudes related to reading interest are diverse, and reading activities have a negative image among peers. The third main theme is support and obstacles from the context of religious colleges, which consists of 3 sub-themes such as reading because of the demands of assignments given by lecturers, lack of variety and completeness of books in the campus library, exams and quizzes force subjects to read books.

3.1. Sub-Theme 1

From the interview results, the subjects said that they were lazy to read. When asked the reason why they were lazy to read, the subjects answered that they were busy

TABLE 1: Overview of the Subjects.

Subjek Informasi diri	Subjek 1	Subjek 2	Subjek 3	Subjek 4	Subjek 5	Subjek 6	Subjek 7
Inisial	GS	NT	AT	ES	DB	O	MAT
Jenis kelamin	Perempuan	Perempuan	Perempuan	Perempuan	Laki Laki	Laki Laki	Perempuan
Usia	22 Tahun	24 Tahun	23 Tahun	20	23	22	20
Asal suku	Rote	Soe (Timor)	Soe (Timor)	TTS, oinlasi	TTS, Mollo	Kupang, Amfoang	Soe, Timor
Agama	Kristen Protestan	Kristen Protestan	Kristen Protestan	Kristen protestan	Kristen Protestan	Kristen Protestan	Kristen Protestan
Pendidikan	Mahasiswa	Mahasiswa	Mahasiswa	Mahasiswa	Mahasiswa	Mahasiswa	Mahasiswa
Jurusan	Ilmu keagamaan Kristen	Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini	Pendidikan Agama Kristen	Pendidikan Agama Kristen	Pendidikan Agama Kristen	Psikologi Kristen	Psikologi Kristen
Semester	VIII (Delapan)	VII (Enam)	VIII (Delapan)	II (Dua)	II (Dua)	II(Dua)	II (Dua)
Anak ke	2 dari 3 bersaudara	3 dari 3 bersaudara	1 dari 3 bersaudara	2 dari 7 bersaudara	6 dari 6 bersaudara	1 dari 3 bersaudara	Pertama dari 2 bersaudara
Awal Masuk Kuliah	Dari tahun 2019	Dari tahun 2020	Dari tahun 2019	2022	2022	2022	2022
Status Kampus	Negeri, Agama	Negeri, Agama	Negeri, Agama	Negeri, Agama	Negeri, Agama	Negeri, Agama	Negeri, Agama

with home activities and college assignments. But for the subject reading is boring. The subjects also argue that, the subject will read unless there is an assignment given by the lecturer. Therefore, the subjects GS and AM spent less than ten minutes reading while the subject NT read less than fifteen minutes, already starting to feel bored. Meanwhile, AT and NT subjects said that when they were not in college, they spent more time playing cellphones, helping parents, and talking with friends. Therefore, it can be said that students' awareness of reading is still very low, because it is hindered by various things such as homework, laziness that arises in students and a high desire to spend time playing cellphones, resulting in students lacking interest in reading.

...”Kalo soal membaca ni beta paling pamalas su wind, karena di rumah ni pekerjaan rumah terlalu banyak. Dimana harus cuci piring, bamasak belum lagi basapu pel, baru ke dari kampus pulang rumah begitu su rasa terlalu cape maka kalo malam begitu su sibuk dengan kerja tugas kuliah jadi snde ada waktu untuk membaca lay. Jadi alo sekarang ni dalam seminggu tu su pasti satu-satu kali ju pernah membaca, itu baca ju kecuali ada tugas, jadi beta baca tu palingan sonde sampe sepuluh menit beta su mulai rasa bosan. Beta baca paling banyak tu satu atau dua halaman....(GS)

3.2. Sub-Theme 2

In the environment, the subject is affected by the living environment in which he lives. Based on the observations seen, the subject GS when reading, his nephew is always noisy and disturbing so that the subject cannot concentrate. And the results of his interview said that when he wanted to read, he was always prevented and ordered by his family to work. Meanwhile, NT and AT subjects, on average, where they live, all people are lazy to read. The influences or factors that arise in him are internal and external factors. Internal factors such as playing cellphones (open Facebook, whatsapp, instagram), watching TV and laziness within themselves (Like sleeping). While external factors such as doing work / home activities, going to the garden, talking with friends, and others. These factors affect the motivation of interest in reading is very lacking.

....” Di beta punya lingkungan tu, semua orang rata-rata sonde ada yang rajin membaca lebih suka bermain Hp dan lebih banyak mulai buka Facebook, whatsapp, instagram jadi ya beta ju terpengaruh jadi pamalas untuk membaca. Dan kadang ju kalo sonde ada kerja begitu maka nonton TV sa. Dan di rumah tu ju kerja telalu banyak sebentar mama suruh pigi kebun na, jadi sonde ada kesempatanmy untuk membaca....(NT)

3.3. Sub-Theme 3

Based on the results of the interview, it is stated that parents let their children not read books at home, therefore children will assume that reading is not important. As said by subject AT that his parents know that he is lazy to read but the parents' response is mediocre. Therefore, this bad thing will be carried over until they go to college. There are some parents who are not aware when their children are watching playing cell phones, watching TV or movies all day. Subject GS said that where he lives there is an older cousin who likes to read but to want to imitate it is very difficult, because he is not used to reading. This means that the role of parents/family and student awareness in fostering interest in reading is still very lacking. However, subject NT said that his parents provided encouragement and motivation so that he could fight laziness in himself.

....”Bapa dong tau, tapi sonde pernah tegur untuk suruh beta membaca. Ma kalo dong tau ju su pasti dong pu respon biasa sa. Jadi beta anggap santai sa, makanya kebanyakan beta lebih suka nonton TV dengan bermain HP”....(AT)

4. CONCLUSION

The results of this research show that there are various obstacles and influences in reading both from themselves and from the environment. The main obstacle is that since childhood they are less accustomed and trained with reading so that it is carried over when they are already in higher education. Social media, cellphones, and TV are also very influential in inhibiting interest in reading. They also said that their interest in reading tends to be low.

In the campus environment, especially facilities and books in the library are lacking so this makes them lazy to visit the library. But on the other hand, there is support for reading from the assignments that lecturers give. Lecturers always give them assignments to have to read, so even though they do it by force but they still try to fight their laziness.

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