Perception of Illiterate Society Toward The Functional Literacy Program

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Abstract

Perception has the important role in determining the worldview and impacts significantly, including on the functional literacy programs. The aim of this study is to reveal the perception of the illiterate in functional literacy programs. This research uses the qualitative approach with the type of phenomenology research. The research was conducted in Kadur Sub-district, Pamekasan Regency. The informants used were 6 persons who were illiterate in the functional literacy program. Data collection techniques use in-depth interviews and documentation studies. Analysis of this research data using Miles and Huberman model. The results of the study show several perceptions that formed in the functional literacy programs. Based on the research, it can be concluded that illiterate people perceive the functional literacy program as a place of fulfillment of desire, including the desire to get reward, acknowledgement, and appreciation of figure. As a place of fulfillment of needs, including the need to socialize, facing the times, empowered, and worship. The benefits of this research can be used for literacy education practitioners to improve the quality of the program by accommodating the wishes and needs of the learning community.
INTRODUCTION

Functional Literacy has the function of developing basic human capabilities that include the ability to read, write and count functional in improving the quality and standard of living the society. The main goal of a functional literacy program is to educate the learning community in order to take advantage of the basic literacy, baca or reading, tulis or writing and hitung or numeracy skills (calistung) and functional capabilities in daily life. The authenticity of functional literacy learning centers on the issues, interests and needs of the learning community itself. The substance of the learning materials is based on activities to assist them in implementing their skills and knowledge. Functional literacy programs can be implemented well in accordance with the needs of each region, functional literacy learning should refer to local context, local design, participatory processes, learning outcomes functionalization (Jalal & Kusnadi, 2005).

The latest Central Bureau of Statistics data (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2017) indicates that a number of regions are indicated to be contributors to illiteracy. Recorded Papua Province became a barn illiterate people by contributing 28.21% in their productive age (14-44 years old). Although it is no longer an indicator of human development index calculation, the problem of illiteracy is at least a general idea that a region has poor quality education. The problem of illiteracy when viewed quantitatively does not seem to have a significant impact, as it is only a few percent nationally. Unlike the problems of unemployment and poverty that directly impact on economic growth and rising inflation. But with the state of Indonesia that has been independent for 72 years is very sad if it seems to have to receive data and facts about the problem of illiteracy is.

Functional literacy is a program organized by the government with the aim of reducing the number of illiterate sufferers. The latest data from the Central Bureau of Statistics of Indonesia states that 4.50% of Indonesians of productive age (> 15 years old) suffer from illiteracy. Based on the available data, most of the illiterate population distribution is still in the area of illiterate pockets or as many as 41 districts / cities that have illiterate population above 30,000 people. Illiteracy is also present in 3T areas, Papua and West Papua. They are generally located in areas that are geographically isolated, remoted, and potentially lagging behind (Direktorat Pembinaan Pendidikan Keaksaraan dan Kesetaraan, 2017). Therefore literacy education should be assessed on the context of holistic issues.

Perceptions that arise in a particular object has an important role in determining a person’s behavior in deciding something (Wahyuni, 2008). Likewise with the perceptions arising from functional literacy programs that will determine how people's perspective learn from the program. This research is important because it aims to explore the meaning of illiterate citizen viewpoint about functional literacy program where previous research stated that in the policy evaluation found the first obstacle, the awareness of society that must be kept up; second, motivation factor; third, geographical constraints; fourth, economic constraints and fifth, socialization and communication constraints between organizers—officers and actors in the field (Hasan, 2006). These constraints can be minimized when program providers and policy makers are able to find out the viewpoint of illiterate citizens against functional literacy programs. It would be very fatal if this program with billions rupiahs is not interpreted as a learning program for illiterate citizens.

The purpose of this study is to express the perception of the illiterate on the functional literacy program in terms of the desire and the need for the program. The benefits of this research as an evaluation material for policy makers to realize a functional literacy program appropriate to the state of the learning community and as input for the organizers of functional literacy programs to encourage the quality of functional literacy programs.
METHODS

In this study researchers used a qualitative approach to the type of phenomenological research. Qualitative research is a method to explore and understand the meaning that by some individuals or groups of people ascribed to social or humanitarian problems (Creswell, 2017). The type of research used in this study is phenomenological research because researchers want to dig deep perception of someone about something that he felt. Phenomenology is a research strategy in which researchers identify the nature of human experience about a particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2017). The use of qualitative approach is very appropriate because it is able to answer the purpose of research that is knowing how the perception of illiterate people to functional literacy program.

The study time is divided into three parts, namely preparation and preliminary study, data mining, and preparation of research report. Preparation and preliminary studies were conducted from February to March 2018, data was collected from April to May 2018 and reporting of research results was undertaken in June 2018. The study was conducted in Kadur Sub-district, Pamekasan. Selection of Kadur Sub-district Pamekasan as a research setting because in that area there are people with illiteracy and never conducted functional literacy program.

Information collected from the Education Office of Pamekasan Regency data stated that the illiteracy rate in Pamekasan Regency is 17,766 persons (Basri, 2017). Researcher used purposive techniques, where researchers have a particular view in selecting informants in the study. The researcher determines the informant based on the recommendation from the organizer of the functional literacy program. It is to legally make sure that the people are literate illiterates who are currently in a functional literacy program. Researchers determine the number of 6 informants with consideration of suggestions from the organizers of functional literacy programs, where the informant is perceived to have the ability to understand the questions to be given by researchers. Informants were HN (47 years old), BD (48 years old), MT (65 years old), JW (66 years old), HM (32 years old), HS (66 years old). The amount also conforms to a phenomenological approach that wishes to extract meaning from the informant's point of view, thus requiring too many informants.

The informants were people with illiteracy who were attending the functional literacy program, so the informants in detail had experienced functional literacy activities, so that the collection and inference of information about the functional literacy program had been established. Based on the collection and inference of information that has been formed, the researcher will explore how the perception of illiterate people about functional literacy program.

Data collection techniques use in-depth interviews and documentation studies. The research instrument used an interview guide to guide the researcher to avoid going too far from the research context and to improve the effectiveness of data collection. Interview guide is used as a reference in improving the effectiveness of data obtained but technically the interview will be done naturally and flow according to the circumstances, situation and condition of informant. In general, there are some questions that each question points require deepening in interview guides made. The impact of the adjustment of circumstances and conditions is not possible there will be some additional questions to dig deeply the meaning felt by the informant. This is in accordance with the type of phenomenological research that aims to explore and explore the meaning of a phenomenon.

Analysis of this research data using data analysis based on Miles and Huberman’ model, that is by data reduction, presentation of data and then taking the conclusion. In the activity of reduction and presentation of data the researcher gets rid of data result of interview which have no relation with information and meaning sought, then sorting and categorized into 2 that is inference of information and interpretation of message. It is based on the
opinion of Desiderato who states that perception is the experience of objects, events, or relationships obtained by concluding information and interpreting messages (Rakhmad, J, 2005). Furthermore the data resorted by factors influencing perception include internal and external factors. External factors include discrimination, attraction, novelty, something of concern. Internal factors include experience / knowledge, expectations, needs, motivation, emotions, and culture. Data analysis activities are not done in a linear manner, but simultaneously in data collection. So that each data is excavated, the researcher also simultaneously reduces, sorting and concluding the data, then simultaneously repeated to the next informant.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Kadur is one of the districts located in Pamekasan Regency, East Java. Pamekasan Regency is located on Madura Island. The area on Madura Island is a red zone of literacy which means a region or zone that needs to get special attention on literacy. One literacy problem is about high illiteracy. This is the reason why researcher make the area on Madura Island as a place of research.

Characteristics of informants in this study are illiterate people who are following a functional literacy program has an age range between 32-66 years, with sex all of them consist of women. The informant responds to the questions that are given by the researcher regarding the perception formed. Data from in-depth interviews that are conducted by researchers to informants will be described in more detail on the description.

Knowledge of Functional Literacy Program

The majority of informants stated knowing the functional literacy program from the public figures named Ustadz Jamah and Ustadz Hairul Umam, both of whom are tutors of functional literacy programs. Several informants stated that this program was the first literacy program that they participated in. Although she admitted that this was the first time in following the functional literacy program, informants already know that there is functional literacy activities since the first because it was implemented not far from where she lived. The same thing was expressed by MT informant (65 years old) who stated that the functional literacy program she knows an illiterate school whose age is advanced. The informant HS (66 years old) also knows this program as a school program for the illiterate. Furthermore, HS informant (66 years) stated that this functional literacy program is socialized door to door by program organizers. Interviews of informants showed that their ability to know functional literacy programs was the result of socialization by the organizers, before they only knew similar activities from information about their residence but had not been moved to join.

Motivation Following Functional Literacy Program

Information was explored more deeply when the informant HM (32 years old) was asked about the lure / reward to be gained when joining the functional literacy program, she explained that it is also important, although the most important thing is literacy. Informant HM (32 years) explained that literacy is a necessary thing, because the informant feels if she can not read and write like a person left behind, and it is something that is important to her. Furthermore, for informal functional literacy informants not only learn to read and write but also there is a skill activity gained. About the motivation that the informant HM (32 years) get to follow the functional literacy program that is based on the desire to catch up the ability of reading, writing and counting and according to informant’s functional literacy activities is a fun activity because it can be gathered with other neighbors. Not really much different from HM (32 years old), JW informant (66 years) expressed her belief to be able to master literacy through functional literacy program, it is based on the tutor teach with passion. On the other hand, informants stated that the motivation to follow this program is mainly master the ability to read and write and get a prize. In contrast to the majority of informants who did not specifically state the desired reward, the informant HN 47-
year-old wished to get a kitchen utensil because she thought it was also important to get her excited, in addition informant HN (47) hoping to get ability to read and write when attending a functional literacy program. Further informant HN (47 years) admitted very happy to follow this program because she can learn for free and also can get a gift kitchen tool. Informants also consider the ability to read and write is very important especially those who have a small business. In general informants stated that their motivation to follow this program is to master reading and writing skills as well as counting, but apart from that the informant also expressed her desire to get the prize from the program.

Feelings about The Functional Literacy Program

The informant MT (65 years old) expressed her belief in studying in the literacy program will help her more confident and improve her communication with others, especially when doing communication with her children and grandchildren. More in the informant revealed the ability to read can be applied by reading the name of the goods in the store as well as the names on the highway. In line with the statement, the informant JW (66 years old) stated that literacy is very important because it is used in everyday life, besides practical skills are also very important for their survival. Therefore, informants feel very happy to follow the functional literacy program. Slightly different from previous informants, informant HM (32 years old) expressed her feelings as normal because she already knew, but informants feel grateful to join the program and can add to the experience. There is no expectation that informants expect from the literacy program, the most important is to improve their ability to read, write and count as most neighbors and the program can run smoothly. Each informant has her own orientation of feelings towards functional literacy programs, it depends on the purpose of their learning through this program whether used as practical skills such as communicating with their family or just to feel not left behind in terms of ability to read, write and count from their neighbors.

Cultural Linkage with Functional Literacy Program

The informant HM (32 years old) stated that she has received support from community leaders to join the functional literacy program. Support is in the form of moral support not to be embarrassed in learning as well as functional literacy program has a value of worship. This functional literacy program has also been held several times around the residence, but the difference is when the participants were many, but the teachers were few, now the teachers become more. Informants focus on functional literacy activities because there is a value of worship in it and of course there is knowledge and prizes that will be given when joining to participate in studying the program. In line with the informant HM (32 years), JW informant (66 years) also stated that there are religious leaders who advise her to follow the functional literacy program so as not to be out of date. The informant also believes that with the encouragement and direction of religious leaders must have good value. Informants also do not feel ashamed because basically learn not to feel embarrassed. Unlike other informants who received support from community and religious leaders to participate in a functional literacy program, informant MT (65 years old) claimed to have support from her husbands to participate in a functional literacy program, so the informant was so excited about the program. The Madurese society's culture of great respect for the characters has a huge influence on the community's decision-making to participate in a functional literacy program.

Interest with Functional Literacy Program

Interest in something is influenced by the presence of something unique, in the functional literacy program the informant HN (47 years old) stated very interested and happy with this program because not only learning letters and numbers but also taught about the letters hijaiyah (Arabic letters). In contrast to the informant HN (47 years old) who claimed to be interested because of the orientation of the given subject matter, informant BD (48 years) said that this functional literacy program is an interesting program, because the learners are the old people...
which is different from the general school whose students are children. The informant MT (65 years old) also has her own orientation in this functional literacy program. The informant MT (65 years old) revealed that one of the reasons why she participates in a functional literacy program is the desire to be able to read Message in Short Message Service (SMS) and skills that can be obtained because they can read. The informant also revealed that age is not a barrier to learning, the most important is her hope to always go ahead and not be left behind.

**Discussion**

Perception is an important thing in the process of human’s activities, including in The Functional Literacy Program. This is based on the subjects chosen in this program who were all senior citizens who had practical consideration in making a decision. Perception also has a very strategic role. Some research reveals that perception influences someone in making certain decision. Partially, perception is influential significantly to someone when buying goods and simultaneously to the consumer’s motivation, and attitude of consumers give influence of 54.3% to the decision to buy something (Saputra, 2013). Besides, perception could influence achievement in studying. The result of recent research shows that there is a significant influence between professionalism’s perception and perception in the use of media in learning towards achievement in studying as of 25.80% (Ratnasari & Widayati, 2012). Some of the researches interpret that perception has a strategic role.

Perception was created due to internal and external factors (Notoatmodjo, 2007). The external factors consist of contradiction (difference), intensity (interest), repetition, something new, something becoming attraction. Internal factors are experience / knowledge, hopes, needs, motivation, emotion, and culture. Based on the two mentioned factors, the Functional Literacy Program was established. According to data taken from the interviews which was then analyzed, there was a tendency among the illiterate citizens considering the program of functional literacy as two things, namely as a medium of fulfilling their willingness and needs.

**Functional Literacy Program As A Medium of Fulfiling Willingness**

According to the data analyzed, the illiterate people tended to make the functional literacy program as a place to get reward as they willed. Although all the informants calimed that their decision to participate in this program was mainly to learn to write, read and count, they admitted that the rewards offered were also important. This perception was mainly because of the experience and information about this in the previous period which provided some rewards to the participants. This was then supported by the socialization step which had been several times delivered by the event organizers about the rewards that would be given. Those illiterate citizens also informed that this program was not something new anymore in their area. Hence, it can be said that this literacy program had been done several times before. This definitely strengthens that reward is something common to give in the program. This then lead the people to assume that by joining such program, they would get reward. Reward is the thing that can boost someone’s motivation to do something (Suwati, 2013). And reward also in the fact could give enormous impacts to invite someone’s intention. The recent research explains that consumers would prefer choosing promotion about reward to discounts and significantly influences the desire of purchasing something (Faesol, 2014)

Another perception of the Functional Literacy Program as a matter of fulfilling willingness is in the social recognition about away from being illiterate. Informants gave strengthening that the program could make them own the ability to read and write. This thing was considered important by them since they would never be said left-behind by other people. This perception was strengthened by the knowledge about several residents who were also illiterate, and they did not want to be considered as left behind citizens. This is also that caused them to join the program sincerely.
Sociologically, ethnic of Madura have very high self-esteem (Rochana, 2012).

The perception about Functional Literacy Program as a medium of fulfilling desire was related with the desire to respect prominent persons and religion leaders. This was supported by the information about the program of functional literacy which was socialization by those religion leaders as the tutors. So, the approachment used in this program was religious approachment. Madura people respects their religion leaders so much in making a decision in their daily life (Rochana, 2012). This becomes common if illiterate people sincerely join the program for the sake of getting good prayers from their prominent leaders that become their tutors. In the process of analyzing and cultivating the data, it is obtained that there were religious activities in the literacy program.

**Functional Literacy Program as A Medium of Fufilling Needs**

From the analyzed data, it is obvious that the illiterate citizens had a tendency to make the Functional Literacy Program as a medium of fulfilling their needs. Need is a construction of energy in the brain which organizes series of processes, such as perception, thinking, and acting to change the existent things and not satisfactory. Need can be stimulated by internal process, more often influenced by environment. Commonly, need comes together with feeling or certain emotion and has special way to express it in reaching the solution (Murray, 1937). The fulfilment of these needs is in terms of socialization, the development of the times, and the needs of worship.

The need of socialization could be seen from the activities done by illiterate people who were very keen on and happy when studying with their neighbors. It was formed because of the limited knowledge about language among them. This program taught them about reading comprehension, writing, and counting which was related to their daily needs. Therefore, it was very important for them to connect with among others. With those literacy skills, they would widen their socialization, including tightening their relationship with their family members, especially their grandchildren who could only speak Bahasa in their daily life. Need of socialization is an important need for citizens. When the need of physiology and the need of security have been fulfilled, there will be the needs of love and cares. These needs consist of the motivation to be needed by others so that they will be considered as a part of the community. The form of this need, like making a friend, having a spouse and the offsprings, being close to family, and interpersonal needs such as taking and giving love (Maslow, 1943).

The perception of illiterate people towards the program of functional literacy as a medium of fulfilling their needs existed in the need of following the development era. Technological advances demand potencial human resources to run them. Hardware will never work maximally without collaboration between software and the brainware. The most common technological tool used by people nowadays is mobile phone. To operate this is needed the ability of literacy, like reading and writing. This need is undeniable because of the developing age. When human beings cannot conquer the technology to fulfill their daily basis, it will be their boomerang for themselves. When technology becomes more advanced and opens the possibilities to exploit numerous natural resources, the tendency to take benefit humans energy and mind for themselves (Machmud, 2005). The needs of the age development is not only related with technological development, but the needs in social life like knowing address, names of streets, names of villages, names of strategic places that can be used by illiterate people.

Another perception of this program is the needs of having practical skills. Illiterate people are those with maturity in age, so they wanted practical abilities. This was caused by their needs to fulfill their daily basis. Due to these practical skills, it would improve people abilities. Skills would be achieved by them in this literacy program became one of indicators why people were interested to join this program. One of indicators from them was ability and freedom to make the best choice in improving their life (Santoso, 2016). And life skill becomes
very important to make people's life more meaningful and useful for other people (Niko, 2016).

The next perception is the need of praying or religious. Illiterate people knew that their learning activities were counted as righteous things. This was based on the values among Madura people who were oriented highly to religion. These values are reflected in Islamic activities, for example the Dhammong ritual. This ritual of pleading for rain to the god is a blend and integration of Islamic tradition and local tradition of Madura (Hefni, 2012). As mentioned in the previous chapter that citizens could also learn about Arabic letters and the tutors were religion leaders. So, it was related each other. The program of functional literacy should be in line with people's needs because it would influence the condition of economy, so it was needed an education about improving people's literacy ability (Indrianti, Khutobah, & Latif, 2017).

The discussion from the result of the research can be used by the decision makers that the program of functional literacy is unique because the main objects are adult people who have different learning orientation compared with schoolchildren. So, the approachment and the process need to be based on thinking orientation of the people which not only about the ability to master the material, but also having consideration about their needs and their willingness. The organizers of the program need to pay attention to these needs because perception created was not only studying. If so, the members would comfortably learn the materials.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research, it can be concluded that illiterate people categorized the perception of the program of functional literacy, namely as a medium of fulfilling willingness and needs. The perception as a medium of fulfilling willingness of the program of functional literacy was divided into three, namely the willingness of getting reward, willingness of being recognized and the willingness of respecting prominent persons. Whereas, perception as a medium of fulfilling needs is extracted into four which are socialization, facing the developing era, having life skills, and praying or religion.

These perceptions appeared because of internal and external factors. Internal factors are knowledge or experience, hopes, motivation, needs, emotion, and culture. Whereas, external factors consist of difference, interest, repetition, renewal, and center of attention. Both of these factors influence illiterate people's perceptions towards Functional Literacy Program.
REFERENCES


