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#### **PROCEEDINGS**









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# New Paradigm for Open University

**PROCEEDINGS** 

### DEMOCRACY AND THE CHALLENGES OF EDUCATION IN INDONESIA: UTILIZATION OF ICT AND ODL TO IMPROVE PUBLIC INTEREST READ

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#### **Abstract**

Indonesia, today, ranks fourth out of the top five countries in the world in terms of population. The population of Indonesia in 2014 amounted to 244,769,000 people. With a large population, education is a major issue that must be managed properly. However, it turns out, it was not envisaged. If the data refer to the Education Development Index (EDI) in 2011, Indonesia is ranked 69th, Malaysia at position 65, and Brunei in position 34. Based on these data, it can be stated the development of education in Indonesia is still lagging behind, when compared with countries other developing. In fact, education is very important for the life of a nation. Reciprocation of a nation, one measure of the quality of education. Democratic era, which followed, the rapid progress in the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), should be able to be a reliable means to improve the quality of education. Democracy has room for every community to get their rights and voice their aspirations, while ICT has an advantage in terms of affordability. In the era of democracy and respond to ICT development, the Indonesian Government has made an important breakthrough, the permissibility of the college in addition to the Open University, to conduct distance education (ODL). This policy, one of which is intended, in order to encourage more and more people accessing education. However, the results are not significant, nonetheless index education levels Indonesia is still low at 14.6 percent, in contrast to Singapore and Malaysia already has an index that better education levels are 28 percent and 33 percent. This paper discusses what factors causing the low quality of education in Indonesia compared with other developing countries. When linked with the culture of Indonesian people who prefer to hear and speak, rather than reading; whether this culture affect the delivery of education? How to answer the challenges of the democratic era. Can ICT and ODL system is used to change the culture of Indonesian society into a society that enjoys reading?

**Keywords:** Democracy, Information and Communication Technology, Distance Education

#### Introduction

The occurrence of democratization in Indonesia since 1998, has provided new opportunities for the education sector to play a greater role in generating qualified human resources. Democracy is believed to improve the welfare of the community, and democracy is also believed to be the only way to increase equality among human beings. Through democracy, the right of every individual to achieve compulsory education met the state. Everyone, no exception, have equal opportunities to education. Democracy becomes the entry point for citizens to fight for equality in education, so that education is not exclusive, it can only be reached by the elite or those who have big resources. Democracy can encourage the government to conduct educational evenly spread. Therefore, through democracy, the hope is obtained, the quality of human resources becomes a reality.

The quality of human resources can be generated, if the state can organize quality education. Quality education, measured by the ability to actualize three fundamental human dimension: first, affective, which is reflected in the quality of faith and piety, ethics and aesthetics, and good character; second, cognitive, which is reflected in the capacity of thought and the power of intellect to explore science and develop, as well as mastering the technology; and third, psychomotor, which is reflected in the ability to develop technical skills and practical skills (Depdiknas, 2005).

In the era of democracy, in the context of realizing quality education at the national level, the State has issued policies to improve the quality of education through the Standar Nasional Pendidikan (SNP). SNP consists of content standards, process standards, competency standards, the standards of teachers and education personnel, facilities and infrastructure standards, management standards, financing standards, assessment standards of education. The standard is used, ranging from early childhood education, elementary education, secondary education, non-formal education, to higher education (Dekdiknas, 2005). In addition through the SNP, the state also responded to improving the quality of education by expanding the coverage of education through a system of Distance Education (ODL) and the development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

Likewise, the implementation of ODL can now be made by the college in addition to the Open University, according Permendikbud no. 24 of 2012 on the Implementation of Distance Learning (ODL) by the College. With the expansion of these opportunities, methods to deliver learning materials and knowledge is increasingly diverse and growing. Similarly, the development of ICT facilities, especially for coverage internet. The regions also increasingly responded to the use of the Internet for education. Referring to the data Ministry of National Education, in response Internet use for education be extended to areas outside of Java, including the island of Sumatra, Bali, Kalimantan, West Nusa Tenggara and East, Sulawesi, Maluku and North Maluku, Papua and West Papua, although the island Java is still ranked the highest at around 68 percent.<sup>1</sup>

However, although the country has made important policy to improve the quality of education, the results have not improved significantly. At the macro level, one of which was reflected in a comparison of the Human Development Index (HDI). In ASEAN, Indonesia is still ranked far below several other ASEAN countries, including Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, Thailand and the Philippines. ASEAN countries have the highest HDI among ASEAN countries with 0.895 is Singapore (ranked 18 in the world). Brunei has a 0.855 HDI (rank 30), while Malaysia has a 0.769 HDI (rank 64). Thailand and the Philippines each have HDI 0.690 and 0.654 (ranking 103 and 114). Other ASEAN countries such as Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia IPM was below Indonesia.<sup>2</sup>

In addition based on the comparison of HDI, at the level of educational praxis also reflect the same thing. Minister of Industry, Saleh Husin, referring to the Global Competitiveness Index, said Indonesia in the period 2014/2015 was ranked 34 out of 134 in the country in terms of achieving Competitiveness Index (CI), the judgment refers to the basic requirements, efficiency enhancers, and innovation. Indonesia is still below Singapore, Thailand, and Malaysia.<sup>3</sup> While the results of the study The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report dated July 24, 2014 Human Development Index (HDI) Indonesia ranks 108 of 187 countries, while Singapore at position 9, Malaysia (62), Thailand (89).<sup>4</sup>

On the micro level, it can be seen from the results of literacy Mathematics and Science in 2007, learners are only able to occupy Indonesia ranked 36th out of 49 countries. While, for science literacy ranks 35 out of 49 countries. The results of this, worse than the Egyptian students who were on the order of 35. The low quality of education on the micro level, can also be seen from the students' reading literacy achievement of Indonesia was ranked 48 out of 56 countries, (OECD, 2007). Likewise, the results of studies Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2006 in the field of reading in children of primary school worldwide under the coordination of The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), which followed 45 countries/states, both come from developed countries and from developing countries, the results showed Indonesia was ranked 41 (OECD, 2006).

Should the above shows the low quality of education at primary and secondary level, then to higher education too. Several years ago, there was no university in Indonesia which entered the group of 100 universities in the world level (Tilaar, 2006), in recent years, the data showed that ITB, UGM and UI ranks 56, 61, and 84 of 100 best universities in Asia.<sup>5</sup>

Referring to the quality of education that results have not exhibited significantly improved, what has really become fundamental problems? In a democratic system of government, the state has tried to spread education, so that people get the same equality in education; however the results are not too satisfactory. How countries address these concerns. Can ICT and ODL system to overcome these challenges? How can democracy be able to motivate states responsive to these problems.

#### **Low Quality Education**

Related to low quality of education, there are many things that affect. Referring to the opinion Slamet Imam Santoso, the greatest influence, is the culture of reading. Low reading culture among students, is based on an education system that does not instill the importance of reading ranging from elementary school. Soegarda Poerbahawatja also found low quality of education in universities due to the reading lessons since elementary school was not able to stimulate students interest in reading. Others expressed the opinion that scholars and intellectuals, including professors less interest in reading, thus affecting the quality of the scientific community: characteristics of the scientific community should be read. Referring to the survey of the National Library, the data found that the public interest in Indonesia is very low, even classified as one of the lowest in the world. Mardiah (2014) said, compared with the ASEAN countries, the reading culture of Indonesian people is very low, the lowest even on ASEAN.

Based on the survey of the Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) in 2006, the conclusion of Indonesian society has not make reading as the main source of information. Indonesian society prefers watching television (85.9%), listening to the radio (40.3%) than reading newspapers (23.5%). In 2009, based on data reported by the Organization for Economic Cooperation Development (OECD, 2006), the reading culture of Indonesian society occupies the lowest position of 52 countries in East Asia. In 2011, based on a survey United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) demonstrated an index reading of Indonesian society only 0,001 (one thousand inhabitants). This is evidenced by the results of the national index which states that the index read in Indonesia is only 0.01. While the average index reading developed countries ranged from 0.45 to 0.62. These results prove that Indonesia is now ranked third from the bottom for reading.<sup>10</sup>

#### Factors Affecting the Quality of Education: Learning and Reading Interest

Learning and reading are the two factors that are considered to have a strong influence in generating quality of education. Learning, refers to the opinion of Piaget (Suparno, 2001:141) is an activity to obtain and find a more general thought structure that can be used in various situations. Meanwhile, Ormrod (2011), states that learning as a change in the length of a mental representation or association as a result of experience. Learning is a change in personality, which manifested as patterns of response in the form of new skills, attitudes, habits, knowledge and skills (Sukmadinata, 2007).

Not everyone can afford to be human learners. For some people, learning a routine job that is saturating. For that, there are several things to encourage people to learn, first, the specific nature curious and want to investigate the wider world; second, the creative nature that exist in humans and the desire to always go forward; third, the desire to get sympathy from others; Fourth, the desire to correct past failures with new business, either by cooperatives and competition; Fifth, the desire to gain a sense of security when it learned the lesson; and sixth, the reward or punishment as an end rather than learning. (Suryabrata, 2004).

The desire to "learn" in a person is not always caused by things in himself (internal). There are also things outside himself (external) such as the desire for sympathy, repair failures, avoid penalties and others. From that described above, there is one thing that has a big influence for someone to read is the appeal of reading. The more interesting reading that is read, and the higher power wants to know the person, the higher the desire of someone to read. One factor that may encourage a person to read is reading. To foster interest in reading depends on the draw whether the reading material and the ease of getting a source of reading.

#### **Reading and Reading Interest**

Hodgson (Tarigan, 2007) said that reading is a process that is carried and used by the reader to obtain messages, which would be submitted by the author through the medium of words or written language. Finochiaro and Bonomo (Tarigan, 2007) said the reading was taking and understand the meaning contained in the written language. In relation to interest in reading, reading would be fun if accompanied by a sense of love for reading material to read. The interest can be expressed through a statement indicating the taste more like a thing than anything else, may be manifested through participation in an activity. Lester D. Crow and Alice D. Crow (1999) states, that interest can demonstrate the ability to provide stimulus that drives our attention to someone, something or activity; or something that could give effect to the experience that has been stimulated by the activity itself. Thus, the interest may arise from the activities and results of the activities involved.

Interest for reading, is one of the principal factors for success in learning. A great desire for activities, minds earnest to dig up information and reach an understanding on all branches of knowledge in the field of study is part of an academic attitude. With the advent of "interest" is created in the mind of a person's concentration. Attention obtained fairly and without coercion against one's willingness will facilitate the development of concentration, the concentration of an activity. In this case the learning activities.

Interest, also directing actions towards a goal and an impetus for action. Because of the encouragement that comes from inside a person and also from the outside, eventually arises the interest in something. What attract someone encouraged him to do more enterprising and better. The emergence of interest, not sudden or spontaneous, but rather arise as a result of participation, the experience, the custom at the time to study or work. So it is clear that the interest will always be associated with about a need or desire. Interest is not present at birth, but gained later.

Based on the above, in conjunction with the interest can be explained as follows, that interest is not the result of human nature, but can be formed or grown, studied and developed. Interest can be linked to the specific purposes for the act, and the interests that usually bring the initiative and lead to behavior or human nature. Ki Supriyoko (Saleh, AR, 2006) states, theoretically there is a positive relationship between interest in reading (reading interest) with the habit of reading (reading habit) and literacy (reading ability). Low interest in reading people make a habit of reading is low, and low reading habits make a low reading skills. Low reading ability at the edges can cause the urge someone to learn to be low. That is what happened to the people of Indonesia, why the quality of education in Indonesia is still far from the quality of education ASEAN countries, even in the world.

#### Democracy as a Means of Improving the Quality of Education

Democracy is a concept of power sharing, elections, open management, individual freedom, free judiciary, the recognition of minority rights, the rule of law, a free press, political parties, consensus, constitutional government, oversight of state administration, the protection of human rights, a majority government, competition skills, political mechanisms, the freedom of state policy, a government that prioritizes the community, and so on. In the context of education, a concept that can be drawn is open management, individual freedom, the recognition of minority rights, supervision of the state administration, the protection of human rights, competition skills, freedom of state policy and government that prioritizes community. The application of the concepts of democracy stands on three pillars of democracy are interrelated functions, namely as freedom, respect for the dignity of others, equality, and a vehicle for sharing.

Referring to the concept of democracy above, democracy can be a way to change the lifestyle of a society into a society that is willing to accept inputs to improve the quality of life, such as the changing lifestyles of people from not like to read into love reading, so that the quality of education expected will increase. In the democratic societies of their human rights protected by the state, such a policy for the right to the same education. State, the concept of democracy, should be able to summon the management education that is open to every community and give recognition to the rights of individuals and minorities. So basically, democracy gives equal opportunity to all individuals without distinction of class, social status, access to education.

In the concept of democracy, the role of the country will be positive and goes in harmony with the needs of society, when educational institutions capable of being the innovator of the implementation of state power. Likewise, the community, can be a positive role if the public is able to participate in any educational process since the planning, implementation, and evaluation. Therefore, in terms of building a learning society, people who are fond of reading, educated people, can only happen if the community itself is also willing to participate or to be democratic. By being democratic, society will be critical of the policy raised by the authorities. And from the critical attitude to be the seed for the democratization of education provision by the State, to be a partner in finding a way out for national problems.

Society today is the advanced civilized society, human-oriented quality produce. To realize these communities required an education that suits the character of the community. Education is meant to be able to develop the full potential of the community become educated society that respects human dignity (dignity) with freedom, acknowledging the diversity, recognize the equal rights and are able to develop community potentials optimally.

Therefore democracy contains the concept of freedom, respect for the dignity of others, equality, and a vehicle to share, then democracy will basically recognizes every citizen as a unique person, different from each other with advantages and disadvantages of each. Democracy provides ample opportunity for the implementation and development of the potential of each individual community, both physical and mental and spiritual. Democracy also recognizes that every individual has the same rights and obligations. Related to that, education in a democratic system is the education that will put the learner as a unique individual, different from each other, and have the potential needs to be realized and developed as much as possible. The education system should provide different treatments to target students in accordance with their respective characteristics. So, in this case the parties involved in the educational process must recognize and appreciate the capabilities and characteristics of individual learners. The education system needed to give birth to such learners includes several things: first, equalization of educational infrastructure. Second, changes in the education system to a decentralized model, and thirdly the establishment of a learning culture in the community.<sup>11</sup>

In an effort to realize the quality of society through the education process, all parties concerned should be aware of the democratic footing. This means that in a democracy everyone should be subject to a joint decision or agreement. Democracy in an educational context, it means equal opportunity for all.<sup>12</sup> That is, each individual gets an equal chance to receive education opportunity and treatment.

Referring to the earlier explanation, the low quality of education in Indonesia, is the interest in reading and learning society is low. Whereas in the context of a democratic country, Indonesia has sought to equalize education through a number of regulations such as Standar National Pendidikan (SNP), distance education system and the development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). However, as discussed, the results are not significant. Even though the decision of the SNP, ODL, as well as ICT development is a decision that has been born together or mutual agreement between the government and legislature, but has not been able to push the quality of education in Indonesia from year to year. It required a new breakthrough by utilizing existing capital. Capital is of course first, democracy (which was run the Indonesian government), both how to increase the use of ICT and systems ODL in the context of improving the quality of education, as well as the third, education should provide different treatment for each individual in accordance with the characteristics of each, in this case educational methods can not be generalized in a rigid, need flexibility to recognize the characteristics of learners, geography and culture. For example, education for indigenous peoples in Jambi, at least have to be adapted to the needs and circumstances of local communities. Thirdly the capital, is a challenge for distance education in Indonesia in achieving quality education.

#### ICT as a Solution to Improve the Quality of Education

Referring to the review which has been discussed above, the problem of education in Indonesia lies in the low interest in reading and learning. Factors that could encourage people to bring up the 'interest' one of them depending on the environment outside oneself. Therefore the 'interest' can be raised. Raises interest in reading among other things can be done to stimulate the readers through interesting reading sentences, drawings, and other visualization techniques. Through the use of ICT, reading can be designed, to follow the needs of the individual characteristics of the community, with the provision, reading material is able to stimulate readers and appeal to the reading. Related to that, how ICT could be a solution to increase public interest?

Today, almost all aspects of life are affected by ICTs. Almost everyone in the big cities and even rural areas are users of the gadget (phone, tablet, lap top, etc.), which is a product of ICT. Utilization gadget with a variety of Internet-connected applications and increasingly mushrooming. Especially when all the information is put together in digital or electronic form, such as digital books, or socalled e-book or electronic book). ICT is expected to cultivate interest in reading, because, referring to the opinion of Elston (Purnomo S, 2013), Information and Communication Technology, is a technology that is used to manage information and communications. Management and communication of information is related to the technology used to access, collect, manipulate and present or communicate information (UNESCO, 2013). Such technology includes hardware, application software, and connectivity, such as access to the internet. The role of ICTs in this respect is as an enabler or a tool that allows to visualize the design of interesting reading, which is composed of elements of the image, graphics, audio, and video. Reading material enriched with these elements, certainly more interesting than reading materials that contain only pure writing. Thus, the development of ICT-based reading materials, is expected to be increased public interest. The role of ICTs, in addition to providing visualization of interesting reading, with a range of connectivity is also great. Internet use is able to divide the reading material of interest to the entire corner, even to rural outposts in Indonesia. This means that the role of ICTs in accordance with the concept of democracy, equal opportunity for all, each individual gets an equal opportunity to receive interesting reading material.

Related to the role of ICTs, actually ICT has great potential to be exploited, not only generate interesting reading material. Particularly in the field of education, UNESCO has identified four (4) steps in adopting ICT education system, namely, first, the emerging stage, ie college/school in the early stages. Teachers and education personnel began to realize, choose/buy, or accept donations for the provision of facilities and infrastructure (supporting work performance). Second, applying stage; ie college/school has a new understanding of the contribution of ICT. Teachers and education personnel to use ICT in school management and curriculum (enhancing traditional teaching). Third, infusing stage; which involves curriculum by integrating ICT. Colleges/schools to develop computer-based technology in the lab, classroom, and administration. Teachers and explore through a new understanding in which ICTs change professional productivity (facilitating learning). Fourth, transforming the stage; ie college/school have tapped ICT in the whole organization. Referring to the role of ICT as identified by UNESCO, thus clearly, in addition to ICT can be utilized to produce interesting reading materials, ICT in the education system is able to create a learning environment that is integrative and creative.

#### **Utilization of Information and Communication Technology in Distance Education**

The use of ICT, the result will be much more significant if ICT is integrated into the concept of ODL. ODL is an alternative model of the learning process that provides ample opportunity for students to learn "anytime, anywhere and with anyone". Learning model in ODL is in line with democratic principles. The slogan of "anytime, anywhere and with anyone" to provide freedom for each individual to determine his desire to learn. The principle was ultimately respect for the dignity of others, equality, and opportunity that is open to the implementation and development of the potential of each individual. The integration of ICT into the ODL concept will ultimately facilitate people's access to education.

Related to the integration of ICT into the ODL concept, in the context of increasing the public interest, the excess use of ICT are: first, the material which has been designed in the form of digital will save storage space. Reading materials such as electronic books can be stored in the hard disk with a storage capacity as much as 12 thousand to 15 thousand titles, the number of book pages on average 500-1,000 pages. This amount is equal to the amount of the entire collection of books from the library of small-medium size. Second, multiple access. Shortage of books printed form (conventional) is the access to the book is single. This means that if there is a book borrowed by someone, the other members will have to wait to borrow the book is returned first. Book electronic form is not the case. Each user can simultaneously use an electronic book that is equally good to read or to be transferred to a personal computer (download). Third, it is not limited by space and time. Collection of electronic books can be accessed from anywhere and at anytime with no record of a computer network (computer internetworking). While the printed book in a library can only be accessed if the people come to the library during open library service. If the library is closed, the people who come are not able to access the library, on the contrary even though the library was open but the user is unable to come to the library so that users can not access the library. Fourth, it can be in the form of multimedia. Electronic book not only contains information that is text only or image only. But can also be in the form of a combination of text images, and sounds. Even the electronic books include documents that are only moving pictures and sound (movies) are not likely to be superseded in text form. (Abdul Rahman Saleh, 2006)

Due to the benefits derived from the use of ICT to support learning, then in the Strategic Plan 2010-2014 of the Ministry of National Education, mentioned the role of ICT: first, to utilization e\_learning and e\_administration, ICT plays a role in the implementation of the strategy of "strengthening institutions, working procedures and human resources". The strategy is a strategy of the achievement of the strategy objectives: "Strengthening governance in ensuring the implementation of education services". Second, utilization of ICT is believed to support efforts to increase access to education, improving the quality, relevance and competitiveness of education, as well as governance, accountability and the public image of education. Third, the low utilization and dissemination of the use of ICT in education, is one of the problems and challenges of education development 2010-2014. With the amount of attention the state of the use of ICT, the strategic planning of Kemenristek Dikti 2015-2019 is focused on the use of ICT infrastructure, especially IT Security; and system development framework/platform, based on Open Source software, especially ICT systems to support e\_Government and e\_Business.

#### Conclusion

Indonesia has fulfilled 17 years of being in a period of democratization. In the democratization period, the quality of education in Indonesia has not experienced significant development, still the quality of education in Indonesia is far behind from other ASEAN countries. Efforts by the state, such as creating a national education standards, and extend the reach of education seemed to have no effect. From various research data as discussed, showing in this case because interest in reading or reading culture of Indonesian society is weak. Low interest in reading this had been the cause of the low quality of education in Indonesia. Therefore, the challenge of education in Indonesia lies in how the state encourages communities to become people who love to read. Thus the role of the state can do is to maximize the use of ICT to produce interesting reading material, and integrate the use of ICT in the concept of ODL in an attempt to make a breakthrough to improve the quality of education.

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