



Review Article

Influence of Children's Characteristics and Volunteer Learning Communication Style on Children's Cultural Literacy in Busa Pustaka

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the influence of children's characteristics and volunteers' learning communication styles on children's cultural literacy in Busa Pustaka. Using a quantitative approach and survey method, the study involved 50 child respondents. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using multiple linear regression. The results show that both children's characteristics and the volunteers' communication style significantly influence children's cultural literacy. Volunteers' communication style was found to have a more dominant effect. These findings emphasize the need for culturally responsive teaching strategies that align with children's developmental characteristics to foster cultural understanding and appreciation.

Keywords: children's characteristics; communication style; volunteer; cultural literacy; informal education; local culture; educational communication

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1. Introduction

Cultural literacy is the ability to understand, appreciate and participate in local culture, including values, traditions, language and cultural symbols. In the midst of globalization and rapid social change, strengthening cultural literacy from an early age is very important to maintain the identity and identity of the nation [1]. cultural literacy rates remain low, as reflected in the 2023 IPLM score of only 55.25%. To address this issue, Busa Pustaka, a mobile library and community learning center, engages volunteers to deliver interactive, culture-based education. This study investigates how children's developmental characteristics and volunteers' communication styles affect cultural literacy outcomes in such informal educational settings. One of the efforts to instill these cultural values can be done through community-based informal education, such as learning activities at Busa Pustaka. Busa Pustaka is a community learning space in Bandar Lampung, built and managed by volunteers with the spirit of literacy and preservation of local culture. The activities carried out at Busa Pustaka not only focus on reading skills, but also the introduction of local culture through folklore, traditional games and interactive dialogues. In practice, children's cultural literacy level is strongly influenced by two main factors, namely: Children's characteristics, such as age, level of curiosity, communication skills, and activeness in activities, have an important

role in determining the extent to which children can accept and internalize cultural values [2]. According to Piaget's theory, children aged 7-12 years are in the concrete operational stage, where they begin to understand concepts and values through real experiences [3]. Meanwhile, Vygotsky emphasizes the importance of social interaction in children's learning process, especially through assistance from more knowledgeable others [4]. This means that if children have supportive characteristics such as being active, communicative, and open to new experiences, the cultural learning process will be more effective. On the other hand, the communication style used by volunteers in delivering cultural materials also determines the effectiveness of learning. Educational communication styles that involve two-way communication, the use of simple language, visual media, and emotional approaches have been proven to increase children's engagement and understanding of culture. Communication by volunteers is not only verbal, but also uses nonverbal communication such as facial expressions, gestures, and eye contact, which strengthens the appeal of learning and creates an emotional bond with children [5]. However, to date, research on the combined influence of children's characteristics and volunteer learning communication styles on children's cultural literacy is still very limited, especially in the context of community-based informal education. This study attempts to address this gap by empirically testing the influence of these two variables on the cultural literacy of children who participate in learning activities at Busa Pustaka. This study aims to:

- (1) To determine the effect of children's characteristics on children's cultural literacy;
- (2) To determine the effect of volunteer learning communication style on children's cultural literacy;
- (3) To find out the simultaneous effect of children's characteristics and volunteer communication style on children's cultural literacy.

The results of this study are expected to make a theoretical contribution to the study of educational communication, as well as a practical contribution in the development of cultural learning models in informal literacy spaces such as Busa Pustaka.

2. Literature Review

This study examines the relationship between children's characteristics and volunteer learning communication styles on children's cultural literacy. Several theories and previous research results provide the conceptual foundation for this study.

2.1. Children's Characteristics

Child characteristics are an important factor in the learning process. The characteristics include age, level of curiosity, social skills, and children's participation in activities. According to Piaget, children aged 7 to 11 years are in the concrete operational stage, where they begin to think logically about real objects and are able to understand concepts conveyed through direct experience [1]. In addition, Vygotsky emphasized the importance of social interaction and support from adults or peers in children's learning. The concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) shows that children's learning potential can develop optimally through guidance from more competent parties [2]. This means that the characteristics of children who are open to communication, active in activities, and have high enthusiasm will more quickly absorb the cultural values conveyed. Research by (slameto, 2010). also states that learning success is influenced by internal factors, such as children's interest, attention, motivation and learning readiness [3]. Therefore, in the context of cultural literacy, children's characteristics play a role in shaping responses to cultural stimuli provided by volunteers.

2.2 Volunteer Communication Style in Learning

Communication in the learning process becomes the main medium to convey knowledge, values and skills. Learning communication style refers to the approach used by educators or facilitators in interacting with learners. In informal education contexts like Busa Pustaka, volunteers have the freedom to use a more flexible and adaptive communication style. This approach often involves two-way communication, storytelling, the use of visual media, and nonverbal expressions to capture children's attention. Dialogical communication - where

children are free to ask questions, discuss and express themselves - can build emotional engagement and enhance understanding of the cultural content presented. Research by (Suherman et al. (2019) found that volunteers' friendly, empathetic and fun communication style had a significant impact on children's engagement in literacy activities [6]. This style helps create a safe and comfortable learning atmosphere, which is important in the process of internalizing cultural values.

2.3 Cultural Literacy in Children

cultural literacy as the basic knowledge that individuals must have to become effective members of a society cultural literacy includes the ability to recognize folklore, cultural symbols, local languages, local traditions, and have an attitude of respect and maintain the cultural heritage. effective multicultural education must begin with children, because childhood is a crucial phase in the formation of cultural identity and social values [7]. Children who are positively exposed to local culture will tend to have a sense of pride in their own culture and be open to diversity. In the learning activities at Busa Pustaka, cultural literacy is fostered through reading cultural stories, playing traditional games, recognizing traditional clothing, and discussing the values inherent in the lives of local communities. All these activities show that cultural literacy is not just knowledge, but also active engagement and a positive attitude towards culture.

3. Proposed Method

This research employed a quantitative correlational method to examine the influence of children's characteristics and volunteers' instructional communication styles on children's cultural literacy. The study was conducted at Busa Pustaka, a community-based learning center located in Bandar Lampung, which facilitates informal education for children with the help of volunteers.

3.1 Population and sampel

The population in this study consisted of all children who were active participants in the Busa Pustaka learning activities. Using purposive sampling technique, a total of 50 respondents were selected based on their regular participation and availability during the data collection period. The criteria included children aged 8–13 years who had attended at least 5 learning sessions at Busa Pustaka.

3.2 Data Collection Instruments

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire based on the Likert scale (1–4), with options ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree". The questionnaire was divided into three sections corresponding to each variable:

- X₁ – Children's Characteristics: Items included curiosity, activeness, confidence, and social interaction.
- X₂ – Volunteer Communication Style: Items measured the clarity, empathy, feedback, nonverbal cues, and adaptation in communication.
- Y – Cultural Literacy: Items assessed understanding of local traditions, appreciation for culture, and participation in cultural activities.

Each questionnaire was validated using Pearson correlation ($r_{\text{count}} > r_{\text{table}}$) and tested for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha (accepted if $\alpha > 0.6$).

3.3 Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis used multiple linear regression to determine the simultaneous and partial effects of the independent variables (X₁ and X₂) on the dependent variable (Y). Prior to the regression analysis, classical assumption tests were conducted, including normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests to ensure the validity of the model. Statistical testing was carried out using SPSS version 25, with significance level set at :

$$a = 0,5 \quad (1)$$

Hypothesis testing was done using:

- t-test to assess the partial effect of each independent variable.
- F-test to assess the simultaneous influence of X1 and X2 on Y.
- Coefficient of Determination (R^2) to determine the proportion of variance in cultural literacy explained by the two independent variables.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

The results of the descriptive analysis showed that both independent variables—Children's Characteristics (X1) and Instructional Communication Style of Volunteers (X2)—were positively perceived by the respondents. On a Likert scale of 1 to 4, the average score for:

- X1 (Children's Characteristics) was 3.41, indicating a high level of curiosity, motivation, and independence.
- X2 (Volunteer Communication Style) scored 3.52, suggesting that volunteers communicate effectively using verbal, nonverbal, and interactive strategies.
- Y (Cultural Literacy of Children) averaged at 3.36, showing a good level of knowledge, appreciation, and participation in cultural activities.

4.2 Classical Assumption Testing

Before conducting regression analysis, classical assumption tests were performed:

- Normality Test: The Kolmogorov–Smirnov test yielded a significance value > 0.05 , indicating that the residuals were normally distributed.
- Multicollinearity Test: VIF values for X1 and X2 were 1,677 and 0,596 respectively (< 10), indicating no multicollinearity.
- Heteroscedasticity Test: Spearman test showed p-values > 0.05 , indicating homoscedasticity.

These results confirm the feasibility of proceeding with multiple linear regression.

4.3 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

The regression equation derived from the analysis is:

$$Y = 2.891 + 0.363X1 + 0.024X2 \quad (1)$$

This indicates that:

- For every one-unit increase in X1 (Children's Characteristics), cultural literacy (Y) increases by 0.251, assuming X2 remains constant.
- For every one-unit increase in X2 (Volunteer Communication Style), cultural literacy (Y) increases by 0.381, assuming X1 remains constant.

4.4 Interpretation

The findings of this study indicate that both children's characteristics and the communication style of volunteers significantly influence children's cultural literacy. However, the volunteer communication style demonstrated a more dominant effect, as reflected in a higher regression coefficient and lower p-value.

This supports Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which emphasizes that learning is a social process where children acquire behaviors, knowledge, and attitudes through observation and imitation. Volunteers who use clear, expressive, and interactive communication (verbal and nonverbal) serve as role models and enhance children's engagement with cultural content.

Meanwhile, the significance of children's characteristics—such as curiosity, activeness, and social interaction—corresponds with Piaget's cognitive development theory and Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Children with higher motivation and readiness are more receptive to cultural messages and values, especially when supported by adult guidance (in this case, volunteers).

In the context of Busa Pustaka, this means that cultural learning is most effective when:

- Volunteers use inclusive and empathetic communication, adapting their methods to the developmental stage of the child.
- Children are encouraged to explore and express themselves, activating their natural curiosity and creativity.

Thus, this study affirms that the interaction between internal (child) and external (volunteer) factors is crucial in shaping cultural understanding, suggesting that future literacy programs must integrate both psychological and communicative approaches.

5. Comparison

The results of this study are consistent with several previous findings regarding the role of child characteristics and communication style in shaping learning outcomes—particularly in cultural education settings.

Firstly, the influence of children's characteristics on cultural literacy aligns with the findings of (slameto, 2010) which emphasize that internal factors such as motivation, attention, and readiness are critical for effective learning. Similarly, Piaget and Vygotsky highlight that children in the concrete operational stage (ages 7–12) learn best through direct experience and interactive support, which reinforces the importance of tailoring cultural content to developmental stages.

Secondly, the significant and more dominant role of volunteer communication style supports the conclusions of (Suherman et al. (2019), who found that empathetic, dialogical, and expressive communication by facilitators increases engagement and understanding in literacy activities. This study adds to that by showing how such communication not only improves general literacy but specifically fosters cultural literacy through emotional connection, visual explanation, and interactive storytelling.

Compared to existing literature, this study provides a more integrated view by analyzing both factors simultaneously. While prior research often examines child development or communication style separately, this research demonstrates that cultural literacy is best supported when volunteer communication adapts to children's characteristics, confirming the theoretical frameworks of both developmental psychology and educational communication.

Moreover, this research fills a gap in studies focusing on informal, community-based education, where educational interactions are more flexible but often lack structure. It highlights that even in non-formal settings like Busa Pustaka, systematic approaches rooted in theory can produce measurable learning outcomes.

6. Conclusions

This study concludes that both children's characteristics and volunteer communication styles significantly influence the cultural literacy of children in informal learning settings, such as Busa Pustaka. The regression results show that the communication style of volunteers has a more dominant effect, although both variables contribute meaningfully.

The findings support psychological and educational theories, particularly those of Piaget, Vygotsky, and Bandura, emphasizing that :

- Children's internal traits such as curiosity, motivation, and activeness play a vital role in how they absorb cultural values.
- Volunteers' communication styles—verbal, nonverbal, empathetic, and interactive—enhance the learning environment and foster deeper cultural understanding.

Implications of this study include the need for :

- Training for volunteers to use age-appropriate, engaging communication strategies.
- Designing informal education models that consider both developmental readiness and communication dynamics.

Limitations of this study lie in the limited sample size (n=50) and context-specific setting (Busa Pustaka in Bandar Lampung), which may affect generalizability.

Suggestions for further research :

- Explore the role of digital communication media in enhancing cultural literacy.
- Include parental involvement or peer influence as mediating/moderating variables in future models.

This study contributes both theoretically to the discourse on educational communication and child development, and practically to the development of culturally responsive literacy programs in informal community-based settings.

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