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A Sociocultural Perspective of Adult Literacy: Ethnographic Analysis of the Instructional Practices of Two Adult Education Tutors in Indonesia

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Abstract

This study focuses on the topic of emerging adult literacy in Indonesia by investigating the sociocultural perspective of tutors who involved in the program. This study adopts a sociocultural perspective and presents an ethnographic investigation that examines the instructional practices of two adult education tutors. In-depth and repeated interviews were conducted with the two subjects to learn about their socioeconomic situation, teaching and training history, personal motivation, literacy beliefs, and pedagogical philosophy. The results of this study, which looked at two tutors' literacy instruction in terms of their characteristics and attitudes as well as their working environments, have shown the benefits of adopting a social perspective on teaching. The findings show that these two tutors are highly motivated and committed to helping their students learn to read and write despite the challenges they face as tutors, including a lack of thorough pre-service, limited in-service training, and minimal ongoing financial and pedagogical support. The results of this research could potentially have significant consequences for developing more efficient adult literacy initiatives in Indonesia and similar culturally heterogeneous environments.

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INTRODUCTION

Acquiring knowledge and skills through education is crucial in advancing human development, as it plays a significant role in empowering individuals, fostering societal advancements, and driving economic prosperity (Zafar et al., 2020). Teaching is a significant social practice within adult literacy education that seeks to provide individuals with the necessary abilities to engage in society actively (Gal et al., 2020; Adam et al., 2022). The study of teaching as a social practice in Indonesia is fascinating because of the distinctive and dynamic environment in which adult literacy tutors work. This is primarily due to the country's linguistic and cultural diversity.

Indonesia, which has a vast archipelago with more than 17,000 islands and a variety of languages and cultures, faces significant challenges in providing fair and inclusive educational opportunities for its diverse adult population. The significance of adult literacy education holds great weight within this particular environment, as it assumes a crucial role in mitigating socioeconomic inequalities and promoting social unity (Pittman et al., 2020). The Indonesian government has been working to reduce the country's high illiteracy rates via a combination of formal and non-formal education programs since its independence in 1945 (Lowenberg, 1983). Adult literacy tutors are crucial in advancing education, primarily within community-based or non-governmental organizations.

The comprehension of the experiences of adult literacy tutors in Indonesia holds significant importance for multiple reasons (Indah et al., 2022; Sultan et al., 2017; Wardani, 2021). Indonesia's diverse cultures and languages pose a distinctive obstacle to adult literacy education. Tutors must navigate a multifaceted linguistic and cultural environment when instructing individuals in fundamental reading abilities. An investigation of how tutors modify their instructional approaches to accommodate this range of variety can yield significant insights into the influence of culture on teaching methodologies. Indonesia has made notable progress in advancing adult literacy through various governmental initiatives. Examining how adult literacy tutors understand and use these regulations in their instructional methods can provide insight into the correlation between policy frameworks and teaching as a social practice (Banseng et al., 2021; Arwin et al., 2022).

The provision of adult literacy education frequently necessitates adopting a student-centered approach that considers adult students' varied requirements, motivations, and life experiences. Examining how tutors adapt their instructional methods to accommodate the individualized requirements of their students can provide valuable insights into optimal approaches in the field of adult education. Adult literacy tutors frequently consist of volunteers or individuals with less professional training. Gaining insight into the professional development possibilities accessible to tutors and the support networks established can provide valuable understanding regarding the obstacles they encounter and the resources they need to enhance their pedagogical approaches. Adult literacy instruction facilitates the acquisition of fundamental skills and engenders wider societal ramifications, including enhancing career prospects, access to healthcare services, and engagement in civic activities. Examining the effects of adult literacy tutors' efforts on the individuals they instruct and the communities they serve might shed light on the broader societal importance of teaching as a social endeavor (Kress et al., 2021).

Prior studies in Indonesia have predominantly examined adult literacy students' characteristics, accomplishments, and representation in primers (Muttaqin, 2018; Sadiku et al., 2022; Swandayani et al., 2021). Several scholarly investigations have examined literacy programs' pedagogical and

infrastructure-related challenges (Rahayu & Usman, 2022). These studies contribute to the perspective that literacy in adult education is characterized by a 'deficit' model, wherein a few students achieve functional literacy while the majority acquire essential reading, writing, and arithmetic skills. The study by Wulandari et al. (2021) examines the vernacular literacy practices used by people in suburban areas who have just learned to read and write. Nevertheless, previous research has yet to include a specific group of adult education tutors. This essay aims to address this gap and serves as a means to explore our interest in adult education within the framework of the social theory of literacy.

This article focuses on the topic of emerging adult literacy in Indonesia. This study adopts a sociocultural perspective (Glăveanu, 2020) and presents an ethnographic investigation (Harwati, 2019) that examines the instructional practices of two adult education tutors. The study sheds light on the tutors' ideas and attitudes towards adult literacy and the specific circumstances in which they operate. This study aims to gain insight into and depict the experiences of two adult literacy tutors, with a specific focus on their local setting. This research aims to emphasize their perspectives, shed light on the contextual factors that shape their work, and provide a platform for their voices to be heard. Significant attention is devoted to examining how teaching under adverse circumstances impacts the context of adult literacy instruction.

This paper examines the instructional practices of two adult education tutors, considering their educational background, professional standing, training, and views towards adult literacy. The adopted social perspective on teaching is grounded in the understanding that teaching is not solely a technical, pedagogical endeavor focused on imparting literacy instruction to students. Instead, it is recognized as a multifaceted process influenced by various factors, including the specific context in which tutors operate, their characteristics, and their beliefs regarding adult literacy. The article aims to examine the subsequent inquiries:

1. What is the current professional standing of these two adult education tutors, and what are their respective attitudes regarding adult literacy?
2. Do they understand the mental and emotional factors that influence participants' attendance and performance in class?
3. What methods are used in the classroom, and how strictly is the prescribed curriculum followed?
4. How do tutors assess their instructional practices and the academic achievements of their students?

The present study posits that a comprehensive comprehension of the instructional practices employed by adult literacy trainers in the classroom necessitates an examination of the sociocultural milieu in which they deliver literacy education to adult students (Villares Nascimento et al., 2022; Weber, 2023). Furthermore, this perspective is grounded in the notion that a comprehensive understanding of adult education tutors' characteristics and instructional practices can contribute valuable insights to developing adult literacy policy, research, and teaching in Indonesia. This may facilitate the exploration of novel approaches to designing and implementing literacy programs. This study seeks to contribute to the excellent discourse on teaching as a social practice by examining adult literacy tutors' experiences, problems, and triumphs in Indonesia. This study explores the complex relationship among cultural, policy, and pedagogical elements that contribute to the development of teaching methodologies, ultimately impacting the experiences of adult students. Furthermore, the results of this study could potentially have significant consequences for

developing more efficient adult literacy initiatives in Indonesia and similar culturally heterogeneous environments. The primary objective of this research is to emphasize the crucial significance of adult literacy tutors in molding the educational environment and promoting social transformation in Indonesia.

METHODS

The Study's Participants, Settings, and Researcher's Involvement

Two imaginary adult education tutors, named Mawar and Indah, participated in this two-year research study. Mawar, a 39-year-old female, possesses a wealth of experience in adult education instruction, spanning over 17 years. This extensive teaching background has been chiefly cultivated inside a residential training setting located in a prominent region of Padang, West Sumatera, Indonesia. Indah, a 36-year-old individual with a bachelor's degree in History, taught literacy skills within a residential training setting near Padang. This endeavor is undertaken as part of an initiative to utilize residential training to facilitate the dissemination of literacy education. The tutors were chosen for their voluntary participation in the current study and affiliation with diverse adult literacy traditions.

Furthermore, the individuals in question were chosen based on practical considerations. Mawar was selected due to her role as an adult education tutor, with whom the authors had established connections through their involvement in the same association. It is worth noting that the authors had previously volunteered to teach English lessons within this association for one year. Indah, who is related to one of the administrators, was also included in the selection process. This particular factor significantly improved the process of data collection. No assertion is made regarding the representativeness of the two tutors in Indonesia's adult education tutor population.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

Social behaviors unfolding in genuine real-world environments have been thoroughly analyzed using ethnographic research methods. The participants' socioeconomic level, years of teaching/training experience, motivation, literacy attitudes, and educational philosophy were all explored via in-depth and repeated interviews. The objective was to investigate how these elements influence their instructional practices. The interviews exhibited a dialogic approach, as the participants were consistently questioned on many topics related to their backgrounds, literacy, and teaching experiences. The interviews were carried out in the Indonesian language, following which the primary extracts of the interviews were translated into English. Data were collected during a nearly one-year duration, spanning from June 2022 to September 2023, during which the participants underwent biweekly interviews. Using informal discussion served as a supplementary method to continuously gather fresh data. Based on our professional affiliation with Mawar and the familial connection we shared with Indah, we engaged in frequent dialogues with both individuals weekly.

In addition, the think-aloud procedure was employed to elicit verbal expressions of thoughts from the literacy trainers, facilitating self-evaluation of their instructional practices. This approach also mitigated any potential adverse influence resulting from the researcher's presence, as Wolcott and Lobczowski (2021) noted. Tutors were told to discuss and get feedback on their andragogical strategies immediately after each class because of the difficulties of expressing their ideas while

teaching. The think-aloud protocol schedule includes five criteria for the best ways to help students succeed in an adult literacy program. Five criteria drawn from Belzer's (2013) and Belzer's (2017) studies are used in the current investigation. These standards include (i) regular and adequate student attendance; (ii) an understanding of the context in which students learn; (iii) the development of a supportive classroom environment; (iv) the use of sound pedagogical practices, well-planned lessons, and a wealth of resources; (v) the evaluation of both teaching methods and student progress. The classroom observation, the fourth mode of data collection, was scheduled using the criteria mentioned above as a guide. In summary, utilizing these five criteria facilitated the process of triangulating the gathered data and effectively capturing the viewpoints of the two adult education tutors, thereby providing a platform for their voices to be heard.

Data collection, coding, and comparison were carried out continuously until theoretical saturation was achieved. The themes derived from the data were recognized, categorized, integrated, and afterward examined about the study questions that were initially posed. Therefore, the data analysis process involved thematic analysis of the acquired data to identify and emphasize recurring patterns and themes derived from the research questions provided in this study. Participants informed permission, privacy, and safety were ethical concerns for collecting and evaluating data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Current Standing and Educational Preparation of an Individual

Indah obtained her Bachelor's degree in History Education in 2005. Subsequently, she experienced a period of unemployment. Upon implementing the new policy that mandated the employment of individuals possessing degrees as tutors for adult literacy, she was among the fortunate individuals who secured a part-time position as a literacy tutor in February 2008. The tutor delivers a single course every week, doing five sessions that spent two hours each. She has an annual salary of 18,000,000 Indonesian rupiah.

"People be sayin' 'poor she" when they find out I got a bachelor's degree and work as a tutor for adults who cannot read so well. But the people we help with literacy are grateful for the assistance we give them." (Indah).

Indah lacks adult literacy pre-service training and regulations. However, she obtained Ministry of Education in-service training. In her first year of teaching, the person attended three half-day in-service training courses. The first meeting was three months after her adult literacy class started. Supervisors who investigate, monitor, create, and promote adult education policy in Indonesia led the training sessions.

"The tutors were supposed to be pros at teaching adults the basics, but I didn't feel I learned much from them. They cared more about ideas than doing things. They didn't think much about how to teach older people. We only looked at and talked about one lesson in a single meeting." (Indah)

Due to the limited number of in-service training sessions, which proved ineffective in enhancing her pedagogical abilities and addressing the prescribed curriculum outlined by the Ministry of Education, Indah has resorted to using self-directed methods to enhance her teaching proficiency. The tutor encourages students to think outside the box by using materials designed specifically for their needs as readers and writers. She also tries to improve her teaching by consulting colleagues for advice. However, she thinks that if she had better pre-service and fruitful

in-service training, her pedagogical techniques would improve, and she'd be better able to meet the literacy needs of adult women.

Mawar's experience as an adult education tutor differed from others. In 2000, she discontinued her enrollment in the first year of high school. Subsequently, she assisted students with their academic tasks before assuming the role of an adult literacy tutor. Initially, she became involved in the house-training program as a volunteer responsible for overseeing the various extracurricular activities inside the organization. Despite having accumulated fourteen years of experience as an adult literacy trainer, she continues to be classified as a volunteer, devoid of any incentives or prospects for advancement to a permanent role.

"The connection contributed to my decision to drop out of high school. I was informed I would move from volunteer teaching to a paid position. I've got a bunch of stuff lined up, like classes for grown-ups, teaching little ones, getting my hands dirty in the garden, learning new skills, and even trying my hand at hairdressing. This made the association a lot of money, but I had a low-paying and temporary job." (Mawar)

Currently, Mawar is teaching adult students Indonesian literacy, focusing on females. The tutor conducts a total of three daily courses, with each session spanning one hour and thirty minutes. Additionally, she imparts Minang literacy instruction to individuals with advanced literacy levels in the Minangese language. Despite her diligent efforts in her work, she receives a remuneration of 15,000 rupiah per hour, and her allowances are disbursed in periodic installments every three months as compensation.

In contrast to Indah, Mawar possesses established protocols on adult education pedagogy, commonly referred to as andragogy, encompassing both general instructional practices and specific methodologies for teaching adult students reading skills. The person mentioned above uses a Ministry of Education document that provides tutors with in-depth details on the features of adult literacy teaching. This guide also details the best practices for instructing adults and their unique needs. Additionally, she participated in one to two annual in-service training programs that were scheduled and facilitated by adult literacy specialists. Sessions typically lasted between seven and fourteen days. Mawar claims that the training sessions have helped her teach literacy in the classroom. However, she argues that most lectures and classroom discussions during training sessions are essentially theoretical. The author offers a specific critique of the financial management of these sessions.

"These training sessions have a problem with communication. No, we don't offer any seminars at this time. We were only given a single demonstration class during our two-week training program. And to make matters even worse, the budget for these sessions isn't being spent honestly. People spend too much on fancy restaurant food when we could save that cash and buy our food." (Mawar)

The Attitudes and Attendance of Adult Education Programs

Due largely to her belief that literacy education is a moral and religious commitment, Indah remains optimistic about her literacy mission despite her unstable job as a part-time tutor, limited training, and unpleasant working circumstances.

"The fact that my job is not stable and I don't earn much money does bother me, but it doesn't impact my teaching at the mosque badly. I'm convinced that I must do my job well no

matter what happens. I do it not just to make money but also to follow Allah's teachings... If I had another way to make money, I'd still want to volunteer to assist in educating women in literacy and numeracy. Seeing the students improve and eventually read, write, and even read the Quran is the most rewarding aspect of this project for me. It's a great feeling!" (Indah)

Indah's unwavering dedication to instructing adult literacy and executing her pedagogical responsibilities with the utmost professionalism is underpinned by her religious beliefs, which emphasize the significance of assisting people in comprehending and effectively utilizing written language. As a testament to her drive, she consistently demonstrates punctuality by arriving to class promptly and has a remarkable attendance record, excluding instances of illness or professional obligations. Furthermore, she considers it her essential responsibility to actively inspire the participants to engage in classroom attendance.

"I emphasize to my students the practical relevance of literacy skills. The importance of reading and reciting Quranic verses in prayer is something we often discuss." (Indah).

She notices that her adult literacy students are more engaged in class and progress toward reading competency as a direct consequence of her leadership. Based on the author's interactions with Indah and their observations of her instructional sessions, it can be inferred that the participants' motivation is intricately linked to her teaching approach. The participants' enthusiasm for acquiring literacy skills supports Indah's efforts in providing literacy instruction and catalyzes her to intensify her instructional endeavors. The tutor's optimistic attitude is evident in her occasional extension of the allotted time for participants, driven by their motivation, which encourages prolonging the course.

While Mawar exhibits a similar level of dedication to adult education as Indah, there is a notable distinction between the two regarding Mawar's infrequent provision of literacy instruction to her students. The combination of her limited income as an adult education tutor with modest wages and her familial obligations as a mother contributes to her occasional absences from class.

"Sometimes, I must skip a class for survival reasons, you know? I got this private class with some other students. I can't understand it. I feel like people in the association think I'm crazy just because I'm married, have two kids, and do this "kind of voluntary" work." (Mawar).

Mawar asserts that her instructional practices are negatively impacted by the ambiguous administrative framework and insufficient compensation that she encounters. The constrained financial remuneration has a detrimental effect on my pedagogical endeavors in the classroom setting. Favorable working conditions are essential for achieving optimal job performance, as their absence may hinder one's ability to carry out their duties effectively. Furthermore, it is essential to acknowledge that the profession in question demands a significant amount of personal sacrifice. The individuals responsible for overseeing the house-training process have their priorities and appear to lack concern for our well-being.

Additionally, she posits a need for genuine determination to propagate literacy competencies among the adult population without essential reading and writing skills. This may be attributed to the individuals in positions of authority within the organization she is affiliated with and the Ministry of Education.

"The government seems uninterested in this industry, even though they claim to be making efforts. And don't even get me started on the civil society; they're completely ignored. They do not care about teaching people how to read and write." (Mawar).

Nevertheless, after conducting classroom observations of Mawar's teaching, it can be concluded that her adult literacy instruction remains unaffected by the uncertain working conditions and low financial compensation she faces. The individual's diligent efforts and unwavering dedication toward facilitating the participants' achievements in literacy acquisition and Quranic memorization were exceptional.

I watched Mawar teach a group of about 25 kids today. She had terrible things to say about the literacy program in the past, but now she is very motivated and committed to learning to read and write. Her reason was also different from the unstable way she ran her business. She was frustrated with the association's leadership and policymakers for not prioritizing efforts to eradicate illiteracy. (Note from Observing on the Class)

The seeming contradiction can be elucidated by considering her conviction in the significant need to provide literacy education to individuals without essential reading and writing skills, irrespective of the unpleasant circumstances under which this teaching is conducted.

"Illiteracy is, like, a big reason why my society is underdeveloped. My main aim is to help some folks in my community, even though things aren't exactly going our way... I'm cool with the participants. I gotta say, I admire what they've accomplished, and I'm rooting for them to keep pushing even harder!" (Mawar).

The primary factor that motivates her to remain in the field is the profound personal gratification she experiences when assisting women in acquiring the skills to decipher and comprehend written language. Additionally, witnessing participants' transformation into literate individuals within a relatively short span of a few months further reinforces her commitment to her job. In summary, while facing uncertain employment and receiving low compensation, the overall positive attitudes of Indah and Mawar towards adult literacy training have a beneficial influence on their classroom teaching methods.

Consciousness of the Elements that Affect the Attendance and Performance of the Participants

Indah employs a pedagogical method rooted in humanism when instructing in literacy. The woman in question demonstrates attentiveness towards her students, displaying a genuine concern for their well-being and taking the initiative to inquire about their progress. Such behavior exemplifies the qualities expected of a compassionate, dedicated, and conscientious adult education tutor. For example, she inquires about why they are absent from class. She understands there are valid excuses for someone absent, such as when they or their children are sick. However, she does not accept other reasons, such as engaging in household chores, visiting the grocery, or attending a public bath. In addition, she dedicates her efforts to considering the mental status of her participants. If a participant encounters a personal issue or experiences ridicule from a fellow student, she would intervene to provide emotional support and alleviate any distress. Indah expresses her inclination to encourage her students, stating, *"I consistently offer encouragement to the participants and express commendation when they provide accurate responses."* (Indah)

Indah demonstrates adaptability in her teaching approach. The individual actively engages in the process of receiving feedback from participants regarding the content being taught and the instructional materials being utilized. The tutor will modify her instructional approach to attain her

pedagogical goals while also addressing the literacy requirements of her students. Nevertheless, most instances entail her incorporating their remarks if they align with the officially prescribed curriculum she must address. She always follows the set curriculum since she cannot afford to buy additional books or pay for duplicate services.

“For today’s lesson, for example, I was thinking of breaking it up into three segments: (a) Quran-related activities, (b) reading/writing, and (c) mathematics. But I limited myself to the first two batches. I slowed down a little to include everyone in class. I was more concerned with getting my students interested in studying and able to read and understand a few phrases from the Quran than I was with making sure they had the textbook. I gave it a go using what I knew, what was available, and what was around me.” (Indah)

Indah demonstrates her cognizance of the various aspects that impact the learning process of the participants by emphasizing the possible advantages associated with acquiring literacy skills. The person explains the rationale behind the Ministry of Religion in Indonesia’s adult literacy program. These objectives encompass acquiring the skills of reading and writing, committing passages from the Quran to memory, familiarising oneself with prayer rituals, and attaining a sufficient level of mathematical proficiency to comprehend and dial a telephone number.

“Well, you see, the participants thought that math might not connect to their daily lives or that it could be too hard to grasp because they did not quite understand its significance. So, I took the time to explain to them how maths plays a role in their lives, like when they dial a phone number or read the bus number.” (Indah).

Similarly, Mawar demonstrates an understanding of the various circumstances that influence the lives of her students and their motivation to enroll in the literacy program. The individual in question demonstrates an awareness of the varying motives of adult participants who have chosen to enroll in the literacy class. Furthermore, she dedicates significant work to evaluating their requirements and providing appropriate support and resources. She provides a clear explanation of the objectives and goals of the literacy lesson to the students. Additionally, she demonstrates comprehension and empathy for individuals who cannot attend class due to justifiable circumstances, such as medical appointments or legal obligations.

“I can tell when someone misses a session. Sometimes, I do not notice her because the classroom is so crowded. But, like, if she misses a bunch of sessions, I’d check in on her. In the event of a death in the group, we always show up as a unit to console one another.” (Mawar)

When numerous participants notified her of their anticipated absences, she would opt to defer the crucial components of the course to subsequent sessions. Furthermore, she actively engages with the adult students by attentively listening to their worries and remarks. In contrast to Indah, she demonstrates a propensity for adapting her instructional strategies to accommodate the specific requirements of her students, prioritizing their needs over strict adherence to the prescribed curriculum. The individual proposes several activities that are most suitable for fulfilling the requirements and desires of the participants, such as further practice in mathematics, the Indonesian language, the English language, or the Quran recitation. Furthermore, she ensures that these activities align with the established curriculum. Instead of relying heavily on the textbook, she utilizes the limited resources provided by the educational institution she is employed to replicate

materials. This approach aims to enhance her classroom activities and reinforce previously taught content and abilities.

"Okay, so I did this religious education thing today. So, I was discussing the Sourate al-balad passage in the Quran with the children. We discussed its significance, context, and overall purpose. And then, I attempted to help them remember it by giving them some hints. So, I didn't rely only on my textbook. I did some reading to give the class the context needed to appreciate this Sourate fully." (Mawar)

The importance of Mawar and Indah's connection to their students was stressed by Carless and Winstone (2023). Tutors of adults may learn a lot about their students' motivation to learn and improve the quality of the adult literacy program by having open dialogue with them about their wants and concerns outside of class.

In conclusion, there is a distinction between Indah and Mawar regarding their instructional methodologies. Indah's adherence to the curriculum is mostly attributed to her delivery of adult literacy education within the framework of utilizing domestic settings as venues for instructional purposes. Consequently, her activities are subject to significant oversight by the Ministry of Religion in Indonesia. In contrast, Mawar likely possesses greater autonomy in addressing the wants and desires of her students, mostly due to the specific environment of her home-based instructional setting. However, both tutors exhibit similarities in their understanding of the various aspects that impact their students' attendance and academic progress. This level of awareness demonstrates their commitment to improving their instructional practices' effectiveness, reinforcing the assertion that they are dedicated tutors who deliver high-quality teaching. The use of a humanistic approach by these tutors serves as another proof of their commitment to effectively fulfilling their purpose of providing high-quality literacy teaching to their students.

Instruction in Adult Education: The Process of Lesson Planning

Despite the suboptimal working conditions and the modest remuneration, Indah demonstrates exceptional organizational skills as an adult education tutor, meticulously devising and coordinating instructional activities. The initial portion of the session is dedicated to memorizing the Quran, while the subsequent segments are allocated to reading, writing, and mathematics activities. Occasionally, the facilitator concludes the session by engaging in a discourse about enhancing one's religious obligations. However, more commonly, the attendees pray to express gratitude towards the facilitator for imparting literacy skills. The meticulousness of her planning may be attributed to her recent enrollment in adult education.

In contrast, Mawar, drawing upon her extensive teaching experience spanning fourteen years, opts to outline the lesson with a brief overview of the tasks to be covered in class. Mawar stated that she once engaged in preparing her lessons but needs to adhere to this routine consistently. Nevertheless, the lack of meticulous lesson planning occasionally has a detrimental effect on her instructional practices.

"I just gave my students a dictation task. Even though I was feeling down, I tried my hardest to get them involved in the task and assist them in improving their spelling abilities. So, I taught what I had planned but wasn't happy with how the lesson went. The class was way too packed, which made it quite frustrating. When compared to prior classes, the student's

performance was subpar. I may have benefited from employing group work as a teaching method and spending more time arranging the dictation task." (Mawar).

The Teaching Methods

Indah typically employs a pedagogical strategy that prioritizes a bottom-up approach, placing students at the focal point of her instructional efforts. The tutor promotes the implementation of cooperative learning strategies among her student body.

"When I teach, I make sure the women are involved, and if they're having trouble grasping anything new, I give them real-life examples. I use real-life stuff to help people understand abstract ideas." (Indah).

"I make sure to keep my students involved and interested while they are learning. I consider how well-read they are and encourage them to work together. The returning students are a great resource for the newcomers to the literacy program, as they can provide advice and encouragement based on their own experiences." (Indah).

Nevertheless, Indah refrains from incorporating group activities during the initial weeks of the literacy session and infrequently promotes participant interaction. Additionally, the tutor does not promote peer correction due to its potential to disrupt the orderly and supportive classroom environment, particularly during the initial stages of the academic year when tensions may arise regarding seating arrangements or when participants make errors and are subject to laughter from their peers. While displaying a friendly and supportive demeanor towards the participants, the tutor ensures the maintenance of a formal atmosphere within the classroom. This is considered a necessary condition for effective literacy instruction and acquisition, particularly during the initial stages of the class.

"In the initial stages of the sessions, I typically adopt a firm approach with the participants; however, as the duration progresses, a sense of camaraderie akin to that of a familial bond tends to develop." (Indah)

By the end of the school year, the participants have developed a feeling of community, resulting in acts of kindness like visiting one another during sickness or loss.

"As the group members get more comfortable with one another, I allow them to provide corrections to one another. I progressively increase their participation in correcting one another... In my opinion, the literacy class has greatly contributed to the participant's ability to form closer bonds with one another. We've got a familial dynamic going on here. Despite the many obstacles we face, I do my best to foster a sense of camaraderie among my students in our reading class. I try to make learning to read and write fun using real-world and even Quranic examples. I also do everything I can to be an encouraging and guiding presence in their lives." (Indah).

Mawar employs a slightly analogous methodology. The tutor prioritizes her students' educational requirements and literacy development as the focal point of her instructional considerations. Unlike Indah, the topic of conversation encourages group engagement, yet they admit to having difficulty with pair or group tasks.

"So, students in one of my courses were interested in learning more about STDs. I decided to have the students work in small groups so that I could better answer their inquiries. I thought they were serious about the assignment, but when I inquired more, the man became awkwardly silent and withdrawn. So, like, this one person in the class was all like, "Hey

guys, this dude right here is your tutor, but he's also kind of like your brother, so don't be embarrassed or anything." (Mawar)

The individual acknowledges that, on occasion, conflicts arise among the participants about allocating a chair. However, she adeptly manages such issues to prevent their recurrence in the future. Mawar's instructional effectiveness is compromised by her non-permanent status and unstable employment, resulting in a diminished sense of motivation and belonging within the classroom.

"Back in the day, when I started teaching and money troubles weren't as bad as they are now, I used to feel like I was part of my class's family. However, this sense of belonging has diminished. I'm disappointed that the group has no paid employees and no formal connection with the government. The local management is quite awful, and there are a lot of various levels in the same class, so I'm not as motivated as I once was." (Mawar)

Assessment and Evaluation

A summative approach characterizes the assessment policy for adult education. On the academic calendar, students must participate in two formal assessments throughout the school year, specifically in January and May. Typically, these assessments encompass four distinct components: reading and writing, which evaluate skills in spelling, vocabulary, and word order; grammar, which focuses on pronoun usage; religious education, which tests students' familiarity with Islamic tenets and principles; and mathematics, which covers number theory and its applications. This strategy has less of an effect on the pedagogical practices of adult education tutors or the academic achievements of adult students since it is mainly designed to achieve administrative and statistical goals. In practical application, Indah informally incorporates formative assessment within her training and evaluation of adult literacy. Neither she nor the decision-makers place much stock on student test scores when deciding whether or not to renew a tutor's contract. Thus, she is correct in her assessment. However, Indah uses these discoveries to refine her pedagogical strategy and alter her teaching and the material she covers.

"I would rather do activities than take examinations to identify weak spots. At the conclusion of each course or skill component, I have the participants do certain activities to gauge their level of comprehension in a discussion. Oh, I give out homework too." (Indah).

Indah engages in self-evaluation as a means of professional development, as she lacks the opportunity for peer review and relies mainly on formative assessment to gauge her students' learning successes.

"When I come back to my apartment, I immediately begin to reflect on my teaching methods and whether or not they were effective." (Indah).

She also tells her students to check out their courses.

"Many of my students came to class today. My kids and I have been hanging out for almost a month, so when I completed what I had planned, I spoke with them and encouraged them to share their opinions and ideas. The Quran was well-received by everybody. New material was mastered while existing material was memorized with greater precision. In addition, they gleefully reported that they had broken the code and can now read the letters and phrases that appear on television, in their children's textbooks, and on the street. Regarding mathematics, they said that they can dial a phone number without asking for help." (Indah).

Mawar also employs the practice of continual assessment. She consistently employs concept-checking tactics to ascertain the level of understanding attained by my students. Exercises are allocated either during class sessions or as homework after each lecture segment. However, she must conduct an assessment after every academic period and a standardized examination developed by the association at the end of the academic year. This examination encompasses parts of reading, writing, the fundamental principles of Islam, and mathematics. Indah and Mawar employ a combination of formative and summative assessment methods to adhere to the stipulated criteria outlined in official guidelines while utilizing these assessments to enhance their pedagogical practices and effectively address their students' literacy learning requirements. Nevertheless, the present article needs to go into the specific effects of this strategy on the literacy acquisition of adult students. However, this topic will be the subject of a future publication.

CONCLUSIONS

This article presents the findings investigating the literacy training methods utilized by two adult education tutors in Indonesia. The tutors have to deal with working conditions that could be better, insufficient pay, and few opportunities for professional development. On the other hand, they exhibit a very high degree of desire and attention towards the literacy growth of their kids. Both tutors stress the significance of contextualizing literacy within the participants' lives, whether through the provision of religious rewards or the promotion of communal development. They also prioritize understanding their students' needs and motivations, and they actively seek feedback to improve their instruction methods. These tutors put student needs first and work hard to foster a sense of community inside the class, even though their instruction methods are somewhat distinct. According to the findings of the study, there is a pressing requirement for adult education tutors to have increased levels of recognition and support, including better salary, job stability, and continued professional development. Teaching adults to read and write can be improved, and a learning culture can be encouraged if policymakers capitalize on these tutors' enthusiasm and optimistic outlooks.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest related to this study.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Irmawita: Conceptualization, Vevi Sunarti: Writing original draft, Ciptro Handrianto: Methodology, Shahid Rasool: Data analysis, Sabbir Ahmed Chowdhury: Data curation.

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