

The Role of the Publishing Industry in the New Order Era as a Supporter of the Illiteracy Eradication Program in Indonesia

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Abstract. The eradication of illiteracy during the New Order was a big step, including for the publishing industry in Indonesia. There are not many studies that discuss how the illiteracy eradication program during the New Order affected the growth of the publishing industry. This article aims to show the growth of publishing during the New Order era and its role in the eradication of illiteracy. This article uses the methods of observation and literature study. The sources used are obtained from books, journal articles, and presidential instructions. Then, the sources were analyzed and interpreted for the writing. The results show that the emergence of SD Inpres during the New Order era as a policy in the illiteracy eradication program had an impact on the growth of the publishing industry to help reduce illiteracy in Indonesia. This growth was accompanied by the production of large numbers of books, such as books with cognitive, affective and psychomotor content that encouraged reading skills and developed critical awareness. This development was a step change from the problems left by the VOC and the Dutch East Indies government to the indigenous population, who were restricted in their access to education, especially the lower classes. This left many of them unable to master some basic skills, including reading, which then led to many indigenous people becoming illiterate.

Keywords: Illiteracy, New Order, Publishing Industry, Books.

1 Introduction

Since the 17th century, the Dutch East Indies government has imposed strict regulations on using textbooks in the schools they manage. The goals of Dutch education in the Dutch East Indies were in line with political policies to maintain power in the archipelago. However, access to education for the indigenous population was still limited, and this was reflected in the inability of the indigenous population to read. This limitation was caused by the Dutch East Indies government, which was

more focused on spreading its power, utilizing the indigenous population to become low-paid employees, and providing wider access to the upper class [1].

At the end of the 19th century, the teaching system in the Dutch East Indies experienced significant developments, especially in terms of the procurement of Dutch-language textbooks. This development was driven by the advancement of the publishing and printing sectors. From 1845 to the end of the 19th century, many language and reading textbooks were published in the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies [1].

Several studies related to the eradication of illiteracy reveal the importance of the role of several institutions in the program. The first research on the solution to school dropouts and illiteracy during the New Order era was to use the Kejar Paket A Program as an alternative that could improve reading skills and support human resource development [2]. Further research on the importance of the role of libraries and bookstores from the late 19th century until modern times in supporting the formation of a literacy society in West Sumatra [3]. This role shows that the existence of books as reading material is an important component in eradicating illiteracy.

In contrast to previous studies, this article discusses how the illiteracy eradication program implemented during the New Order period could foster many book publishing industries of various types and the contribution of the book publishing industry to the illiteracy eradication program during the New Order period. These problems are discussed more specifically in three questions: First, what is the history of book publishing policy in Indonesia? Second, how was the implementation of the illiteracy eradication program during the New Order period? Third, what was the role of the publishing industry in the illiteracy eradication program?

2 Methods

Based on the research that has been done, researchers in compiling this article used the observation method and a literature study. Data collection was carried out using various sources, namely journal articles and books. Then, researchers also used observation data from the library of SD Negeri Manyaran 01 to obtain information related to the publishing industry and books published during the New Order era.

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 History of Book Publishing Policy in Indonesia

Dutch East Indies and Batavia have been the publishing centers of books since 1619, when the Dutch colonial government ruled. Any form of reading read by indigenous peoples is strictly controlled by the colonial government. Various procedures and permits were also regulated by them until the end of the 18th century. It was done to keep the state of affairs of the government at the time stable [4].

In the 19th century, colonial governments continued their control efforts to provide more effective Dutch language education. For this reason, on June 24, 1864, a letter of Government No. 10 was issued to commend those who compiled the Dutch

textbook. This has led to an increase in the publication of books on learning Dutch [1].

In the late 19th century, the Malay language experienced significant growth in the newspaper industry in Indonesia. The demand to master Malay and Dutch encouraged generations of Peranakan Chinese to pursue education. As a result, this generation then pioneered book publishing by translating stories from their country into Malay [5].

The Dutch colonial government's response to the Peranakan Chinese was to establish the *Commissie voor de Indlandsche School en Volkslectuur* (Commission for People's Reading) in 1908. The commission thrived under Dutch colonial rule. In 1917, the commission was transformed into *Kantoor voor de Volkslectuur*, later known as Balai Poestaka. By 1921, Balai Poestaka had become a symbol of prestige because it had its own printing press and its readers were the Dutch-speaking elite [5].

Strict control over publication continued until the 20th century. One example is the Persbreidel Rules, which were adopted by Governor General De Graeff on September 7, 1931. The introduction of such regulations empowers the Governor-General to prohibit any publication deemed to interfere with public order [6].

In the era of the New Order, the Indonesian government tends to try to place the press as part of the ideology of the state so that the press can help the reproductive process and maintain the stability and legitimacy of the regime [7]. Moreover, from 1969 to the late 1970s, the role of government in the publishing world was becoming increasingly visible through a book purchase project to support the elimination of illiteracy. This policy then encouraged the activity of writing and publishing books in Indonesia [8]. The New Order government strictly controls media publishing to maintain political stability while improving literacy and publishing development.

3.2 New Order Era Illiteracy Eradication Program in Indonesia

The New Order period was the time when Soeharto served as head of state. President Soeharto issued Presidential Instruction No. 10/1973 and Presidential Instruction No. 6/1974 on the Elementary Development Assistance Program, including a book procurement project. The project provoked enthusiasm for publishing, including the emergence of new publishers, after which many moderate publishers began to show their existence by adopting modern concepts. Human resource development was a priority during this period. The government's effort to support this was to prioritize the publication of textbooks, as they were considered lacking in quality and quantity. Meanwhile, non-essential subjects were given to private publishers [9].

The decree of the Minister of Education, Teaching, and Culture dated February 15, 1961, No. 4223/Kab. Article 17 mentions planning, leading, promoting, and supervising the eradication of illiteracy [10]. The completion of nine-year compulsory education and the eradication of illiteracy were programs that were operationally implemented by the New Order government. The focus of this program lies in the eradication of Functional Illiteracy, Kejar Paket A, and the Functional Literacy program. These programs became a way to reduce the level of illiteracy in Indonesia and involved various activities, such as discussing, reading, writing, and counting in daily life [2].

3.3 The Role of Publishers in Indonesia's Illiteracy Eradication Program

The publishing industry in Indonesia has experienced ups and downs from time to time. The dynamics of the publishing industry cannot be separated from government intervention as the holder of authority in the life of the state. Policies issued by the government are one of the factors driving the ups and downs in the publishing world.

Since 1974, the government has purchased reading books from private publishers. In 1973/1974, the government purchased 25,000 copies per book title. The increase in book purchases occurred in 1983/1984, when the number of purchases increased to 160,000 copies per title [9]. The SD Inpres program encouraged the accelerated growth of the publishing industry in Indonesia. The SD Inpres program run by the New Order era government had a significant impact on the publishing world. The positive impact that can be seen is the proliferation of the publishing industry in Indonesia. The SD Inpres program had a significant impact on the publishing industry in Indonesia, with the emergence of private publishers that were not spearheaded by Indonesian writers. The project produced a wide range of book content, including cognitive, affective, and psychomotor, and increased literacy rates and the number of learners from elementary to high school thanks to the compulsory education program. However, the project also had negative effects, namely the emergence of many seasonal publishers with low quality books [8].

The abundance of the publishing industry during the New Order was evidenced by the emergence of books to support SD Inpres. Based on observations made at SD Negeri Manyaran 01, there were many book publications during this period, as follows:

1. Cognitive content: 904 reading books, 4 textbooks, 3 reference books, 4 teacher handbooks, 1 encyclopedia, and 46 skill books.
2. Affective content: 901 reading books, 5 encyclopedias, and 28 skill books.
3. Psychomotor content: 166 reading books and 24 skill books.

The total number of books is 2.086, with 657 publishers. The SD Inpres program, with the support of the publishing industry, produces various book contents (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor) that comprehensively support illiteracy eradication efforts. Cognitive content develops basic understanding; affective content increases learning motivation; and psychomotor content trains writing and reading skills. The collaboration between the Indonesian government program and the active role of the book publishing industry has had a significant impact on the eradication of illiteracy in Indonesia.

4 Conclusion

The history of book publishing policy in Indonesia, from the strict control exercised by the Dutch colonial government to the central role of the government in the New Order era, reflects the complex dynamics of the publishing industry. The implementation of the SD Inpres program during the New Order era focused on eradicating illiteracy, which had a significant impact on the publishing industry in Indonesia. The publishing industry played an important role in supporting this program by contributing to producing educational books to support the running of this

program. The importance of the publishing industry during the New Order era can also be seen in the increase in book purchases by the government. The SD Inpres program with the intervention of the publishing industry managed to produce a variety of book content, including cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. Despite the success in increasing literacy rates, there are also negative effects such as the emergence of seasonal publishers with poor quality books. Overall, the publishing industry in Indonesia has contributed to the success of the illiteracy eradication program.

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