

## Home Libraries and their Roles in Social Changes among Rural Communities in Indonesia

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### ABSTRACT

This main aim of this paper is to explore home libraries' involvement in social changes in the rural area of Kepek, Gunungkidul, Yogyakarta. These home libraries mainly work as a collection provider at every house managed by a reading centre known as TBM (Community Reading Garden). This research used conceptual frameworks of social changes based on Ogburn and Bourdieu. Qualitative method was used to collect data using observation, interview, and documentation. The collected data was analysed through Miles and Huberman model including display, reduction, and conclusion/verification. The findings show that social changes occur through four phases, namely invention/discovery, diffusion, accumulation, and adaptation. These changes also found dynamic contestation between agency and structure in the home library program. The contestation creates dynamics in education and economy among actors in Kepek communities.

**Keywords:** Home libraries; Social change; Community reading garden; Rural communities; TBM, Indonesia.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Inequalities of facilities and information services among communities have become a crucial problem. Communities who live in urban areas dominantly have more access to information than those who live in rural areas<sup>1</sup>. This gap of information makes rural communities lag behind in economy and education. Therefore, they need access and adequate information facilities to reduce the lag<sup>2</sup>. Rights to information access should be achieved as people have in their urban surroundings. Thus, the government should provide information access facilities as good as possible for its community and make it a priority for human development (Domi, 2015, p. 648)<sup>3</sup>.

Information gap becomes a basic problem in rural areas, as encountered by those who live in Kepek, rural area of Gunungkidul, Special Region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia. This area is a bit far from the city, around 47 kilometres away<sup>4</sup>. Besides, the lack of access to urban areas makes people in the region unable to get enough information. Therefore, the lack of information facing them became a problem before the emergence of home library programs developed by Community Reading Garden (TBM, in Indonesian acronym)<sup>5</sup>. The programs provide a library at every house in the communities having one hundred and twenty-seven houses. Before the programs, social life among the communities had lagged in various aspects, particularly education and economy.

This condition was seen from its population in 2017; only 779 (8 %) of 10,302 people went to university<sup>6</sup>. The number increased by 1,896 (15 %) of 11,491 people in 2019. Another

rest 3,499 (34 %) persons were not to school and dropped out in 2017. The number decreased into 3,363 (27 %) in 2019<sup>7</sup>. The improvement is estimated because of the involvement of TBM creating home libraries to contribute to education. They act as learning spaces that provide collections and spaces for inspiration and network with various issues, such as policy and development (Niegaard, 2011, p. 176<sup>8</sup> & Rui 2013, 97<sup>9</sup>). This issue has been researched by Muslimah & Isyawati (2018)<sup>10</sup> in relation to the literacy empowerment movement. Unfortunately, the research tends to be descriptive without an in-depth analysis approach in explaining their issues. Therefore, this research will investigate the issue within the framework of social change using Ogburn's material-nonmaterial and Bourdieu's habitus concepts. Home libraries are accepted by the rural community as social practices that impact on reading habits, educational awareness, and economic empowerment.

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Libraries have fundamental roles in facilitating communities to achieve their goals. Evans (2002<sup>11</sup> & 2009<sup>12</sup>) argued those roles in several fields, preserving information sources, part of implementing education, sources of information, creating recreational situation, and sustaining cultural discourse. These roles illustrate the importance of library position in society. Umut, Dogan, Soydal, and Taskin (2019)<sup>13</sup> stated that libraries as a learning environment are regarded as the third position after home and work. Its existence is urgent in human life. Strand & Britz (2018)<sup>14</sup> and Edwards (2018)<sup>15</sup> revealed that the libraries serve as a means of increasing access to information while alleviating community poverty<sup>16,17</sup>. The achievement of

access to information and economic progress can be carried out through technological development and supporting cultural changes<sup>9</sup>.

Technological development for improving access to information is one of the responsibilities of the library inherent in the roles of information distribution to the public. According to Mehra, Singh, Hollenbach, and Partee II (2017)<sup>18</sup>, libraries among rural communities must become centres of information developed by technological means because libraries as agents of change can bring people to a better future. These roles can be conducted if the culture of communities is based on reading and educational interests as formal responsibilities of the library<sup>16,17</sup>. Education will further enhance the roles of libraries concerning their social function as a community space beside its efforts to build community capacity through social inclusion and social capital, which ends in social harmony<sup>19</sup>. A society will always change in all areas of complexity. A change is defined as something dynamic, meaning that changes do not occur linearly<sup>20</sup>.

According to Maciver (1962, p. 511)<sup>21</sup>, social change is to balance social relations. Another opinion put forward by Soemardjan (1962, 20)<sup>22</sup> that social changes occur in social institutions affecting their social system, including values, attitudes, and patterns of behaviour. Social change is also called as cultural change including various parts, such as art, science, technology, and philosophy<sup>23</sup>. It is also related to social actions and interactions, human relationships, and attitudes. Lauer (1982, 210)<sup>24</sup> and Boudon (1986)<sup>25</sup> defined social change as a change in social phenomena occurring at various levels of human life, from individuals to global levels. Giddens and Duneier (2016)<sup>26</sup> argued at least three factors that influence changes: economy, politics, and culture. How much change occurs depends on each individual and the environment. The impact of social change on society depends on dialectical efforts among members of communities<sup>27</sup> covering elements of culture, material and nonmaterial. Ogburn (2004)<sup>28</sup> stated that when one of the elements is changing faster than the other will cause the emergence of cultural lag. He further argued that the material element tends to change faster than the other. The material one is the main source of change.

If the accumulation of the social changes in material one keeps continuously and moves quickly, then the cultural backwardness will increase in comparison with the past. The accumulation of such lags will also occur simultaneously with the incompatibility in society<sup>23</sup>. According to Ogburn<sup>28</sup>, such changes are impacted by several elements, such as technology and culture, which are considered as an influencing apparatus on social change. Rapid technological development has given birth to changes that have caused gap and lag between material and nonmaterial elements. These changes occur through four phases, namely invention or discovery in cultural novelty, diffusion in external cultures, accumulation in the combination of inventions, and adaptation as a process for following changes driven by other elements (Volti, 2004, p. 398)<sup>29</sup>. He argued that technological progress produces rapid changes in the material aspect of culture, but the material is not materialised to the lag<sup>28,30</sup>. Ogburn explained the basis of his comprehensive theory as social innovation as well as a critique for the process

of social changes. He said that civilisation is a complex of interconnection between social institutions and customs on one hand and technology and science, on the other<sup>31</sup>.

The other concept to discover social change is the habitus of Bourdieu aiming to overcome the so-called false opposition<sup>30</sup>. He focuses his attention on the practice as a result of the dialectical relationship between agency and structure<sup>32</sup>. Agency is a framework of action in social practices, where actors show their differences. These actors in this paper are those involved in home libraries, whether actively or potentially. Meanwhile, structure is an element that can constrain and enable actions of actors. The structure represents guided values for society (Barker, 2000, pp. 181-2)<sup>33</sup>. He brings together dimensions of the duality of actors in agency and structure<sup>26</sup> that lead him to genetic structuralism. The habitus is interpreted as a mental or cognitive structure by which people relate to the social world. Habitus is the product of the internalisation of the social world structure obtained as a result of its long-standing social position<sup>34</sup>. According to him, every actor working for habitus into practice will always come into a contestation, which is in its inside found the struggle to fight for capital to gain a certain access to a hierarchy of power<sup>34</sup>. An agent will have difficulty in applying habitus in the arena as a social practice in the absence of capital<sup>35</sup>. Those who have more capitals will be better able to maintain their structure because the position of agents is depended on the ownership of those capitals including economy, culture, social, and symbolic<sup>34</sup>.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This research employed qualitative study with a descriptive approach. Denzin (1994)<sup>36</sup> explained qualitative study as a way to understand phenomena experienced by the subject of research, such as behaviour and action. According to Alasuutari, qualitative research is a research method based on natural object condition, in which researchers become key instruments and emphasize the meaning of generalisation<sup>37</sup>. Whereas, a descriptive study serves to describe a situation as it is. Thus, this qualitative descriptive research is aimed to explain particular phenomena about the research object<sup>38</sup>. Informants selected based on purposive technique. Alasuutari<sup>37</sup> stated such technique is determined by certain considerations. These mean that researchers are familiar with subjects who are deserved to become informants. This approach is similar to an investigative technique that aims to make research more efficient to get significant information in a fast way. In the case of social changes in Kepek, researchers use five informants.

**Table 1. Demographic information of the informants**

Informants	Gender	Education	Job	Age
ADR	Male	University	Teacher and head of home libraries	30
SUD	Male	University	Chief of village	46
NGA	Male	School	Farmer	52
TAU	Male	University	Teacher & member of home libraries	32
TAR	Female	School	Farmer	40

Data collection techniques employ observation, interview, and documentation. The observation was done several times to look at closely what and how phenomena emerge as well as to make sure the validity of data. Interviews were conducted to those informants considered as capable of explaining what researchers expect to know. Meanwhile, documentation refers to documents, brochures, and the like which can be used to support data of this research.

These informants are considered as primary sources to get valid information. Those are from three kinds of backgrounds. One person was selected because he was regarded as the most responsible in the home library programs. Another one was chosen because he was considered as a person who knows well about the rural communities due to his responsibility as the head of the village. The other three persons are from active members of the programs. Thus, those are regarded as the important persons who know much about activities of the home library programs.

#### 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

##### 4.1 Social Condition before Home Library Program in Kepek Communities

People among the communities mostly worked as fishermen and farmers, most of which were only laborers. Their economic condition was far below the standard that made them difficult to meet their daily needs. They are lagging behind in various fields, especially education and economy, as described based on interviews below. According to informants, it was found that their low economic level specifically made them not aware of the importance of education as a foundation for a better life. Economic problems became interrelated issues with education. The low level of the education can be seen in the Fig. 1.

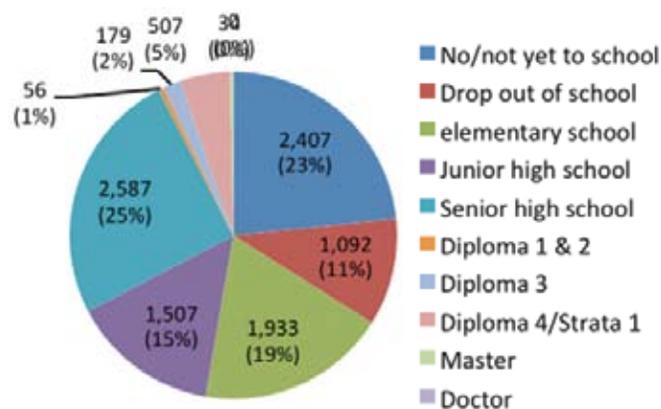


Figure 1. Data on level of education in Kepek village by 2017.

Figure 1 shows that the condition of Kepek community was vulnerable in education. Based on the results of interviews with informant, it was found that the situation was generally driven by four main points, namely, lack of access to information on education, less supporting environment, no support from parents, and low standard in economy. Their education was at an alarming level, where the dropped out rate is up to 11 per cent and those who do not attend school are even greater at 23 per cent.

The lack of access to information on education and less supporting environment occurred due to several things. Both were caused by similar factors, among them, the area far from the city to get educational facilities, no book shops and learning centres, lack of internet access, rare learning facilities, no figures for the world of education, etc. This can be seen from the results of several interviews below.

“... this village was a very quiet area in terms of education, ... people found it difficult to obtain good educational information ... just look up to now there is no bookstore that is easy to reach ... learning centres was never found, people rarely had cell phones because they had to have a quota to be used, while basic needs are difficult ...”

“... talking about history of this village, ... around two years ago, before found a TBM learning centre, this area was felt very far from the city, internet access was difficult due to no money, so it was extremely hard for the community, nothing could be a role model for education..., most youths graduated from school immediately went to city for a work...”

Then the issues on lack of support from parents and low economic level were an urgent problem. This problem was caused by several interrelated things, such as, level of education among parents was low; they had no education awareness. So, expectations to young people who had just graduated from school as an initial example did not help because they on average went to the city, family income was not enough for basic needs, and so on. These problems can be seen in two interviews as follow.

“... this village was that many parents did not care about their children’s education because they themselves did not have education ... people were poor, did not have permanent jobs, so many young people chose to go elsewhere looking for job ...”

“... as far as I know, the economy of the population here was very alarming before found the roles of TBM, the home libraries teach us now farming, entrepreneurship, and so on ... but at that time, young people just graduated preferred to go to the city for a work rather than continuing their education in college, because college needs money, whereas their parents were unable to finance, the point is difficult ... difficult ...”

##### 4.2 Post-Establishment of Home Library Program

The establishment of home libraries through one home one library program in Kepek has encouraged people’s attention towards education. This program is designed in the form of providing collections of life skills regarding community livelihoods, such as raising goats or catfish and fishing, at each house. This kind of program is the first one that has been implemented in Indonesia. Since its implementation, there have been several social changes taking place in the communities. These social changes have been shown in gradual improvement of their education, which then gradually influences their economy.

The roles of home libraries programs, not only touch awareness toward education among parents, but also influence interest and enthusiasm of children who initially had no role models. The presence of the programs through young people who are full of dedication to education is an important moment for village children to have examples for their education. This

change occurs continuously and surely, which can be seen as a model of information distribution system that touches the needs of communities, so that it successfully influences the communities in determining their social practices, which are by Azzeh<sup>39</sup> called as decision support in organisations. The success of this program can be seen from the decline in dropped out rates by 3 per cent (from 11 % to 8 %) and not going to school by 5 per cent (from 23 % to 18 %) in two years, from 2017 - 2019. The data can be seen in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2.

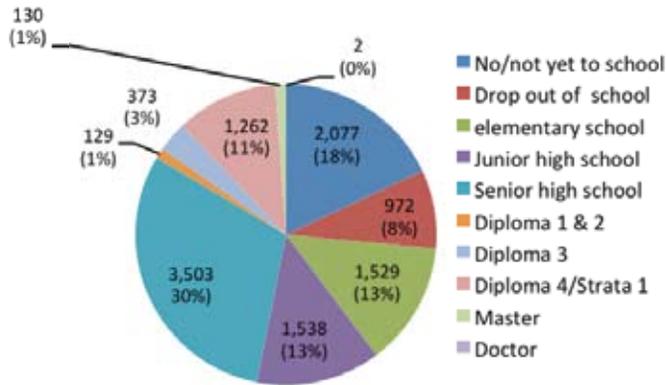


Figure 2. Data on level of communities' education of Kepek village in 2019<sup>7</sup>.

The trends in increasing educational interest and their effects to economy of the communities which were previously found limited access to educational information, lack of environmental support, less parental participation, and low income of families become a good indicator for a future life among them. The birth of home libraries is felt by the communities in several changes related to their social conditions. Limitations in access to educational information and less supporting environment have moved to a conducive condition as data presented below.

“... now learning is easy and conducive, books are provided, even librarians deliver their collections at home, can be read at any time ... educational information is smooth, TBM volunteers disseminate information ... and books are very useful as knowledge for farming, raising goats, catfish, etc. ... there is also a collection of information for fishing, collaboration... the books are very informative ... it seems economy is improving. It was rarely vehicles, now lots of motorbikes...”

“... there are about 45 children participating in this home library program. It seems interesting because of providing a corner reading in each house, we also open a free tutoring classroom that can be followed by children. We believe that this guidance program can facilitate them in learning because their parents are busy working in their fields; they have no time to accompany their children to learn. We provide this guidance to improve their learning outcomes...”

In addition, parental support is now starting to improve and economic life is also better than several years ago. These two things are interrelated with one another, as the parents' economy improves, financial support and enthusiasm for their children increase. Parents, who had only one cow or goat, now have a number of livestock that have been raised up through modern methods, such as cooperation with capital owners.

Previously, livestock were less fat because they did not have knowledge about raising livestock. Now their livestock are fat because they have knowledge on how to care for them. In essence, they can improve their economy through education, although it is a nonformal way through home libraries available in their homes. Related to this, a number of informants stated as follows.

“... we praise God, even though community members are mostly only as a farmer until now, they have enough income to support their families, and can even support their children's schools ... this is because we have already used knowledge and technology for farming, we read books provided by TBM at every house, ... we understand how to fatten cattle, all because of reading books ... our income increases more than a quarter...”

“... with home libraries, unemployment can be reduced in this place, home libraries have many ways to get people to work well, all use books, various books and are taught to know how to practice them ... the guidance given by these home libraries very useful, books distributed to every home, not just how to raise livestock, but also how to get the right buyers, how to work with others, etc...”

### 4.3 Critical Analysis on Concepts of Ogburn and Bourdieu Based-Social Changes

Social changes in Kepek through involvement of home libraries were analysed using concepts of Ogburn material-nonmaterial and Bourdieu agency-structure. As explained in the literature review, Ogburn sees material and nonmaterial-based social change through four phases, namely invention or discovery, diffusion, accumulation, and adaptation<sup>28</sup>. Whereas, agency and structure were seen in the framework of Bourdieu habitus<sup>26</sup>. Both of these concepts were used in an integrated manner to complement each other in investigating phenomena of social changes through the home libraries.

- First, invention is a phase marked by cultural novelty; there is a new activity practiced by a community through a process of interaction and contestation between actors within an organisation or group<sup>40</sup>. Interaction and contestation occur through four types of capitals, namely economic, symbolic, social, and cultural, which are owned by each actor<sup>34</sup>. Home library existence in the form of one home one library is a discovery that was innovatively created in such a way as to design the library as a partner<sup>15</sup> and to influence behaviour of social actors in the educational domain of Kepek community. Home libraries are a new social practice of the community that did not exist before. This library management model can be considered as an infrastructure that guarantees the sustainability of community innovative public spaces<sup>41</sup> as well as agents of change<sup>18</sup>.

This innovation was carried out by a small number of young people who were initially concerned about the educational and economic conditions of their village. This concern has driven them to move to mobilise village children to learn together by approaching their parents through a collection program to their homes for reading materials. Here, dominant structure of culture ignoring the

literacy slowly has to fight with a new cultural structure of literacy brought by these young actors. This process leads to material and nonmaterial dialectics. For example, they do not need to leave their house for reading books because they have been facilitated by creative young people<sup>42</sup>. They only need to open the books available in their homes. The books provided at home help farmers and ranchers to understand the right way to farm and raise livestock, so that the results are maximally in economy. The ability of actors' innovations in driving social changes has seen the existence of social capital<sup>43</sup> through their shrewd relationships with children and their parents as other actors in a society on one side. This is a strategically cooperative work to build literacy of users<sup>44</sup>. Economic capital on the other hand is created by the success of home libraries actors in running their programs to develop ability of parents' literacy in carrying out their works for earning money<sup>45</sup>.

The success of these programs is not merely a local original design, but there are interactions with external parties, external culture in the form of modernity innovation and the use of appropriate technology, such as mastery of knowledge for a work. So, it works not only with the instinctive and traditional models<sup>46</sup> that are usually practiced by local Kepek community, before the emergence of home libraries.

- There is a process of mastering knowledge. This is what Ogburn calls diffusion, as the second phase of social changes. The selection of collections for home libraries also has certain consideration for the benefits of communities. Collections are organised according to the conditions of needs of those served<sup>47</sup>. If the community works as farmers, then the collections sent to their homes are collections on how to farm properly, as well as other fields.

This diffusion phase can be further seen in the context of approach contestation to the tutoring model between private and group classes. Children who have the same level of ability are grouped into one tutoring class, while those who are different, whether higher or lower, are handled privately. This approach is different from the previous condition, that is, learning is done without measuring ability, so it is very traditional; only based on the local instinct of learning actors. The combination of local tradition and global literacy model developed by home libraries is a form of Ogburn diffusion phase, which is in Sajna<sup>48</sup> considered as service optimisation.

- Third phase is accumulation, which is found in the interaction of various discoveries created by home libraries actors. This accumulation of creativity programs implemented by these actors is one home one library, life skills collection, tutoring strategies, links and matches with community life, development of community work through books, and so on. All of these inventions work accumulatively, not individually, in building social changes in society. The world of education and economy, in particular, is illustrated by the accumulation process above because this research indeed emphasises more on the social changes of those education and economy<sup>49</sup>. It

does not mean that the impact of these social changes is limited to these two fields, but also touches on other aspects of consciousness, such as law, culture, and religion. However, the last three aspects need to be done in other research.

- Last phase is adaptation, which is seen from the efforts of actors to maintain the sustainability of the found programs. It appears that competition efforts of the actors through capitals they have are to be able to adapt programs that are already running. For example, village leader plays his symbolic capital as an actor who has the highest social status in village governance<sup>50</sup>. He also plays his cultural capital through his knowledge about local custom system that makes him able to be followed by his communities, as a figure. Meanwhile, home libraries through their cultural structure of innovation maintain information recency that reaches their communities by collection rolling system from house to house. One type of collection can be felt its recency by hundreds of homes included in the home libraries programs. Finally, social changes in the fields of education and economy can be seen a shift from a lack of access to information on education, less supporting environment, lack of parents' attention, and low level of economy to a new condition, such as availability of learning centres, easy access to life skill books, free learning classes, and improvement of economic conditions.

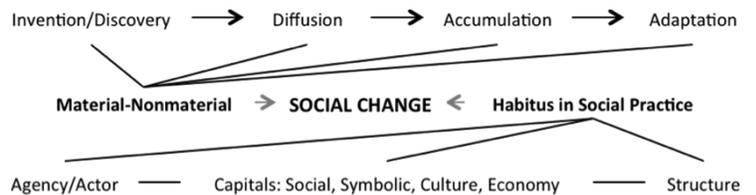


Figure 3. Social changes in the frames of Ogburn and Bourdieu.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

This research discusses on social changes among Kepek communities through the involvement of home library programs. The social changes were analysed using conceptual frameworks of Ogburn material-nonmaterial and Bourdieu agency-structure. Both frameworks were used synergistically to discover social changes of Kepek communities. Ogburn material and nonmaterial framework were conceptualised in four phases, namely invention or discovery, diffusion, accumulation, and adaptaion, while Bourdieu agency and structure were used to investigate actors and cultural factors that take part in the dialectic of social interaction that occurs in the phases of social changes. To understand those phases and the involvement of agencies and social structures, this study systematically describes social conditions before and after the establishment of home libraries. The study concludes that social changes through the home libraries can be seen in several forms. First, home libraries programs have influenced cultural structure of community awareness toward the importance of education. Second, awareness toward education has raised the communities's economy on one hand, while the economic improvement itself directly affects the awareness

of educational behaviour on the other. Third, educational facilities have increased, which has an impact on increasing reading interest. Finally, these social changes have undergone a phase of invention to adaptation that occurs dynamically and dialectically between actors and cultural structure of Kepek communities.

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