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Social Motives of the 'Sekolah Perjumpaan' Community in Enhancing Educational Literacy in Lower-Middle-Class Communities

Alfiatmi Laelatunnufus[1*], Marzandi[2], Muhamad Khalid Iswadi[3], Siti Julaikha[4]

[1*), 3)]Pengelolaan Arsip dan Rekaman Informasi, Politeknik Medica Farma Husada Mataram
[2)]Prodi Komunikasi Penyiaran Islam, Pascasarjana Universitas Islam Negeri Mataram
[4)]Teknologi Laboratorium Medis, Politeknik Medica Farma Husada Mataram

Corresponding e-mail: (nufus.alfia@gmail.com)

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the social motives behind the "Sekolah Perjumpaan" (School of Encounter) community in enhancing educational literacy among lower-middle-class communities. Educational literacy plays a crucial role in improving access to and the quality of education, particularly among economically disadvantaged groups. In this context, Sekolah Perjumpaan emerges as a grassroots initiative that directly engages the community to address challenges in educational literacy. This research employs a qualitative approach, utilizing data collection techniques such as participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The collected data were systematically analyzed to identify patterns and social motives that drive participation in the Sekolah Perjumpaan community. The findings reveal that Sekolah Perjumpaan serves as a platform to foster stronger interactions between schools and communities. Through regular meetings and collaborative activities, it facilitates the exchange of knowledge and experiences on educational issues. Participation in these activities also enhances awareness of the importance of education and encourages the adoption of literacy practices in daily life. These findings underscore the significant potential of school-community collaboration in improving educational literacy among lower-income populations.

KEYWORDS : Sekolah Perjumpaan, Social Motives, Educational Literacy

INTRODUCTION

Education in Indonesia faces a series of complex challenges, particularly among lower-middle-class communities. These issues encompass various aspects, such as limited access, low-quality learning, a low awareness of the importance of education, and a lack of support from the surrounding community. This situation makes the dream of pursuing higher education seem impossible for many individuals in society. Data from research by Supriadi (2020) shows that low levels of educational literacy among these communities are a major obstacle to improving social and economic well-being. To address these challenges, the concept of the *Sekolah Perjumpaan* (Encounter School) community offers an interesting solution. The *Sekolah Perjumpaan* community is an informal forum where parents, teachers, and the local community can meet for discussion and deliberation to build shared commitments. For example, a commitment to study three times a week is made as a promise resulting from the deliberation, thus reinforcing the focus on shared commitments rather than learning outcomes.

According to research by Santoso (2018), such communities can increase parental participation in children's education and provide stronger support for the learning process at school. However, behind this concept, it is important to understand the urgency of the underlying social motives. Social motives are the internal drives that prompt individuals or groups to act for the common good or social welfare. According to the social motivation theory by Deci and Ryan (2012), social motives can increase an individual's intrinsic motivation in carrying out an activity. In the educational context, social motives are crucial because they create strong bonds and engagement between various stakeholders. As expressed by Hargreaves et al. (2010), education centered on social motives emphasizes the importance of cooperation, empathy, and attention to the needs of the wider community. Therefore, social motives are an important foundation in forming an encounter school communities, where the shared goal of improving educational literacy among lower-middle-class communities can be achieved. The urgency of social motives in the context of the encounter school communities can also be seen through the perspective of the theory of parental involvement in education. According to Epstein's (2011) theory of parental involvement, parental involvement in children's education has a significant impact on children's academic success and social development.

In the context of the encounter school community, social motives are key to increasing parental involvement, due to a sense of responsibility and concern for children's educational development. Furthermore, social motives also have significant implications for building networks and collaboration among community members. A study by Laski et al. (2018) highlighted that the

success of an educational community often depends on the existence of strong and mutually supportive social ties. Strong social motives, such as a sense of solidarity and concern for shared interests, can strengthen the encounter school community network, thereby providing more effective support in improving educational literacy among lower-middle-class communities. Therefore, a deeper understanding of social motives can help shape a sustainable and meaningful encounter school community for all parties involved. The urgency of social motives in the context of the encounter school community is crucial in improving educational literacy among lower-middle-class communities. Through a deeper understanding of these social drives, it is hoped that more effective strategies can be designed and implemented to strengthen parental involvement, build strong community networks, and provide deeper meaning for all community members. References from these studies will provide a solid theoretical basis to support the argument about the urgency of social motives in improving educational literacy in lower-middle class communities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Improving educational literacy among lower-middle-class communities has garnered increasing attention from academics and education practitioners alike. Limited access to formal education, low awareness of its importance, and weak social support are key inhibiting factors rooted in the social structure of vulnerable populations (Supriadi, 2020).

In response to these challenges, community-based approaches such as the *Sekolah Perjumpaan* (Encounter School) community offer innovative and promising solutions. This model aligns with the principles of the Learning Organization, as described by Senge (2000), who argues that learning is not solely an individual responsibility but rather a collective process that occurs within a supportive and collaborative environment. This framework creates participatory spaces that connect schools and communities in efforts to develop contextual and sustainable educational literacy.

Within the context of community formation, social motivation plays a central role. According to Deci and Ryan (2012), intrinsic motivation based on social values can strengthen individual engagement in activities that benefit the collective. Social motivation not only encourages participation but also fosters a sense of shared responsibility for educational development. Research by Hargreaves et al. (2010) supports this perspective, emphasizing that collaboration, empathy, and social commitment are essential foundations for successful community-based educational transformation.

This approach is further reinforced by Epstein's (2011) theory of parental involvement, which highlights the significant impact of active parental engagement on children's academic achievement and social development. In the context of Encounter School communities, social motives such as empathy, a sense of belonging, and equality serve as key drivers for increasing parental involvement in their children's education.

Moreover, Max Weber's theory of social action—particularly through the concept of *Verstehen*—offers a valuable lens through which to understand that every social action is driven by motives that must be interpreted within the subjective context of the actor (Umanailo & Basrun, 2023). In this regard, community members' participation in Encounter Schools is influenced not only by practical needs, but also by values such as solidarity, mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), and social responsibility.

Studies by Laski et al. (2018) and Laveni et al. (2023) also demonstrate that the success of an educational community is significantly shaped by the quality of interpersonal relationships among its members. Communities with strong social ties are better positioned to cultivate inclusive, open, and supportive learning environments, as illustrated by the case of the Bangket Bilong community.

In conclusion, the existing literature confirms that a community-based educational model grounded in social motivation holds considerable potential for addressing the structural and cultural barriers inherent in formal education systems. The Encounter School community serves as a practical manifestation of these theoretical perspectives, illustrating that meaningful education is shaped not only by curricula and policies, but also by social awareness, collective commitment, and authentic human relationships.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological method, which aims to understand social motives in the context of the encounter school community that plays a role in improving educational literacy in lower-middle-class communities. Phenomenology, as a research approach, emphasizes an in-depth understanding of individuals' lived experiences related to a particular phenomenon. This study adopts a hermeneutic phenomenological model, which focuses on interpreting the "texts" of life and individual life experiences. Consequently, this research seeks to describe and analyze the subjective experiences of individuals concerning the

social motives of the Encounter School in improving educational literacy in lower-middle-class communities through a phenomenological lens.

The approach is descriptive-analytical, where the descriptive component is used to portray the research object as it naturally occurs. In this study, the research object is the social motives of the Encounter School in fostering educational literacy within the lower-middle-class community. This approach enables the researcher to provide a clear and detailed depiction of the social motives of the Encounter School and their impact on educational literacy among the community. Additionally, the research develops a composite description capturing the essence of the motives, followed by an in-depth analysis of the social motives driving the Encounter School community to enhance educational literacy in the lower-middle-class population.

Data collection techniques include direct observation, in-depth interviews, and secondary data collection. Direct observation is conducted to explore the phenomena occurring among groups of individuals who have experienced them. In-depth interviews are the primary tool in qualitative data collection, given that phenomenological research examines individual subjective experiences. In this context, this study will involve between 5 and 25 informants, depending on the complexity of the phenomenon being studied. Secondary data is obtained from various data sources and literature such as books, magazines, and research journals.

For data analysis, the researcher adopted Moustakas' structured phenomenological analysis method. This process involves several key steps: describing personal experiences, identifying significant statements, and constructing a composite description of the essence of those experiences. This analytical process facilitates a deeper understanding of the lived experiences and contextual factors surrounding the phenomenon.

By integrating findings from previous research, this study aims to comprehensively explain the social motives within the Encounter School community and their role in advancing educational literacy among lower-middle-class communities.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Education serves as a fundamental pillar in building a developed and cultured society. However, in practice, numerous challenges persist in improving educational literacy, particularly among lower-middle-class communities. To address these challenges, the concept of the Encounter School community has emerged as a promising innovation. This community provides a collaborative space where parents, teachers, and local residents engage collectively to enhance

educational understanding and literacy. Based on research conducted with learning participants at the Encounter School in Bangket Bilong, Karang Bongkot Hamlet, Karang Bongkot Village, Labuapi District, West Lombok Regency, this study reveals several key findings related to the social motives driving the community's efforts to improve educational literacy among lower-middle-class groups.

Social Motives of Encounter Schools in Improving Understanding of Educational Literacy in Lower-Middle-Class Communities

During data collection through observations and interviews, intensive interactions were observed among learning participants—including parents, teachers, and other community members—within the Encounter School community. Participants actively engaged in various learning activities organized by the community. Social motives such as concern for children's education and a shared desire to improve communal welfare emerged as primary factors motivating active participation. Both parents and teachers demonstrated a strong sense of responsibility in fostering a supportive learning environment conducive to children's educational development. Furthermore, during brainstorming sessions or mentor deliberations, participants collectively agreed to oversee the commitments made, reinforcing shared accountability. This aligns with findings by Rahman, Sundawa, & Ratmaningsih (2025), which highlight the positive impact of collaboration among parents, teachers, and the community on children's academic achievement and social skills.

Bangket Bilong, an area located in Karang Bongkot Hamlet, Karang Bongkot Village, Labuapi District, West Lombok Regency, experienced limited awareness of the importance of education before the emergence of the 'Sekolah Perjumpaan' community concept about eight years ago. This was reflected in the low enrollment and interest of local children in formal education. The Sekolah Perjumpaan community emerged as a collaborative solution among parents, educators, and community members to bridge the gap in educational literacy, especially among vulnerable populations. Nonetheless, challenges remain in strengthening social motivation within the community.

In education, social motivation plays a crucial role both as a catalyst for participation and as a foundation for creating an inclusive and effective learning environment. For instance, parents with heightened social awareness about their children's education tend to engage more actively in school activities, thereby supporting their children's learning processes. Similarly, Irwan, Nuryani, and Masruddin (2023) argue that educators who attend to social aspects in their

teaching are more likely to provide personalized attention and support to students inside and outside the classroom.

Social motives, such as awareness of the importance of children's education and a passion for improving the common good, are crucial elements in stimulating active participation in the learning process. Within the community of the Encounter School, there is no hierarchical distinction between educators and students; all are considered subjects of learning. This concept serves as the primary foundation for establishing a learning culture that views each individual as a valuable creature of God with unique potential to contribute to human civilization.

From Max Weber's perspective, understanding social action is inseparable from a deep understanding of the underlying social motives. The theory of "Verstehen" emphasizes the importance of accurately understanding the intentions behind human behavior, whether positive or potentially harmful. In horizontal relationships between people, an accurate understanding of social motives is key to analyzing social interactions and their impact within a societal context.

Based on field observations and supported by Weber's *Verstehen* theory, this study identifies a consistent relationship: social motives within the Encounter School context play a pivotal role in enhancing educational literacy among lower-middle-class communities. One proposed approach is to increase the frequency of positive interactions between mentors and learners. Through stronger interactions, it is hoped that understanding of educational literacy among these communities can be effectively improved within the Meeting School environment. This awareness and commitment reflect the belief that educational opportunities should be equally accessible to all individuals who possess the willingness and determination to learn.

In conclusion, the findings demonstrate that social motives are central to shaping the learning dynamics within the Sekolah Perjumpaan community. Motives such as concern for children's education, collective responsibility, and the desire to improve communal welfare drive active participation, particularly among parents and educators, in cultivating an inclusive and collaborative learning environment. This community has successfully transformed social interaction patterns into a constructive educational force that promotes increased literacy among lower-middle-class populations. The egalitarian learning approach, which positions every individual as an active learner without hierarchy, strengthens social bonds and fosters shared commitment toward educational awareness. In line with Max Weber's theory of social action, involvement in this community is motivated not solely by practical concerns but also by a profound understanding of shared social values and objectives. Therefore, enhancing social

motives through meaningful interactions among mentors, parents, and students is a strategic approach to sustainably improving educational literacy in socioeconomically vulnerable communities.

Improving Social Motives of School Encounters in Understanding Educational Literacy in Lower-Middle-Class Communities

The findings of this study significantly contribute to deepening our understanding of efforts to enhance social motivation within the context of the encounter school community to improve educational literacy among lower-middle-class communities. The practical implications of this research have the potential to support the development of more effective educational programs and policies to achieve educational equality and improve literacy among vulnerable communities. Within this framework, several commitments are identified that stem from a shared awareness between the encounter school community mentors and the learning participants.

For example, there is a commitment to hold regular, flexible discussions, not limited by space and time, every month within the community of the meeting school. In these discussion forums, the meeting school coordinator provides guidance to mentors, covering various aspects such as spiritual development, sharing information about the world of education, and strengthening social aspects. Furthermore, there is a commitment to hold meetings three times a week with elementary-level learning participants.

This concept aims to facilitate grouping of learning participants, thereby facilitating adjustment between learning participants who have not yet entered elementary school and those who have. With the frequency of intense meetings with learning participants, it is hoped that emotional bonds with them can be strengthened, because direct interaction between mentors and learning participants has a positive impact, considering the emotional aspects and verbal communication involved. Through an approach that builds strong relationships like this, it is hoped that an understanding of educational literacy will be easier to implement, because this understanding stems from commitments that have been built on the basis of shared awareness, which will ultimately give rise to positive changes in society.

In various discussions, Abah Husni Muadz, as the conceptor of the school of encounter, often advised us to meet with sincere intentions, it is an extraordinary worship, especially since there are loads of goodness contained in it. He further explained that meeting with sincere intentions will give birth to many bonuses, including educational bonuses, understanding bonuses, and other good bonuses. This is proof that the learning process of the school of encounter knows no

space and time, for example, discussing the concept of awareness and the spirit of education is often done anytime and without planning. Routine discussions or reflections every Saturday night which often discuss the spirit of education are carried out from after Isha prayers until before dawn.

In the book "School of Encounters" Muadz (2017) explains that the presence of the school of encounters community is a concept of unconditional learning in order to normalize towards open social relations, mutual respect, and unconditional acceptance in a heterogeneous society.

This research shows that the social motives that develop within the Sekolah Perjumpaan community significantly contribute to improving educational literacy among lower-middle-class communities. Through a shared commitment between mentors and participants, various initiatives have emerged that not only strengthen the academic dimension but also foster emotional and spiritual social relationships. Activities such as regular discussions, intensive meetings, and flexible time and space within the learning process demonstrate that education can be inclusive and contextual, based on collective awareness. The spirit of encounter fostered by this community emphasizes the values of sincerity, openness, and mutual respect, creating a vibrant and meaningful learning space. In line with Muadz's (2017) thinking, Sekolah Perjumpaan serves not only as a learning medium but also as a medium for social reconciliation, fostering a society of unconditional acceptance and support. Thus, this social motive-based approach not only strengthens educational literacy but also presents a relevant and transformative alternative education model for vulnerable communities.

Implications from the Social Motives of the School Community Encounter in Improving the Understanding of Educational Literacy in the Lower-Middle-Class Community

This study highlights the transformative role of social motivation within the context of the *Sekolah Perjumpaan* (Encounter School) community in enhancing educational literacy among lower-middle-class populations. One of the key implications is the improvement of educational quality within the Bangket Bilong community. With a collective awareness of the value of education, the *Sekolah*.

Perjumpaan fosters an environment conducive to intellectual and academic growth. Moreover, social motivation contributes to improved quality of life and overall community well-being (Felipus, Indrawati, & Amseke, 2024).

Through active participation in learning activities and support among community members, the Bangket Bilong community can experience improvements in their overall social and economic status. Furthermore, social motivation helps create a caring society. By sharing knowledge and experiences, and supporting each other in the learning process, the meeting school community builds strong social bonds among its members. This has a positive impact on fostering solidarity and social awareness within the community.

In addition, social motivation has facilitated professional diversification among community members. Through an inclusive and individual-centered learning approach, the community-based school provides opportunities for people to develop diverse skills and interests. This allows the Bangket Bilong community to have broader career choices and achieve their potential.

The positive impact of the *Sekolah Perjumpaan* extends beyond students and parents to the mentors themselves. Many mentors have successfully completed postgraduate studies—both domestically and internationally—through scholarship programs. These sustained community-driven learning activities have fostered intrinsic motivation and a strong desire for continued personal and professional growth. As a result, these mentors are often referred to as *assābiqūnal awwalūn*—the first generation of pioneers—symbolizing their role as the first individuals in their villages to obtain master's degrees or become lecturers.

In conclusion, this research confirms that social motivation is a powerful force in shaping an alternative educational ecosystem within the *Sekolah Perjumpaan*. By nurturing collective awareness, fostering active engagement, and embedding a spirit of mutual cooperation, the community has successfully created an inclusive, empowering, and socially bonded learning environment. The outcomes are visible not only in improved educational outcomes and community well-being but also in expanded professional opportunities and the emergence of educational leaders from within the community. This phenomenon underscores the capacity of sustained social motivation to catalyze structural change, cultivate local pioneers, and lay the foundation for a more self-reliant, educated, and resilient society.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings from the *Sekolah Perjumpaan* (Encounter School) community in Bangket Bilong, it can be concluded that social motives play a crucial role in enhancing educational literacy among lower-middle-class communities. Motivations such as concern for children’s education, the desire to improve collective well-being, and a shared commitment to learning have emerged

as key drivers of active community participation in educational initiatives. The *Sekolah Perjumpaan* model has successfully established an inclusive and egalitarian learning environment, effectively bridging educational gaps through a community-centered approach. By fostering emotional bonds, facilitating ongoing dialogue, and cultivating collective awareness of the importance of education, this community not only enhances educational literacy but also initiates broader social transformation. This shift is evident in the increasing enthusiasm for learning, notable academic achievements, and the emergence of a pioneering generation of mentors who have completed graduate studies and now serve as catalysts for change within their communities.

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