



## **POLA LISA: An Information Literacy Model for National Curriculum-based Schools in Indonesia**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper shows how a school with Indonesian national curriculum has implemented information literacy (IL) program as part of library program. The research was conducted to affirm or to disprove a previous study made by the National Library of Indonesia in 2011 indicating that IL Program is only applicable in schools with non-Indonesian curriculum (*Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia:2012*). IL Program in this study refers to an IL Program embedded in the library program for students.

This research was undertaken in Santa Angela School Library (SA), a secondary school that gained the top score in the National Library of Indonesia Pre-Assessment in 2012 (George,2013:168-169). One of the elements researched was the structural implementation of IL. The fact that SA is a national curriculum-based school and has implemented IL drew attention of the author to further delve into the issue of IL in schools using the Indonesian national curriculum. The research was carried out as the author's thesis to complete her master's degree in 2013, and has sought to prove that IL is applicable to national curriculum schools.

This research used qualitative method with in-depth interview with school librarian, library staff, students, teachers and school principal. A further literature review of recent studies on the subject was also done. Data analysis used in this research used Miles and Huberman analysis. This paper will look at and discuss the elements supporting the implementation of the IL which are: the school policy, the planning of the program, the implementation of the program and the evaluation.

A model of IL was made and called *POLA LISA* (*Pola* means model, and *LISA* stands for (*L*)iterasi (*I*nformasi (*S*)anta (*A*)ngela or IL of Santa Angela School). The model will help readers to understand the whole picture of the IL as implemented in school context including library program, school subjects teaching and steps taken by students to complete the tasks given.

**Keywords:** information literacy, information literacy model, user education, school library program, junior high school

## 1. INFORMATION LITERACY

One important program of a school library in preparing students to be independent learners and responsible citizens is to implement Information Literacy or IL. IL Program is a series of activities that hone the skills of the students in using information to solve problems they have, both in their academic and daily lives. These skills become increasingly important when the students engage in an information-based society that provides greater opportunities for them to participate in achieving their goals for their greater good and eventually to participate effectively and responsibly to the demands of society as an adult. The position of information literacy and media literacy in the context of democracy and good governance as advocated by UNESCO (Wilson, C., Grizzle A. & al.,2011:25) is shown in the Media and Information Literacy (MIL) scheme below (Latuputty & Mulkan, 2012). IL and media literacy is a related skill when one uses information to solve problems. When students articulate their new knowledge gained from the steps of IL and share it, they involve media and information literacy processes and they become media and information literate citizens.

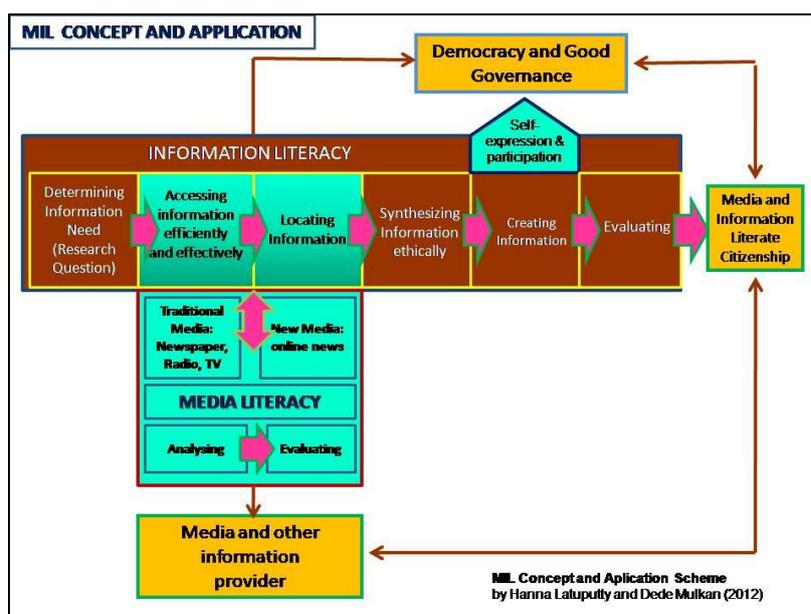


Figure 1. Media and Information Literacy Scheme

IL Programs need to be created and developed for the students as early as possible. There is an urgency to this as information and communication technologies are evolving rapidly, bringing information swiftly for anyone who needs it.

IL was first coined by Paul Zurkowski. He was a former President of US Information Industry Association. He wrote a proposal in 1974 to introduce the concept of IL to the National Commission for Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS). Paul Zurkowski's recommendation was to design a national program to achieve universal IL in the decades ahead (Eisenberg, Lowe & Spitzer, 2004: 3).

According to Zurkowski, those who use sources of information in their works are information literate people. They learn techniques and skills to take advantage of various means of resources and use them to solve their problems. The concept of IL then is to develop means by which people solve problems in a competitive information-based society (Horton, Forest Woody Jr., 2007:1).

Even though the IL was first conceptualized in the work place, IL also developed in formal education such as schools and universities. The essence of information literacy education is a constructivism learning system which puts students at the center of learning (student-centered learning). This system directs students in constructing their own materials or phenomena they encounter through experiential learning (Sukaesih, 2012: 3). A linkage of this system with information literacy begins with the issue or topic that should be solved. By applying information literacy, the students will construct new knowledge that is built upon the existing knowledge when they have founded a solution to their problem. As Doyle (1992 in Andretta 2008:15) stated, one of the abilities of an information literate person is the skill to integrate information into existing body of knowledge.

There are many definitions of IL as made by library associations and international agencies such as UNESCO, American Library Association (ALA), Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL), Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) and many more (George, 2013, 9-10). Webber and Johnston (2000 in Andretta, 2008: 15) compares the definitions of IL: *reveals a common coverage of the stages of information need recognition, search formulation, source selection and interrogation, information evaluation, information synthesis and use.*

### **1.1. The Importance of Information Literacy**

Nowadays, the young generation is fluent in using information and communication equipment such as computers or mobile phones in their daily lives. They love to chat, share in the social virtual world. This phenomenon brings a situation where information is easy to access and share very quickly. It facilitates access to diverse information and eventually has created a new phenomenon in the lifestyle of young people. Godwin (2008:5) referred such generation as "web generation" or "Google generation". There are several things that must be considered specifically related to the tendency of their fluency in technology especially the unlimited access and getting unlimited information. When utilizing the internet, anyone can easily upload a variety of information since anyone can freely express ideas or works in the virtual world. Godwin (2008: 6) added that Google generation considers what is written and listed on the web as definitely true and singular and searches in Google provide instant gratification that most of this generation are accustomed to. They also are not mindful of the ethics in the use of the contents of these sources because they do not fully understand the implications and therefore are incautious and in some cases, naive. They are not aware that after the information is uploaded, there is no party specifically making corrections or filtration to such information. They consider the use of the information needed by cutting and pasting and this behaviour is common as they do not realize that the information obtained need to be re-read and processed before being used.

Google generation behaviour described by Godwin above need the watchful attention of parents and teachers. They should be aware of such situation so that they would be able to

guide and explain to their children or students when they search for the information. Children need to know that they have to respect other people's work, be honest in the use of information obtained and cite sources accurately. This should be taught as early as possible but the teaching, guidance and monitoring by parents and teachers on information literacy have its limits and so the children of this generation and the ones following them will definitely need information literacy as part of their lifelong learning. Teaching information literacy becomes important to accommodate the Google generation behaviour.

Farmer & Henri revealed how information literacy influences students' reading activities. In addition to improving students' reading comprehension, and integrated information literacy, collaboratively designed academic activities will enhance the learning capabilities and products of their research. Moreover, the students who are taught information literacy in secondary schools are more successful in higher education than students who do not receive information literacy lessons. (Farmer & Henri, 2008: 16)

Thus, information literacy will help students succeed in formal education, and will equip them well on their own when they become members of society. They use information from a variety of sources to solve problems and make decisions. Finally, the information literacy skills inherent in their lives enable them to form positive attitude and habits that make them lifelong learners.

## **2. IMPLEMENTATION OF *POLA LISA***

### **2.1. Brief Description of SA Library**

SA is a Catholic School located in Bandung, East Java. It has two libraries serving elementary school and junior & high school students. This research was carried out in junior and high school library. The library is in a two-storey building, the first floor is for library collection and study area that could accommodate one class. The second floor is for film viewing and computer use. The computers have internet connection. The area of the library is 321 square meters.

The management of school supports the library activities and has good communication channels with the librarians. The library is staffed with two librarians. One of them has library science background. The school policy includes library fee with the student's monthly tuition and is estimated to be between Rp10,000-Rp12,000/month (roughly USD1). In 2011-2012 academic year, the annual budget for library was Rp101,760.000, equivalent to USD7,837.88 in current conversion. It allows the librarians to plan their budget properly and to buy new library materials. Currently the library has a varied collection including books (reference, fiction and non-fiction), popular magazines, newspapers, maps and films in VCD and DVD formats. In 2011, they had in their collection 6,362 non-fiction books, 2,640 fiction books, 12 titles of magazines and newspapers, 450 films and 19 maps. The library serves 1,272 junior & high school students and their teachers.

The school give librarians autonomy and authority to select and purchase library collections. Usually librarians ask students and teachers for their wish-list and will bring this to school principal for approval before they proceed to order them.

## 2.2 Planning, Application and Evaluation of IL Program

The library will do the planning at the end of a given school year to be implemented in the following year. The process of implementation usually takes place together when all teachers do their new academic year planning. Librarian will bring the library program to the school principal for approval. The program includes: library orientation at the beginning of school year for new students in Year 7, Silent Reading in the Library, teaching the writing of book and magazines synopsis and film watching. Each class is timetabled once a month for the IL Program in the library.

There is a library timetable set for each class. However, during the period of research, it was revealed that a teacher would send students to the library or came over with them, outside of the timetable. For purposes of orderliness, each teacher who wished to use the library not in their regular time would need to fill in a form and get the school principal's signature and give to the librarian. This policy was made by the school principal to avoid misuse of the library.

By the end of academic year, the whole school is subject to evaluation, including the library. However, the librarian stated that the evaluation is done regularly by the school principal with her periodic visits. She often comes to the library, assesses the activities taking place and asks librarian to monitor library use. This constant monitoring on the management level keeps library staff alert as to its users so that feedback is received at regular intervals during the schoolyear rather than only at the end of the schoolyear.

Below is the scheme showing the whole picture of how the IL program was implemented in SA.

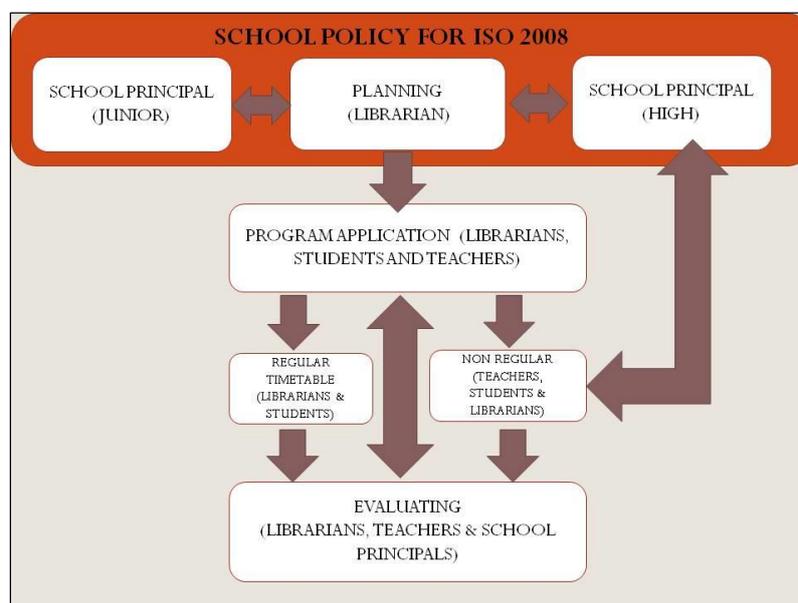


Figure 2: IL Library Program in the School System

## 2.3. Information Literacy in Santa Angela School

Based on the interview and observation, a diagram below was drawn up to show how the library program (on the orange side) was carried out by the library. The program mentioned

was a series of activities that they called structured IL. The green side shows subject teachers who were involved not only based on the regular timetable classes but also the non-regular ones. They usually send students to do specific work in the library. The center of the diagram shows how students carried out the tasks assigned by their teachers.

Most of the tasks were given clearly by the teachers. It means that the students understood the tasks given to them and what to search for to get results. They would go to the library seeking various ways to get the information they need. Most of them would go straight-away to the second floor to use the internet. They go to Google search and type in the key words that is usually clear from the task given. They know that Google will put the first rank the most relevant information they need. If they already got the information they need, they will copy it and give it to the teachers. Students rarely refer to other resources to find similar information as they believe that the internet provides them real and accurate information they need without question, as Godwin proved in his 2008 study.

Not all students used the internet for research purposes. Some of them checked out the shelves directly to find books. They know the location of the books through the DDC numbers or seek help from the librarian. The reason why this group of students used books was because it was quicker for them to access books downstairs rather than go upstairs to use the internet. The step after collecting information for both ways were the same. They wrote down the information they needed and gave it to their teachers. The process is shown in a scheme below.

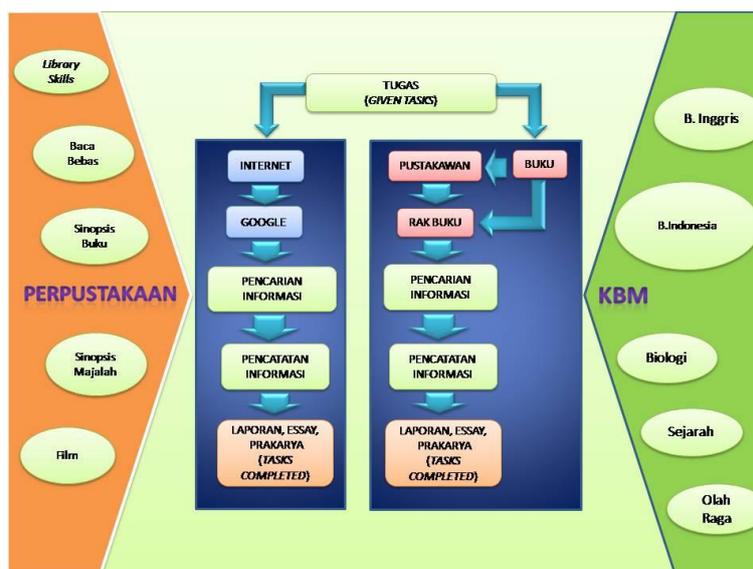


Figure 3: Scheme IL in SA

### 3. DISCUSSION

In Figure 3: Scheme IL in SA shows the three components of how IL is implemented in SA. The orange area describes the activities program conducted by the library. It includes library skills, silent reading, books and magazines synopsis and watching films. All the activities were timetabled for each class from Years 7 to 9. However, since Year 9 students were

preparing for final examination, they usually have only the program on semester one that ends in December. The green area describes subject teachers who use the library for their learning process. There were only five subjects: English, Indonesian Language, Biology, History and Sports. The sample learning activities by these subject teachers were various. English and Indonesian Language, and teachers worked closely with library staff to develop these. They taught students on how to write synopsis, encouraged them to read during the lesson and also other tasks that were mostly using library resources. English teachers collaborated with librarians in getting English articles for students to be translated. This was one of the ways the English collection is used. Biology teacher required students to find information on plants. Students went straight to Google, typed in what they were looking for, got the information they needed, wrote them down without any processing of the information and submitted what they copied to their teacher.

IL in SA shows that students are not maximizing the collection in the library. At the beginning they have decided that they only use one type of material. For example, they decided to use the internet because they understood that they would get the information very fast via Google or they decided to use books because they were reluctant to go the second floor while they could go straight to the book shelf on the ground floor. This behavior shows that they are not choosing the resources based on the information they need, but they choose the information based on which of material type that suits their convenience. The other reason for this behavior is because the students are aware that teachers only expect them to collect basic information, rather than seek solutions to problem solving tasks that may force them to use many types of resources.

Although teachers demand only the gathering of facts or basic information, students need to use more than one resource to complete the information they seek and to be more thorough. Various type of information eventually would make the information collection more comprehensive.

When they finish the process, students were not citing the resources from which they got the information from. They simply copied and pasted and gave it as it is to their teachers. They were not taught on the etiquette and ethics of using the information from the internet and traditional sources of information and so respect for the intellectual right of the author/s or source of the information is absent.

The structured IL Program in SA library covered the steps of acquiring information or information seeking. The students did not have a constructivist learning experience mentioned by Sukaesih earlier. They were at the stage of gathering information and it stops there. IL should cover information processing by synthesizing from various resources. However they have implemented library skill in finding resources and using them, one of skills needed in IL steps.

Ideally in IL Program, according to Webber and Johnston, once one gets and collects information, will need to evaluate and synthesize it, at the beginning, before they use and present it as answer of their problem. Students need to be taught on how to select, quote, synthesize as well as the etiquette on how to use them. The proposed IL Program below is shows the ideal scenario of IL in SA called POLA LISA.

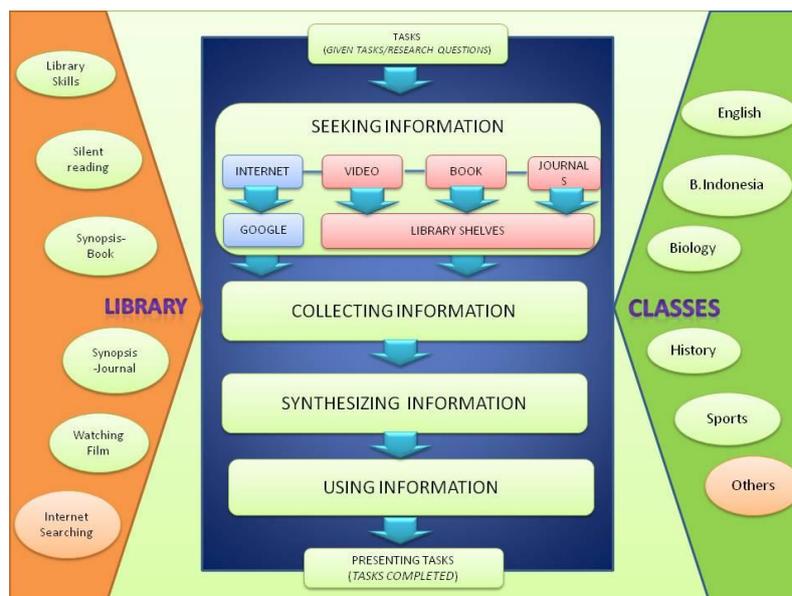


Figure 4: POLA LISA –  
A scheme of IL implementation for SA

There is one additional program that could be added for IL Program in the library that is internet searching. It would include the ethics of citing sources and plagiarism in many various type of materials. On the green side on the right, the school could encourage other subject teachers to also use the library during their learning and teaching time at school. In the blue middle side, are steps that were suggested as IL steps based on Webber and Johnston's study. Students may seek and collect the information using various types of library materials then synthesize, use and present them as completed task. The constructivist learning is happening when they go through these steps and they are able to construct a new knowledge in certain subjects. Students are also expected to use the information ethically and appreciate previous knowledge by authors including their intellectual right to avoid plagiarism.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The IL Program in SA was started as a basic library skills program useful for the students. The management support was shown clearly and this is one of the advantages in pursuing the importance of school library in supporting learning and teaching. The IL Program in SA may be improved by adding a new program, the teaching of internet searching skills as well as etiquette in using information from various type of library materials. Also, school management should take the good collaboration between librarians and teachers forward by encouraging students using the library with the IL Program, but more importantly, it would be a great advantage for the library program if teachers themselves are also given an IL Program orientation so that they will have same understanding on what contribution the library has to support learning in school.

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