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LIBRARIAN'S DUALIST ATTITUDE ON CENSORSHIP PRACTICES IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates librarians' perspective towards censorship practices that apply in the world of education, especially at the primary and secondary levels. This practice operates under the pretext of keeping students from consuming information they do not deserve to know. This practice on the other hand is against the intellectual freedom of the individual. What is the perspective of librarians in dealing with this condition? By using the literature study method, the research is directed at mapping censorship issues that often occur at various levels of education and how librarians as library authorities respond to this condition. Research findings show that controversial issues such as sex education, LGBT and violence are issues that are often subject to censorship. Media that has experienced censorship is not only printed media, but other media including social media. Censorship does not only occur in classrooms by teachers, but also in libraries by librarians. Librarians managed this practice differently, some are against censorship and support intellectual freedom through various measures, but there are also librarians who support the practice of censorship with various arguments. This dualist attitude seems to arise because of various factors that influence librarians, both internal and external. Librarians' excuse against censorship is to support an atmosphere of intellectual freedom in schools. Meanwhile, librarians who support this practice argue because of pressure from outside themselves, such as orders from the school environment where they work. Of course, this difference in perspective must remain within the corridors of professionalism and the applicable code of ethics.

INTRODUCTION

The right to obtain and disseminate information cannot always be acquired easily. In fact, easy access to information through various means, such as access in libraries, is the right of everyone without exception. The Library Bill of Rights states that a person's right to use a library should not be denied or abused because of their origin, age, background, or views (American Library Association, 1996). Instead of convenience, many people actually encounter obstacles in obtaining information due to conflicts of interest, for example authoritarian rulers and domination by the majority (Yusuf et al., 2010). One of the inhibiting factors for a person to obtain and disseminate information is censorship, which is a change in the access status of a material based on its content and made by the government or authorized representatives. These changes include exclusion, prohibition, removal, or age-level access restrictions (Knox, 2014). Censorship is used by individuals, groups, or a country as an effort to control access to information obtained (Fitzsimmons, 1996). The practice of censorship is not only applied to information, but also to works of art such as paintings, music and films. Usually, censorship of information is carried out on the basis of politics, religion, morals, and if the information makes violations, in the form of treason, conflict, or is vulgar (Fitzsimmons, 1996).

Censorship of library materials is not only done by national or regional libraries. Various educational institutions are indirectly involved in censoring information in the form of teaching materials that will be conveyed to students. In this case, it is the educators and librarians who are given the responsibility for conducting the censorship. In school libraries, this practice is generally carried out on library materials containing racial, religious minorities, persons with disabilities, LGBT, along with other material containing harsh words, the use of narcotics, and sex (Carlson, 2017).

Although the application of censorship has been opposed by the American Library Association (ALA) through the Library Bill of Rights, various educational institutions, both through intermediaries for educators and school and college libraries, are still censoring information to be disseminated to students and academicians. In Indonesia, this is also contrary to the librarian code of ethics regarding obligations to the profession which reads "Librarians uphold the principle of intellectual freedom and refrain from censoring library and information material sources" (Indonesian Librarian Association, n.d.). Librarians who are supposed to provide collections according to curriculum needs as well as other additional collections actually limit students to access wider information due to the application of censorship. In addition, educators who are supposed to provide the widest possible information to students, but they limit the information from many things they do not or want to know.

Censorship that is implemented in various educational institutions is usually in the form of self-censorship, namely actions that are carried out deliberately and voluntarily to withhold information from other people, without any formal obstacles (Bar-tal, Nets-Zehngut, & Sharvit, 2017, Shabbir et al., 2020). This independent censorship is usually carried out based on the personal wishes of

educators, librarians, other parties from schools or universities, or on the wishes of parents of students who find a collection which they deem incompatible with personal morality or contrary to state values. In educational institutions, the implementation of this censorship policy is usually based on several individual and collective motivations (Bar-tal et al., 2017).

The school librarian as well as a teacher experiences a dilemma when applying censorship, because they are required to balance their professional requirement not to do censorship with his obligation to position himself as a parent in school and introduce a small example of censorship (Duthie, 2010). The will to provide the widest possible access to information for students is actually hampered because librarians are worried that they will get criticism from the school or the students' parents (Follen, Goff, & Salazar, 2018, Bait et al., 2020). Therefore, librarians in school libraries try to do various ways in following the flow of censorship policies in educational institutions, either trying to implement them or against these policies.

The existing research on censorship in various countries raises the issue of censorship policies that are applied as a whole in socialist-communist countries, such as "National Socialist Medical Literature and the Censorship Practices in the Soviet Occupation Zone and Early East German State" by Igor J Polianski (2020), which describes how publications on the world of medicine were limited and in East Germany and other occupied countries of the Soviet Union. In addition, Sei Jeong Chin's (2018) research entitled "Institutional Origins of the Media Censorship in China: The Making of the Socialist Media Censorship System in 1950s Shanghai" describes how media censorship began in the People's Republic of China. Through this article, the author will describe censorship practices that occur in the world of education which impose limits on students in obtaining information, so that other educational institutions can reconsider the application of censorship policies in their teaching environment. The author will also describe the impact which is the impact of the application of censorship in the educational environment and the attitude of librarians in responding to the practice of censorship.

The application of censorship in educational environment is handled in various ways on various materials and topics. This is contrary to intellectual freedom and has various consequences for groups who are given restrictions to access information. However, librarians have their own way of dealing with censorship practices that are applied in educational environment. Based on this issue, the issue that will be raised in this article is about how censorship occurs in primary and secondary education, both in academic activities such as learning, as well as in non-academic activities such as extracurricular activities and library services. The next problem is regarding how the impact of censorship practices on students, as well as how librarians address this problem.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is a qualitative research using literature study method. Various electronic sources in the form of articles and electronic books are used to

provide an overview of phenomena that occur in the field, present related theories, and present theories or phenomena that are new findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Censorship, whether consciously or not, is actually already wide-spread in educational environment. In practice, it is not only educational institutions that direct educators to impose censorship. It is not uncommon for the educators themselves to impose censorship of information on their students based on things they consider important not to be known by students. Students also has to do censoring the information they need, which can usually be classified as self-censorship, because they do so on the basis of self-desire and awareness, without instructions from others.

Various topic has to get the application of censorship. In Indonesia, based on TAP MPRS Number XXV of 1966, topics such as communism and the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) were banned during the New Order era during the reign of President Soeharto, even textbooks in schools are prohibited from containing these topics (Yusuf et al., 2010; Shabbir et al., 2020; Shariff et al., 2020). No information can be accessed on the two topics. This is because books published and containing information about communism will be immediately withdrawn from circulation. In an educational environment, students are usually directed not to speak offensive to racial and sexual topics. A survey conducted by Bobkowski and Belmas in 2017 stated that 38% of student journalists were asked by school administrators to stay away from certain topics such as the legalization of drugs and marijuana, LGBTQ issues, religion, and other issues deemed by administrators to be controversial (Farquhar & Carey, 2019; Shabbir et al., 2020)

In a social environment, sexual topics or issues are often considered taboo and are often hidden from students, especially students who are considered minors. This makes sexual topics considered difficult to obtain knowledge (Robinson, 2013; Shabbir et al., 2020). Most teachers and parents consider sex education to be limited to discussing human reproductive activities. In fact, the scope of sex education is not limited to reproductive activities. Personal health, recognizing body anatomy, recognizing disease, sexual violence, and marriage and family are all part of this issue. Unfortunately, because it is considered taboo, this issue is considered inappropriate to convey to students, especially those who are still in the category of children. Even in countries that are considered liberal, such as the United States, the issue of sex education was once complained to court in the 1970s (Digenio, 2016).

REASONS AND OBJECTS OF CENSORSHIP

In Indonesia, the authority to regulate book censorship is the Attorney General's Office. Censorship is carried out by burning or crushing books to pulp. During the reign of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in 2007, the object which has the most subject to censorship was history textbooks for secondary schools. 14,960 copies of books were burned at the Semarang High Court, 1,400 books of Indonesian history were burned at the Depok District

Prosecutor's Office, and 300 books were burned in Purwakarta. Thousands of books are considered banned by the local government. This event was the biggest book destruction event of its time (Yusuf et al., 2010).

There are several complaint cases filed by several parties in response to the issue of sex education in formal and non-formal education settings. Natasha DiGenio's "Censorship and Authority in Sex Education: Three Court Cases from 1970's America" (2016) explains how these complaints are filed based on the facts in the field that teachers cannot provide sex education to their students because of conservative criticism that they think sex education as taboo. One of the complaints was filed by Alexander R. Mercer and Dr. Richard H. Goldfine in 1973 about learning about contraception which they thought, should be, could be taught in the classroom. Mercer challenged a Michigan law passed in 1949 against teaching contraceptive methods in public schools, because he argued that students should have the freedom to know about birth control or contraception. DiGenio explains in detail how the sexual revolution has had a major impact on the development of sex education in the United States.

Censorship is based on a number of things. Although the prosecution did not end in court as in the previous case, the practice of censorship still persists. City Partnership School in the United States in Alyson Rumberger's research entitled "The Elementary School Library: Tensions Between Access and Censorship" (2019) censorship both by the school and by the students themselves. Simply put, students do sensors based on their level and ability to read. The level that the students have will lead them to independently censor the material they can read in the library, referring to the language that is included in their reading level. The school also uses a content-based censorship system. Some types of content that are censored include violence, politics, and social forces. Content-based censorship carried out in this library was not carried out based on the student's reading level like previous censorship, but was carried out by librarians by evaluating the quality of the content. In addition, the City Partnership School Library also applies censorship based on the behavior and habits of its students while in the library, where students who are deemed not to have literacy habits that are in accordance with existing norms in school are limited to walking around the library and looking for their own reading.

Emmanuel Ifeduba in "Book Censorship in Nigeria: A study of Origin, Methods and Motivations, 1805-2018" (2018), mentions several cases of censorship of books and films that occur in schools in Nigeria which are carried out in various ways. An adaptation film that is used as a learning media about history for Nigerian teenagers entitled "Half of a Yellow Sun" by Chimamanda Adichie was pulled from the school curriculum to avoid conflict between tribes, avoid Boko Haram terrorists linking it to ethnic problems that have occurred, and avoid increasing public distrust of other ethnicities in the country. In 2017, parents of students at a junior high school in the state of Lagos demanded censorship of the social science textbook being used entitled "Religion and National Values (Social Studies) for J.S.S.1" by

S.O. Omotuyole, because it contains material that teaches students to masturbate as a way to restrain lust.

Censorship is not only applied to books used in the learning curriculum, but also to books that are a means of entertainment for students. In 2007, the Kano state authorities in Nigeria burned a novel that was kept in an all-girls school because it was considered pornographic and lacking morals in accordance with customs and traditions in northern Nigeria. In 2012, Mark Twain's novel "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" and Chinua Achebe's "Things Fall Apart" were demanded to be withdrawn from Centennial High School. Achebe's novel was withdrawn because it was considered violent and offended several elements of society. Other books such as "The Tears of a Bride", "The Precious Child" and "In Dependence" were also pulled from the school book list. Access restrictions are imposed on some of these books (Ifeduba, 2018). Ifeduba mentions the many censorship practices in Nigeria and describes the reasons for the censorship. Unfortunately, there is no detailed explanation of these practices.

Impact of censorship on students

The censorship of information in various types of material has several implications for meeting students' information needs as well as on several other sectors. Censorship of Information obstructs the child's self-development process and prevent them from recognizing their real world. This is because in order to be able to criticize their world, children need to be introduced and not deliberately protected from current events, controversial topics, and relevant conversations with the understanding that they will form their own opinions when given the opportunity to do so, whereas censorship blocks their Access to various information they can know (Rumberger, 2019; Shabbir et al., 2020).

Using the innocence of children as an excuse for censorship does not seem to have the full effect that many predict (Robinson, 2013). When it comes to censorship of sex education discussed earlier, another effect of censorship is that children become more vulnerable in several ways. In his book entitled "Innocence, Knowledge and the Construction of Childhood" (2013), Kerry H. Robinson argues that exposing the innocence and age of children as a barrier to providing knowledge of sex can have three significant impacts. First, their development as young citizens who are competent, knowledgeable, critical and ethical thinking is obstructed because their innocence has been mobilized to serve as the reason for the regulation of children's access to important knowledge. Second, they are more susceptible to denying their sexual subjectivity and desires, that is, their sense of self as sexual beings. The perception that sexuality is irrelevant to children leads them to reject the core components of what constitutes subjectivity or themselves. Third, children will continue to think that sexuality has become a taboo subject because their age is always constrained by sexual issues. This is what makes child fetishization possible for some adults, where they use the innocence of childhood as the focus of their desires. In addition, children will also feel

afraid to discuss sexual problems with their parents, so they will choose to remain silent.

Librarian's Attitude Toward Censorship Practices

There are many requests for censorship of books and other forms of information by several parties in the educational environment certainly make librarians hesitate in determining their attitudes. Even though they understand that the practice of censorship is against the Bill of Rights which regulates intellectual freedom, it is their work environment that requires them to stick to the policy. In McNicol's research (McNicol, 2016) which was stated in an article entitled "School librarians' intellectual freedom attitudes and practices", 96.9% of school librarians who were research subjects supported the statement that young people should have the freedom to read and consider ideas that are broader than ideas that held by the majority around intellectual freedom. 85.5% of them agree to support resistance to individual or group efforts that impose their will on school management and operations. Through his research, McNicol shows that school librarians in this case prefer to support the theory of intellectual freedom, but do not do so practically. The attitudes that they showed also depend on their work environment. Librarians who work in primary school libraries prefer to do censorship, while those who work in secondary school libraries choose to show the diversity of collections without censorship. The decision about their censorship is also influenced by the age of the students.

Censorship that occurs in the educational environment is not only carried out on print collections, but also electronic collections and even social media which are used by students as a means of searching for information and used by teachers and librarians as teaching media. In their research entitled "Access Denied: School Librarians' Responses to School District Policies on the Use of Social Media Tools" DiScala and Weeks (2013) explain that four librarians respond to the censorship policy implemented by the local district government on information in electronic form and social media differently, depending on the form of the policy. Policies take the form of formal, informal and applied to school district networks. Censorship policies in the formal form will be complied, while in the informal and applied forms, librarians will assist and direct students to carry out learning activities using networks outside the school network. Broadly speaking, DiScala and Weeks explained that librarians found that it is difficult to help students in learning activities because of the access blocking. This research is very interesting because censorship policies at the district level are rarely found. Unfortunately, DiScala and Weeks did not mention the district in which their research was focused.

Oltmann (2016) in his research "Public Librarians' Views on Collection Development and Censorship" conducted on 76 librarians in the state of Ohio, describes the attitudes of librarians regarding the procurement of certain hypothetical collections. As a result, more than 75% of librarians choose to hold collections with controversial issues such as atheism, religious issues, LGBTQ, the Holocaust, and so on. One of the librarians said that providing

information to users is their job, not to censor or restrict it. Other librarians added that there is no reason for them to censor, because the library has the responsibility to provide library materials that represent all ideas, cultural aspects, and thoughts. Even though they support the procurement of various library material contents without exception, these librarians will still consider other aspects and not prioritize their personal interests.

To act against censorship practices that occur in educational environment, school librarians take several ways to provide information and provide access to students. In the book selection process, librarians choose not to include controversial content if they judge their community as conservative inland communities, or possibly against the content (Dawkins, 2018). Librarians in City Partnership School libraries play an important role in evaluating the quality of the content in the library, then immediately warn students to be careful in choosing information with the code "be careful what you put in your mind". The librarian also directs students to read books which according to them have good quality content and gives them suggestions for books to read (Rumberger, 2019).

Another way that librarians take in addressing censorship that occurs in the school environment where they work is by suing the school that censors to the secondary court. Storts-Brinks (2010) in "Censorship Online: One School Librarian's Journey to Provide Access to LGBT Resources" tells of his experience fighting for student access to information on sites containing LGBT issues. Upon realizing that the internet site filtering system used at Fulton High School, namely the Education Networks of America (ENA), was blocking access to the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) and Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN) sites, Storts-Brinks immediately sent a request to ENA for unblock the site. It is because students need information from both sites for the purposes of doing assignments. In addition, the GLSEN site is known to provide benefits to both schools and students, especially to make students who are members of the gay community at school feel more accepted by the environment.

The request to ENA was not followed up because according to the description of ENA, the two sites were considered not included in the criteria for the category of sexuality and alternative lifestyle. Furthermore, other sites that contain similar issues, even in a positive way, are blocked and no one knows at whose request the blocking of the site was carried out. To address this issue, Storts-Brinks submitted a request for assistance to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). The ACLU sent a letter of request addressed to the school so that students there were given the freedom to access all information. This letter was sent three times and received no response at all from the school. The ACLU finally brought the matter to court in May 2009, three months after the request was sent to the school. In June 2009, the school agreed to an agreement not to use filter software that blocks student access to information on LGBT topics. If this agreement is violated, the charges will return to court (Storts-Brinks, 2010).

Another way librarians can provide access to information on controversial issues is by supporting other librarians to do the same. Stevens and Frick chose this attitude by making tools in the form of resource guides and infographics that can be used by other librarians. Through "Defending Intellectual Freedom: LGBTQ + Materials in Public and School Libraries" Stevens and Frick (2018) explain how these resource guides and infographics can help school librarians to develop and include materials containing LGBTQ + issues as part of their curriculum and library collections.

Although many librarians provide alternatives in providing access to information on controversial content to students, it is not uncommon for librarians to continue to follow directions from the school for censorship. In his research "A Study of Self-Censorship by School Librarians", Rickman (2010) states that librarians choose to hold collections based solely on the needs of the curriculum. They choose to provide collections according to the age and educational level of their students. There are also librarians who do forced censorship because they have to follow the policies and requests of the school administrator. They chose to stick with the policy because they felt they had no other choice.

Librarians are not easy to pull books off the shelf when there are complaints or requests to censor library materials. There are several ways to keep books on the shelf in the library. Taylor and McMenemy (2012) through their "Censorship Challenges to Books in Scottish Public Libraries" describes four ways librarians in Scotland respond to censorship. The first way is to keep the collection as library stock. This attitude is the wisest attitude for a librarian when responding to the challenge of censorship. The second way is to move the collection to another shelf with a new subject that is considered appropriate for the collection. In addition, the next way is by labeling the collection, or by making it a collection with limited access. The last method which is the worst option is to withdraw books from the collection shelf.

CONCLUSION

The practice of censorship is prevalent in educational environment. This condition is driven by various interests, both from internal schools (school administrators, teachers, and librarians) and outside the school which involve the students' parents. This practice is carried out by limiting students' access to information sources whose content is considered controversial. So far, the controversial issues most frequently impacted by censorship are sex education and LGBT. Media that is censored is not only printed collections, but also music and even social media. Censorship does not only occur in classrooms by teachers, but also in libraries by librarians. In fact, this practice is sometimes done independently by students.

The dualist attitude of the school librarian can be seen in responding to this practice of censorship. This difference in attitudes, both those who support and those who reject them, is caused by several reasons. Librarians' excuse against censorship is to support an atmosphere of intellectual freedom in schools. They believe that young people also need to be given an understanding of a wide range of issues in order to make them understand the

dynamics of society. Meanwhile, librarians who support this practice argue because of pressure from outside themselves, such as orders from the school environment where they work. However, there are also librarians who choose to do independent censorship on the grounds that they adapt the library collection to the needs of the school.

It should be recognized that providing students with broad access to information is also provides opportunities for the development of their thinking. The information they obtain can support the formation of their self-identity, self-concept and self-social. Educational institutions together with libraries play an important role in supplying their information needs. Therefore, limiting access to information for students through censorship practices needs to be considered wisely and librarians in carrying out these practices must still refer to professionalism and the applicable code of ethics.

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