

## LITERACY PRACTICES OF INDONESIAN COLLEGE STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN ONE SEMESTER OFF-CAMPUS PROGRAM

RAUDHATUN NAFISAH<sup>1</sup>, RIZKY AMALIA SYAHRANI<sup>1</sup>, FIRMAN PARLINDUNGAN<sup>1</sup>, ALFIN KHAIRI<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Communication Department, Faculty of Social and Political Science, University of Teuku Umar, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>BKKBN Representative of Aceh, Indonesia

Email: raudhatunnafisah@utu.ac.id

DOI : <http://dx.doi.org/10.29300/ling.v10i1.4151>

Received: June 5<sup>th</sup> 2024

Accepted: July 21<sup>st</sup> 2024

Published: July 24<sup>th</sup> 2024

### Abstract

Although there is a growing consensus in research that literacy practices can inform growth in literacy competence, there remains a dearth of studies explaining what and how Indonesian college students interact with texts in off-campus contexts. The objectives of this study are two folds: (1) to identify types of literacy practices carried out by Indonesian undergraduate students; and (2) to study the differences in use of the literacy practices between high rating and low rating students. As many as 200 Indonesian undergraduate students participated in this study. They were asked to complete an online questionnaire of literacy practices and a self-assessment. Principal Component Analysis were employed to analyze data for the first research question. T-test analysis was performed to answer the second research question. We found that there are 8 factors treated as posteriori categories of students' literacy practices off campus, including professional-related literacy practices, academic-related literacy practices, knowledge-generating literacy practices, self-regulated literacy practices, leisure literacy practices, transactional literacy practices, and course-related literacy practices. The t-test analysis showed that there are significant differences in use of literacy practices in the four first factors between high rating and low rating students. This is because high rating students typically engaged in reading and writing activities that support success of their college program. These findings indicate that determining effective interventions is pivotal to improve literacy skills of Indonesian college students that tap into their structure of literacy practices out of campus.

**Keywords:** Literacy practices, literacy, college students, language learning, Emancipated Curriculum

## INTRODUCTION

The development of literacy has expanded from a singular perspective of isolated skills into social practices. This development made literacy is one of the most essential skills needed in the 21st century, as nearly all knowledge and information are available on the internet. Literacy helps individuals access knowledge, serving as the foundation for decision-making, personal empowerment, active participation in society, and increased awareness of the environment (Frankel, Becker, Rowe, & Pearson, 2016). Literacy encompasses language knowledge and skills applied in every activity to access, understand, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information, ideas, concepts, and emotions (Parlindungan, 2017; Rosenberg & Mangelsdorf, 2021). In other words, a person's literacy skills contribute to their thinking ability that allow them to thrive as lifelong learners.

In Indonesia, literacy has also become crucial and the center of educational reform. The government launched Emancipated Curriculum (*Kurikulum Merdeka*) in 2020 applicable for

elementary through university level of education. This inclusion has major implication for language teaching and learning, either in first language or in foreign language. However, the results of the 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) indicated a low level of reading interest in Indonesia. In 2018, a survey by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) showed that only 14.92% of the population above the age of 10 read newspapers or magazines. This finding was lower than the 15-year-old percentage from a decade earlier (23.70%). In 2022, Indonesia's PISA score decreased by 12 points which was primarily caused by the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, it indicates that school-age students in Indonesia have not practiced literacy as social activities in their daily live, which then further implicated by their low literacy skills.

One effort that can be made to enhance literacy skills is to expand exposure to literacy practices (Gandara, Navarro-Pablo, & Garcia-Jimenez, 2021; Rahmat et al, 2021). Literacy practices refer to how people use writing and language in their daily lives. These practices involve values, attitudes, feelings, and social relationships (Street, 1993). The simplest understanding is what people do with texts, reading, and writing (Barton, 2007), and it is an internal process that occurs in the social context connecting people with one another (Linares & Blocker, 2021).

The International Literacy Association defines literacy as the ability to recognize, understand, interpret, create, compute and communicate using visual, auditory and digital symbols on cross-disciplinary and scientific topics (ILA, 2016). In line with this, UNESCO defines literacy as the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, compute and communicate using printed and written symbols in various contexts. Literacy includes a continuum or series of learning (learning continuum) for an individual that enables him to achieve his life goals, develop his knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in the wider community and society (UNESCO, 2004, 2017, in Montoya, 2018). Basically, literacy is the ability to read and write functionally and at a certain level is integrated with mathematical abilities. Therefore, literacy must be understood not only as a cognitive process.

Our theoretical underpinning in this research grounded on the theory of literacy as social practices, commonly termed in research as literacy practices (Bloome et al., 2018; Street, 1993; Gee, 1990). In this theory, reading or writing plays a role in human daily activities and typically involves written or digital texts within the social interactions. Researching literacy practices means identifying literacy events, which are observable episodes that emerge from people's activities with texts in daily context (Barton, 2007). This perspective differs from the traditional view of literacy (deficit view of literacy) in which literacy is understood as a monotonous and technical skill in reading and writing (Burnett & Merchant, 2015; Richardson, 1998). In the deficit view of literacy, discussions or dialogues about literacy are primarily associated with illiteracy and focus more on what someone cannot do rather than what they can do. The deficit model of literacy has been widely challenged by researchers who view literacy as practices and events that occur in meaningful social and cultural environments (Dharamshi, 2019; Gee, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 2005).

In general, the perspective of literacy as a social practice can be categorized into five fundamental statements, namely: (1) literacy is understood as a set of social practices that can

be inferred from events mediated by written texts, (2) there are various literacies associated with different domains of life, (3) literacy practices are shaped by social institutions and power relations, with some literacies being more dominant than others, (4) literacy practices have specific goals within specific contexts as well as broader social purposes, (5) literacy practices are dynamic, and new knowledge is often acquired through informal learning processes and the construction of knowledge (Barton, 2007; Bloome et al., 2018; Street, 1993).

As a case in point, Parlindungan, Rahmatillah, and Lisyati (2020) examined the reading preferences of Indonesian students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the demands of online learning, students preferred printed texts for their academic purposes. Nafisah et al. (2023) studied millennials in Kulon Progo who used digital technology for communication and entrepreneurship, finding that both aspects were continuous literacy practices that shaped their millennial identity. These findings indicate that student activities related to texts might depend on tools and situated daily practices, including preferences. These practices sometimes are regulated and sometimes are not.

In Setiyadi and Piyakun's (2019) research on literacy practices of 73 Indonesian students, it was found that in academic activities, students tend to engage in productive literacy practices such as reading and writing assignments, as well as using language and communication skills that support their learning success. Literacy practices in Indonesia are a unique variable to study because language demographics vary greatly depending on their place of residence (Susanto & Rifai, 2017). Students in Indonesia usually use more than two languages in their daily lives, and this multilingual use influences their literacy practices. To this end, we could argue that literacy practices are closely related to language learning.

Unfortunately, research on the literacy practices of Indonesian students is still very limited, especially with the implementation of the Emancipated Curriculum (or *Kurikulum Merdeka*) (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2020), which presents challenges for students to engage in literacy practices. In this policy, students take approximately 20 semester credits outside of the campus for real-life working experiences. Comprehensive knowledge about the structure of literacy practices of students following MBKM is needed to develop appropriate interventions to enhance their literacy skills.

Informed by the notion of literacy as social practices, the objectives of this study were twofold: (1) to identify types of literacy practices carried out by Indonesian undergraduate students; and (2) to study the differences in use of the literacy practices between high rating and low rating students.

We first explain the method of the study that includes design of the research, participants, tools for data collection and data analysis method. Then, we discussed the findings based on the research questions, which are (1) types of literacy practices and (2) differences of literacy practices between high rating and low rating students. We also discuss those findings with relevant literatures. Finally, we conclude the paper with implications for research and practice.

## **METHOD**

This research employed a quantitative approach with a descriptive and ex-post facto design (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000). This design is powerful in exploring possible antecedents of events that have already occurred but cannot be manipulated by the researcher (West & Lee, 2011). Participants of the study were selected through purposive sampling. Approximately 200 undergraduate students from various universities in Indonesia voluntarily participated in this study. To be eligible, they must take one-semester off campus program of any kind for at least 20 credits during the 2022/2023 academic year. Before participating in this research, each participant received a comprehensive explanation of the purpose and procedures of this study and was asked to sign an informed consent form. Their participation was distributed online through a snowballing technique.

Every student had the right to choose whether to participate in this research or not. There was no coercion for students to become participants in this study. Their identities are kept confidential both during the research and in any subsequent academic publications. Their involvement in this research will not affect their grades in courses or other campus academic activities.

For data collection, we used a Literacy Practice Questionnaire (Killian, Chitiyo, Kolodziej, & Akenson, 2021). Currently, this is the only questionnaire on literacy practices that has been used widely. This questionnaire pertains to educational background, literacy experience, occupation, cognitive skills in literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving. All these variables are measured using a Likert Scale that assesses the frequency of literacy practices (5 = every day, 4 = at least once a week but not every day, 3 = less than once a week but at least once a month, 2 = less than once a month, and 1 = never). We also used a Self-Assessment Questionnaire to measure the students' literacy skills between high-rating and low rating students. This instrument also used a Likert Scale to measure how well they assess their reading and writing skills. Both instruments in this study were tested for reliability using the Cronbach Alpha method (Pallant, 2011).

Data collected were statistically analyzed using SPSS. The first dataset, which consists of literacy practice factors, was analyzed using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) to generate a taxonomy of literacy practices. Before conducting PCA, the factor suitability analysis will be performed using the Bartlett test and the sample adequacy test with Kaiser-Meyer Olkin (KMO) (Pallant, 2011). Then, the results of the factor analysis were coded based on the weighted structure of each literacy practice item, starting from the highest. When an item has a high weight in more than one factor, a decision was made regarding which category it is most suitable for.

Afterwards, a descriptive analysis was conducted by calculating the average scores to measure the intensity of the use of literacy practices. The intensity was considered low if the average score falls between 1.00 and 2.44, moderate if between 2.45 and 3.44, and high if between 3.45 and 5.00 (Oxford, 1990). Such range has been used widely in language and educational research, particularly that employed ex-post facto or factorial design.

Finally, an independent sample t-test was conducted to answer questions about the differences in the use of literacy practices between students who considered as having higher literacy skills and lower literacy skills. From the result of their self-assessment, the participants were divided into three groups. Students who score 36 or higher in self-

assessment were categorized as high rating students, while those who score 25 or lower were considered low rating students. Students with scores between 26 and 35 were not included in the analysis. This decision was based on the total score received by the participants (0-50 scale).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The objective of this study was to examine the literacy practices of Indonesian undergraduate students during one-semester off-campus program, which are equivalent to approximately 20 credit hours. In this section, we present the findings which cover the types of literacy practices and differences of literacy practices between low and high rating students. We also discuss the findings with relevant literatures and how this study contributes to the development of knowledge and practice.

Before running the factorial analysis, we first conducted the item suitability and sampling adequacy tests (see Table 1). We performed Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to check whether the correlation matrix among the variables is significantly different from an identity matrix, which would indicate that the variables are not related. We found that the significance value of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is 0.000 ( $< 0.05$ ), so the existing variables are correlated and factor analysis can be continued. We then performed KMO (Kaiser-Meyer Olkin) Measure of Sampling Adequacy (MSA) to assess the adequacy of the sample for factor analysis (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000).

**Table 1. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity & KMO MSA**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.862
Approx. Chi-Square	2708.137
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df 435
	Sig. .000

As seen in Table 1 above we found that the KMO MSA was 0.862 ( $> 0.5$ ), implying that there was enough shared variance among the variables to proceed with the analysis (Pallant, 2011). We performed the Principal Component Analysis to identify types of literacy practices of the students.

### *Types of Literacy Practices*

The Principal Component Analysis (PCA) yielded eight factors with rotated eigenvalues 1 or greater explaining a cumulative variance of 65.68% of the construct (See Table 2). This decision was made based on the suggestion by Pallant (2011) in performing factorial analysis.

Factor 1 was coded as Professional-Related Literacy Practices and got higher loads (more than .3) from four literacy practice items. It accounted for 10.35% of the variances. This factor primarily encompasses literacy practices, such as writing/compiling report, teaching a classroom, arranging activities that involve other people, and discussing/sharing about book. Similar finding was found in the work of Killian, Chitiyo, Kolodziej, & Akenson

(2021) who examined adult literacy practices. They argue that adults were more engaged with professional-related literacy practices due to the demands they face in the workforce.

**Table 2. Factors of Literacy Practices**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Variance (%)</b>
1	Professional-related literacy practices	10.35
2	Academic-related literacy practices	10.24
3	Knowledge-generating literacy practices	9.16
4	Collaborative literacy practices	9.02
5	Self-regulated literacy practices	8.01
6	Leisure literacy practices	7.02
7	Transactional literacy practices	6.63
8	Course-related literacy practices	5.21
Cumulative Variance		65.68

Factor 2 was coded as Academic-Related Literacy Practices that got the second highest loads (slightly greater than .3). This factor consisted of five literacy practice items and was accounted for 10.24% of the variances. It includes reading journal or scientific publication, reading financial report, filling out forms, writing article, making a written announcement, and making a verbal announcement. Gao and Wang (2023) also argue that college students' participation and engagement with texts outside of classroom may improve their academic literacies and performance in college.

Factor 3 and Factor 4 explained approximately 9% of the variances. Factor 3 was coded as Knowledge-Generating Literacy Practices which included five literacy practice items, such as writing letters, memo, or daily journal/diary, reading newspaper or magazine, reading a flyer/direction/manual book, reading a book, and reading letters, memo, or daily journal/diary. Factor 4 coded as Collaborative Literacy Activities included items such as having a discussion with other people, persuading other people to do something, giving advice to other people, reading a diagram, map, or scheme, solving simple problem, and collaborating with other people. Fang and Robertson (2020) mentioned that college students need to engage with such literacy practices typically in disciplinary setting to support their learning and educational journey.

The rest of the factors also obtained relatively high loads that explained 8%, 7%, 6%, and 5% of the variances sequentially. Factor 5 was coded as Self-Regulated Literacy Practices. This included items of literacy practices, such as arranging/managing personal schedule and arranging/managing personal activities. Factor 6 was related to Leisure Literacy Activities that included items such as watching movies, listening to music, and discussing movie/music. Factor 7 was coded as Transactional Literacy Practices since it is related to items like carrying out buying and selling transactions, as well as carrying out negotiation. The last factor was related to items such as carrying out presentation and doing school homework. Thus, this factor was coded as Course-Related Literacy Practices. These factors are crucial for college students as adults, particularly for their own learning and transition to enter the workforce (Killian, Chitiyo, Kolodziej, & Akenson (2021)

These findings add to the existing literature about literacy practices for college students, particularly from the positivist perspective. Current research about literacy practices were

dominated by the opponents of constructivist paradigm. For instance, Brzeski (2017) studying the relationship between the identities and engagement in literacy practices across home and college domain of students in the U.K., found that the literacy practices of the students were shaped by their cultural and racial identities. Some other findings in different contexts were also found similar in this line of research paradigm, which are typically not generalizable (e.g., Aguilera & Lopez, 2020; Wang, 2016). Our research, on the other hand, generate understanding of literacy practices based on actions that have already occurred and can be used to predict certain causes for other contexts.

We argue that the eight categories of literacy practices that we found might be treated as posteriori categories in training college students, particularly in Indonesia to develop their literacy skills. For example, the first category, Professional-Related Literacy Practices that consists of important literacy practices in the working and professional spaces are items that have received less attention in research and education (Kiili, Makinen, Coiro, 2013).

Despite what college students do on campus as part of their academic development (Afdal et al., 2023), off-campus literacy practices should be avidly experienced and richly valued (Pfrenger, 2017). These off-campus experiences that we found might not only broaden college students' horizons, but also prepare them for the complexities of the real world. Encounters with diverse perspectives, cultures, and real-life challenges can significantly enhance a student's education.

On campus, the student learning process is regulated and supervised in such a way. Students on campus are also exposed to systemic academic life. However, in the implementation of *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka*, the learning process is an important manifestation of student-centered learning (Luthfi & Mardiani, 2020). Studying outside campus offers challenges and opportunities to develop students' innovation, creativity, capacity, personality and needs, as well as fostering independence in exploring and finding information through the complexity of reality and areas such as ability requirements, real problems, social experiences, partnerships, self-management (Fitriasari, Budimansyah, Insani, & Aulia, 2020). The demands for success, hard and soft skill goals of students can be greatly influenced by an individual learning curriculum that is well planned and implemented.

Therefore, striking a balance between on-campus academic pursuits and off-campus experiences is crucial for holistic growth. However, the implementation of this policy undoubtedly faces numerous challenges (Puspitasari & Nugroho, 2021), ranging from the COVID-19 pandemic to the readiness of higher education institutions and student learning outcomes (Luthfi & Mardiani, 2020). The most significant question arises regarding whether the competencies of graduates align with the needs of the current era and industry, particularly 21st-century skills such as literacy. Student literacy practices outside the campus become the key to their academic success in carrying out learning activities. Students must be able to manage their daily activities not only to complete tasks from partners but also to fulfill their personal skills.

Within the campus, the learning process of students is regulated and supervised to a certain extent. Students within the campus are also exposed to a systemic academic life. However, in the implementation of the *Kampus Merdeka*, the learning process is a crucial

manifestation of student-centered learning (Luthfi & Mardiani, 2020). Learning outside the campus offers challenges and opportunities to develop innovation, creativity, capacity, personality, and students' needs, as well as fostering independence in exploring and discovering information through the complexity of reality and fields such as competency requirements, real-world problems, social experiences, partnerships, and self-management (Fitriasari, Budimansyah, Insani, & Aulia, 2020). The demands for success, both in hard and soft skills, can be significantly influenced by well-planned and implemented individual learning curricula.

### ***Differences of Literacy Practices between High Rating and Low Rating Students***

We were also interested to look at the differences of literacy practices between high rating and low rating students. By high rating we meant are those who self-assessed themselves as possessing literacy skills with scores of 36 or higher. Low rating students are those who scored 25 or lower in their self-assessment. This decision was informed by Killian, Chitiyo, Kolodziej, & Akenson (2021).

The result of the comparison between these groups of students can be seen in Table 3 below. Before performing t-test analysis, we first run the Levene's test for equality of variances (Pallant, 2011). We found that The Levene's test is not significant, which means the assumption of homogeneity of variance were met. The t-test analysis showed that for Factors 1, 2, 3, and 4 is significant, with a positive average score of differences, which means sufficient evidence to conclude that the scores for the four factors of high rating students are better than the low rating students. The t-test analysis for the rest of the factors showed no significant differences between those two groups of students. Table 3 presents the t-test analysis result.

This finding is in consistent with the findings of several other studies, either studies with positivists or constructivist paradigms. Our major claim in relation to current literature is that engaging college students in a variety of high impact techniques may have a cumulative effect that enhances their reading and research abilities (Afdal, et al, 2023; Conefrey, 2021; Zhu, 2021).

The four categories of literacy practices that show there are significant difference in use between high rating and low rating students include: (1) Professional-Related Literacy Practices, (2) Academic-Related Literacy Practices, (3) Knowledge-Generating Literacy Practices, and (4) Collaborative Literacy Practices. These findings highlight the importance of these literacy dimensions in assessing and understanding students' overall academic performance and competence (Gao & Wang, 2023).

Support for this claim has been demonstrated by other scholars. For example, Arends and Petersen (2018) conducted a study on how college students in Africa form friendships with their peers and the values they attach to these relationships over time, and how this affects their integration into university life. The students in their study participated in an education excursion program, both on and off-campus, as part of their first-year seminar.

Arends and Petersen (2018) then conducted a longitudinal study, initially collecting biographical surveys and questionnaires from the students and following up with dyadic interviews 30 months later. Their qualitative analysis revealed that during their first year, the



students faced various challenges in transitioning to university life, but the excursion program helped them bridge racial, cultural, religious, and language differences. Additionally, the third-year data demonstrated the long-term positive effects of the excursion program on their social and academic integration. This study indicates that having off-campus program is beneficial for the students experiences in campus life that goes beyond their academic life. We argue that such literacy practices in off-campus context could help them grow positive skills relevant for their academic achievement.

Relevant to our research findings, we also argue that understanding high and low-rating students, particularly differences in specific literacy practices informs educators to develop appropriate teaching methods and interventions (Fitriasari et al, 2020). By identifying literacy practices that students may be struggling, educators can provide targeted support to help them improve their skills in academic setting (Aguilera & Lopez, 2020; Wang, 2016). Addressing these differences in literacy practice is crucial to improve academic performance. Students who strengthen their abilities in areas such as Professional-Related, Academic-Related, Knowledge-Generating, and Collaborative Literacy Practices are likely to perform better in their studies and overall academic achievement. However, further research is needed to examine how these difference can predict or influence academic performance as an outcome measure. Another study related to changes over time or progress of academic achievement, particularly related to language learning is also interesting to explore.

Moreover, a comprehensive investigation of literacy practices among students with varying academic performance levels indicate the underlying factors contributing to educational disparities (Burnett & Merchant, 2015). By identifying the specific reading and writing habits of high and low-rating students, educators and policymakers can gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by certain demographic groups (Setiyadi & Piyakun, 2019). As shown throughout our study, this knowledge is significant in devising targeted interventions and resource allocation strategies to bridge gaps in language learning for university students. For instance, it may reveal whether socio-economic factors, cultural influences, or access to learning materials play significant roles in shaping literacy outcomes. This information can provide educational institutions to formulate informed-initiatives that address the root causes of inequality, promoting a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. Ultimately, the goal is to foster an educational system that empowers every student, regardless of their background, with the necessary tools and resources for academic success (Brzeski, 2017; Gandara, Navarro-Pablo, & Garcia-Jimmenez, 2021; Rosenberg & Mangelsdorf, 2021).

**Table 3. Difference of Literacy Practices between High Rating Students and Low Rating Students**

Factor	Factor Categories	Groups	Mean	Mean Difference	t-value
1	Professional-related literacy practices	Higher Rating	.19	.44	3.186***
		Lower Rating	.25		
2	Academic-related literacy practices	Higher Rating	.19	.44	3.195***
		Lower Rating	.25		
3	Knowledge-generating literacy practices	Higher Rating	.18	.41	2.995***
		Lower Rating	.23		

4	Collaborative literacy practices	Higher Rating	.16	.38	2.773***
		Lower Rating	.21		
5	Self-regulated literacy practices	Higher Rating	.06	.15	1.061**
		Lower Rating	.08		
6	Leisure literacy practices	Higher Rating	.00	.02	.158**
		Lower Rating	.01		
7	Transactional literacy practices	Higher Rating	.00	.02	.149**
		Lower Rating	.01		
8	Course-related literacy practices	Higher Rating	.06	.15	1.066**
		Lower Rating	.08		

\*\*\* The difference is significant at the .000 level (2-tailed)

\*\* The difference is not significant at the .000 level (2-tailed)

To conclude the findings, we argue that examining literacy practices of college students might reconstruct a new path for language teaching and learning because educators can provide with developmentally appropriate experiences related to reading and writing. This statement is supported by Saracho (2017) who mentions that the relationship between language learning and literacy practice are grounded in the long standing knowledge and research about developmental theory, such as Piaget's maturation and level of development and Vygotsky's zone of proximal development. In the long run, literacy practices might shape students' identity to be successful language learners as suggested by D'Agostino and Mocciaro (2021) that students who engage in multilingual practices by adopting strategies of language acquisition in naturalistic settings usually enhance their literacy skills effectively. However, further investigation on how those practices reflect their interlanguage and literacy achievement are needed.

## CONCLUSION

In this study we examine patterns of literacy practices of Indonesian college students who participated in one semester off-campus program within the newest higher education policy called Kampus Merdeka. We also studied how their literacy practices are distinct between high rating and low rating students. For the first objective, we found eight categories of literacy practices that the students had, including: (1) Professional-related literacy practices, (2) Academic-related literacy practices, (3) Knowledge-generating literacy practices, (4) Collaborative literacy practices, (5) Self-regulated literacy practices, (6) Leisure literacy practices, (7) Transactional literacy practices, and (8) Course-related literacy practices. Each category consists of important literacy practices items that can be used to inform educators designing meaningful off-campus programs.

This finding stands as an unequivocal testament to the pivotal role of literacy assumes in shaping educational frameworks. Its reverberations extend beyond immediate contexts, carrying the potential to inform and revolutionize global educational policies and practices in higher education. Positioned at the nexus of innovation and tradition, this research becomes a transformative force, compelling educators to envisage and tailor off-campus programs within the *Kurikulum Merdeka* that transcend the mere dissemination of knowledge, fostering a diverse spectrum of literacy skills requisite for navigating 21st-century challenges. The future of higher education lies not solely in the conveyance of information but in the endowment of students with tools for perpetual learning and critical thinking.

For the second objective, we found significant difference in the first four literacy practices categories between high rating and low rating students. This finding indicates potential implications for education and student success. Recognizing the distinctions in specific literacy practices between high-rating and low-rating students empowers educators to customize their teaching approaches and support measures. Closing the gap in literacy practices could result in enhanced academic outcomes. Furthermore, it brings attention to potential inequalities within the education system. Recognizing these variations in literacy practices among students with different literacy ratings can guide the allocation of educational resources and support, ultimately ensuring equitable opportunities for all students.

This study has supported a previous claim on literature that there have always been discursive relationship between literacy practices and their literacy skills out of academic setting, which indicates further what counts as equity on education for all students (Emilia et al, 2022). Another important claim to take into account is that language learning and literacy practices are closely related and supportive of each other (D'Agostino & Mocciaro, 2021). Our research has demonstrated such claims are relevant and are empirically grounded to inform future research and higher educational policy.

We employed quantitative ex-post facto design in our study. Future research could delve deeper into the eight categories of literacy practices identified in this study. Researchers could explore how these practices evolve over time, the factors influencing their development, and their impact on students' overall academic performance and success. Future researchers could also conduct longitudinal studies to track the progress of students over multiple semesters or years, examining how their literacy practices change and adapt as they progress through their academic journey. Such explorations are crucial in order to provide informed-judgement of off-campus programs offered by university that have effective contributions for students.

Qualitative research methods, such as interviews and focus groups, could provide valuable insights into the lived experiences of students participating in off-campus programs like *Kampus Merdeka*. These qualitative approaches could help uncover the motivations, challenges, and perceptions of students regarding their literacy practices. The nuanced and rich of real life experiences might be useful resources for others, especially those of low achievers.

Finally, further research could explore the implications of the *Kampus Merdeka* policy and similar higher education policies on students' literacy practices and overall success. Investigating how literacy practices can help improve Indonesia's PISA score is also important. Understanding how such policies impact students' development can inform policy makers and educators.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

This research was made possible by the generous funding of Universitas Teuku Umar through Internal Research Scheme with the Decree number 497/UN59/AL.04/2023. Any interpretations and claims made in this research are solely the responsibility of the researchers.

## REFERENCES

- Afdal, H., W., Spernes, K., & Hoff-Jenssen, R. (2023). Academic reading as a social practice in higher education. *Higher Education*, 85, 1337-1355.
- Arends, D., & Petersen, N. F. (2018). The role of first-year experience excursion in promoting social integration at university: Student teachers' views. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, 8(1), 1-9.
- Barton, D. (2007). *Literacy: An introduction to the ecology of written language* (2nd ed.). Blackwell.
- Bloom, D., Castanheira, M. L., Leung, C., & Rowsell, J. (2018). *Re-theorizing literacy practices: Complex social and cultural contexts* (1st Edition). Routledge.
- Burnett, C., & Merchant, G. (2015). The challenge of 21st-century literacies. *Journal of Adolescents and Adult Literacy*, 59(3), 271-274.
- Brzeski, A. (2017). Literacy practices, identity and engagement: integrating multifaceted identities of college students to support learning. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 22(3), 391-408.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morison, K. (2000). *Research methods in education*. Routledge Falmer.
- Conefrey, T. (2021). Supporting first-generation adjustment to college with high-impact practices. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory and Practice*, 23(1), 139-160.
- D'Agostino, M., & Mocciaro, E. (2021). Literacy and literacy practices: Plurilingual connected migrants and emerging literacy. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 51.
- Dharamshi, P. (2019). "I remember being aware of how I was being positioned by my school": How early experiences with deficit views of education influence the practices of literacy teacher educators. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 77, 90-99.
- Emilia, E., Sujatna, E. T. S., & Kurniasih, N. (2022). Training teachers to teach PISA-like reading: A case in Indonesia. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 12(1), 58-78.
- Fang, Z., & Robertson, D. A. (2020). Unpacking and operationalizing disciplinary literacy. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 64(2), 240-242.
- Fitriasari, S., Budimansyah, D., Insani, N. N., & Aulia, S. R. (2020). Implementasi program belajar di luar kampus, merdeka belajar – kampus merdeka program studi pendidikan kewarganegaraan. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pendidikan Pancasila & Kewarganegaraan*, 1(1), 13-19.
- Frankel, K., Becker, B., Rowe, M., & Pearson P.D. (2016). From "What is reading?" to "What is literacy?" *Journal of Education*, 196(3), 7-17.
- Gandara, Y., Navarro-Pablo, M., & Garcia-Jimenez, E. (2021). Decolonising literacy practices for an inclusive and sustainable model of literacy education. *Sustainability*, 12(23), 1-19.
- Gao, Y., & Wang, H. (2023). Developing Chinese university students' academic literacies in English language classrooms via a production-oriented approach: an action research perspective. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 1-11.

- Gee, J. (1990). Sociocultural approach to literacy. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 12, 31-48.
- ILA (2016). The science of reading. Available at : <https://www.literacyworldwide.org/get-resources/making-sense-of-the-science-of-reading>
- Kiili, Makinen, M., & Coiro, J. (2013). Rethinking academic literacies designing multifaceted academic literacy experiences for preservice teachers. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 57(3), 223-232.
- Killian, M. R., Chitiyo, G., Kolodzie, N. J., & Akenson, A. B. (2021). Examining the underlying structure of adult literacy practices at home and at work. *Reading Horizons*, 60(1), 1-21.
- Linares, E., & Blocker, D. (2021). Literacy en français and à la française: Socializing students to academic literacy practices in a foreign language. *Foreign Language Annals*, 1-32.
- Luthfi, I., & Mardiani, R. (2020). Merdeka belajar - kampus merdeka policy: How does it affect the sustainability on accounting education in Indonesia? *Dinamika Pendidikan*, 15(2), 243-253.
- Montoya, S. (2018). *Defining literacy*. Germany: UNESCO Institute for Statistics.
- Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. New York: Newbury House Publishers.
- Pallant, J. (2011). *A step-by-step guide to data analysis using SPSS for windows*. McGraw-Hill Education.
- Parlindungan, F. (2017). Exploring literacy practices in a second language. *TEFLIN Journal*, 28(1), 115-132.
- Parlindungan, F., Rahmatillah, R., & Lisyati, L. (2020). Challenges in online learning during covid-19 pandemic: lessons learned from universities in Indonesia. *TESOL International Journal*, 16(4.1), 6-27.
- Pfrenger, W. (2017). Cultivating places and people at the center: Cross-pollinating literacies on a rural campus. *Journal of Basic Writing*, 36(1), 87-119.
- Programme for International Students Assessment. (2018). *PISA 2018 results: Factsheets Indonesia*. <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/publications/21st-century-readers-a83d84cb-en.htm>
- Programme for International Students Assessment. (2022). *PISA 2022 results: Factsheets Indonesia*. <https://www.oecd.org/publication/pisa-2022-results/country-notes/indonesia-c2e1ae0e/>
- Puspitasari, R., & Nugroho, R. (2021). Implementasi kebijakan merdeka belajar, kampusmerdeka FISIP UPN Veteran Jawa Timur. *Dinamika Governance: Jurnal Ilmu Administrasi Negara*, 11(2), 272-292.
- Rahmat, Y. N., Saputra, A., Hakim, M. A. R., Saputra, E., & Serasi, R. (2021). Learning L2 by Utilizing Dictionary Strategies: Learner Autonomy and Learning Strategies. *Lingua Cultura*, 15(2), 175-181

- Rosenberg, L., & Mangelsdorf, K. (2021). Centering students' language and literacy practices. In Losey, K., & Shuck, G. (Eds.). *Plurilingual pedagogies for multilingual writing classroom*. Routledge.
- Richardson, P. (1998). Literacy, learning and teaching. *Educational Review*, 50(2), 115-134.
- Saracho, O. N. (2017). Literacy and language: new developments in research, theory, and practice. *Early Child Development and Care*, 187(3-4), 299-304.
- Street, B. V. (1993). The new literacy studies. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 16(2), 81-97.
- Susanto, F., & Rifai, I. (2017). Narrating literacy practices at an urban secondary school in Surabaya. *Journal of English Teaching Adi Buana*, 2(2), 189-199.
- Wang, X. (2016). Transnational Chinese students' literacy and networking practices. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 60(6), 687-696.
- West, A. G., & Lee, I. (2011). Multilingual vandalism detection using language-independent & ex post facto evidence. PAN-CLEF '11: Notebook Papers on Uncovering Plagiarism, Authorship, and Social Software Misuse. September.
- Zhu, J. (2021). Using picture books to support cultural transitions among college international students: Pedagogical designs for ESL classrooms. *TESOL Journal*, 13(e638), 1-12.