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IN THE GLOBAL DIGITAL AGE**



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Free Internet Program for Public Literacy Development in North Lampung

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Keywords: responsiveness, free internet program, global digital age, public literacy

Abstract: A free internet program in North Lampung is intended to facilitate the community in accessing the internet to maximise the use of information and telecommunication technology. This study aims to find out about the responsiveness to a free internet program in North Lampung. This research used a qualitative approach of a descriptive type. The data were collected through interviews, documentation and observation. The stages of data analysis performed were to collect data, reduce, expose and draw conclusions. The results of this study indicated that a free internet program could not be enjoyed by the majority of the community and it could not meet the preferences and interests of certain groups. The suggestions given were that the Government of North Lampung should install a free internet facility in a strategic place which could be accessed by the majority of students and stakeholders such as in school and a park where many users access information.

1 INTRODUCTION

The internet is a part of information and communication technology that continues to develop, and offers many benefits and convenience for users such as searching, receiving, storing, processing, sending and disseminating data or information quickly and easily, and it can form community interaction. It is undeniable that there are various fields that have benefited from the internet including education, health, economics, politics, bureaucracy, security, and other fields. So, now the internet has an effect on the competitiveness of individuals, communities, and countries in the midst of the current mobilisation of human increasingly rapidly so that the progress of the Internet has become one indicator of the progress of a country.

The development of the internet in Indonesia continues to increase. This can be seen from the results of a survey conducted by the Association of Internet Service Providers in Indonesia (APJII) which stated that the number of internet users in

Indonesia reached 88.1 million people with a population of 252.4 million up to the end of 2014. The number of internet users in Indonesia was mostly in West Java Province at 16.4 million, followed by East Java at 12.1 million users and Central Java at 10.7 million users, while Lampung Province was in the 7th position at 3.5 million users. The penetration of internet users in Indonesia in 2014 was 34.9% and this indicates still low internet usage (<http://www.apjii.or.id>, accessed on the 18th November 2016).

The internet is a basic need and a very important resource while communication and information is a right for every society in Indonesia. Therefore, the state or government organisers in this case the Ministry of Communication and Information are obliged to fulfil the communication and information needs of the community so that they can realise a prosperous society in Indonesia. The government is required to answer to the needs and increase the willingness and ability to use the internet as an information tool within the community.

The vision of the Ministry of Communication and Information (Kemen-Kominfo) in the Strategic Plan of 2015-2019 is: "The realization of the availability and the increasing quality of communication and informatics services to support the focus of government development as a form of state presence in declaring sovereignty and equitable development and availability of NATIONAL broadband access, internet and digital broadcasting that is equitable and affordable to promote economic, educational, social, cultural, and security growth".

In response to the vision, Kemen-Kominfo has been trying to provide internet services for the community, one of which services was the free internet program in Indonesia as set out in the Regulation of the Minister of Communication and Information No. 2 of 2013 on the Provision of Wireless Internet Access Services In the Universal Service Obligation Program. The emergence of these free internet programs can help the community in terms of information technology in Indonesia.

This free internet program reduces the gaps in community ability in the use and utilisation of information technology and communication itself (e-literacy), especially internet technology. North Lampung regency is one of the regencies that has implemented a free internet program.

Free internet programs are one form of service to support public literacy in getting to know the internet.

A form of literacy that must be mastered by the public in obtaining information is in the form of the mastery of letters and literacy, but along with the development of increasingly modern technology, the mastery of letters is no longer effective when obtaining information. Therefore, the use of the internet strongly supports an increase in public literacy, but the internet does not simply display letters

UNESCO explains that literacy is a fundamental right of every individual for lifelong learning. It is useful for exchanging knowledge along with the development of technology that is currently internet-based; through the internet, the availability of communication is more developed and can affect political and social life (<http://www.unesco.org>, accessed on 8th march 2017).

Literacy in the era of globalisation is very necessary, now the development of science and technology takes place very quickly. Likewise with the internet, literacy is necessary, because, with the internet, we can access and browse the information quickly. Currently the internet is not only used as a

means of communication or means of seeking information, but it has also been used as a means to fulfill needs such as education, and can even be used as a means of seeking money through the network. This means that users can use this device as much as the points that have been provided, and for internet Based on the research of Agustini (2017, p. 8) the Office of Communication and Informatics provides free internet programs for all the communities in North Lampung Regency which can be accessed 24 hours a day and this program was expected to cover all parts of North Lampung Regency so that all people could enjoy the program.

2 RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted within the scope of North Lampung Regency, the Office of Communications and Informatics of North Lampung, PT. Telecommunication, Indonesia, and a free internet location. The Communication and Information Service of North Lampung was chosen as the location for the research because the Office of Communications and Informatics was the implementing organisation for the free internet program in North Lampung; in addition to this, research was conducted at PT. Telecommunication, and several free internet locations namely South Kotabumi Subdistrict and South Lampung Abung.

According to Sugiyono (2015, p. 224) data collection techniques represent the most strategic steps in the study, because the main purpose of research is to get data. Data collection techniques used in this study were: 1). Interview techniques with a specific purpose. The conversation was conducted by two parties, the interviewer who asked questions and interviewees who provided answers to the questions. The technique used by selecting members was specifically based on research objectives. The instruments used to conduct this interview were a small record of researchers, interview guides and mobile phones for their recorders and cameras.

Data analysis is the process of finding data and systematically compiling data obtained from interviews, field notes, and documentation, by organising data into categories, breaking it into units, synthesising it, composing it into patterns, choosing which is important and which needs to be learned, and to draw conclusions. Data analysis in this study consisted of several stages, and the stages were: 1) data reduction from the report amount. Reducing data means summarising, selecting the key

points, focusing on the things that matter, looking for the theme and pattern. Activities to reduce the data that were done in this study included: recording of interviews, observations and documentation as well as field notes and document collection for results related to the research focus. In this study, the data were obtained then selected and re-adjusted with the focus of research on the free internet program in North Lampung District; 2) data presentation was done to make it easier for the researcher to see the overall picture or specific part of the research. According to Miles and Huberman in Sugiyono (2015, p. 249) the most commonly presented data in qualitative research is narrative text; 3) verification or inferences. The data presented were still temporary, and could change when strong evidence was found to be supportive at a later stage. But if the conclusions raised in the initial stages were supported by valid and consistent evidence when researchers returned to the field to collect data, the conclusion put forward could be considered a credible conclusion. In this study, the data were obtained then analysed and patterns were searched for, including themes and things that often arise, as outlined in the conclusion. The process of drawing conclusions in this research was done by discussing the data in terms of the findings in the field with the proposed theories as well as with the extract from the series of research results based on interview observation, and documentation.

3 DISCUSSION

Based on the results of research on the responsiveness of a free internet program in North Lampung Regency, it can be stated that people were satisfied. This can be seen from the satisfaction put forward by some internet access users who claimed to be satisfied with the free internet program. From the researcher's analysis of all interviews with internet access users, the satisfaction felt by the internet access users could be seen from reference to the adequate facilities and infrastructure.

Based on the results of the analysis, researchers have seen that people who claimed not to be satisfied with the internet program were only located in four location points. The four points were at Saprodi Abung Selatan, Kotabumi Koramil, Ramayana Kotabumi Fruit Market, and Bukit Kemuning Market. Researchers found that, in Ramayana Kotabumi Fruit Market, the internet access did not run smoothly and sometimes internet access could not be used or even there were wifi

access at the location of Ramayana Fruit Market, Kotabumi.

According to the researcher, the location of the free wifi installation in North Lampung Regency was not effective due to the location which was not strategic. Based on the description of the results, this program is very helpful for the people of North Lampung Regency, but there are still many people in North Lampung who still stall when trying to use the technology or are less able to access the internet; in addition, the internet is not used in a positive way.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion of this research is that the free internet program could not be enjoyed by majority of the community and meet the preferences and interests of certain groups. The suggestions given were that the Government of North Lampung should install a free internet facility in a strategic place which could be accessed by the majority of students and stakeholders such as in a school and a park where many users access information.

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