

*(Research/Review) Article*

# Anies Baswedan's Leadership in Literacy Campaign Minister of Education and Culture (2014-2016)

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**Abstract:** This article analyzes Anies Baswedan's leadership in driving the national literacy campaign during his tenure as Indonesia's Minister of Education and culture from 2014 to 2016. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method, with data sources in the form of policy documents, program reports, and literature related to leadership and literacy. The results showed that the transformational leadership style implemented by Anies Baswedan was effective in building a common vision and motivating various stakeholders to actively participate in national literacy programs, especially the School Literacy Movement (GLS). The leadership is able to foster a culture of sustainable literacy in schools and communities, although still faced with challenges in the form of limited resources and access gaps. Overall, Anies Baswedan's leadership contributed significantly to improving the quality of education and strengthening national literacy as an important foundation to face the challenges of 21st Century Education. Keywords: transformational leadership, Literacy Campaign, School Literacy Movement, Anies Baswedan, literacy culture, education policy, 21st Century Education.

**Keywords:** Anies Baswedan; Literacy Campaign; Literacy Culture; School Literacy Movement; Transformational Leadership.

## 1. Introduction

Literacy is a basic competence that is the main foundation in the learning and development process of human resources (HR). The ability to read, write and understand information is not just a prerequisite for formal education, but also an important capital for active participation in social, economic and cultural life (Ashkur, et.al, 2024). In this era of globalization and digital, literacy has developed into a cross-modality covering digital literacy, media literacy and Information Literacy which is a 21st century competence for individuals to be able to compete, adapt and innovate (Simarmata, et.al, 2022). However, literacy achievement in Indonesia still presents significant challenges. For example, various studies show that school literacy policies in Indonesia have indeed grown, but their implementation and equity are still not optimal (Nadifa, et.al, 2024). In the context of education, the role of school leadership is also proven to determine visionary leadership and support literacy innovation to have an impact on reading culture in schools (Wulandari, et.al, 2023). Meanwhile, in the context of digitalization of education, research shows that transformational leadership can improve teacher innovation and utilization of literacy technology in schools (Lasrin, et.al, 2024). In the context of national policy, since the launch of the School Literacy Movement (GLS) program in Indonesia, the government has placed literacy as a strategic priority in strengthening primary and Secondary Education. The literature review study on GLS implementation shows the positive potential of the program in increasing students' reading interest, but also notes that school leadership and resource management factors are key to successful implementation (Simarmata, et.al, 2022). Thus, the success of literacy depends not only on access to reading materials or library infrastructure but also on the quality of leadership that is able to drive systemic changes in literacy culture. In the period 2014-2016, Anies Baswedan served as Minister of Education and culture of the Republic of Indonesia and placed the national literacy

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campaign as one of the main agendas. Various conditions such as low reading interest, Limited school library facilities, and lack of sustainable literacy development indicate that strategic interventions and strong leadership are needed to build a solid literacy culture. This study takes this background and aims to analyze the role and strategy of Anies Baswedan's leadership in driving the national literacy campaign, as well as identify the impact of such leadership on the development of literacy culture in Indonesian schools.

## **2. Preliminaries or Related Work or Literature Review**

### **Transformational Leadership in education**

Research in 2020 now shows that transformational leadership is the most relevant leadership style for driving systemic change in schools and educational institutions. This leadership emphasizes the vision, inspiration, motivation, and empowerment of school residents.

Transformational for Educational Innovation According to Simarmata et al. (2022), transformational leadership plays an important role in supporting innovation and adaptation of digital literacy in schools. Leaders who have a vision and are able to inspire teachers will encourage the implementation of more effective literacy programs.

Impact on teacher professionalism Research by Susanti et al. (2023) found that transformational leadership of school principals increases teacher professionalism, especially in the utilization of digital literacy and Innovative Learning media.

Collaboration and improving the quality of learning According to Gaspersz (2024), transformational leadership is associated with increased teacher collaboration, which then has an impact on the achievement of cross-disciplinary learning. That is, transformational leaders encourage creative and literacy-based learning practices.

Transformational leadership and school well-being Suryaningsih et al. (2021) affirms that transformational leadership not only improves cultural literacy, but also improves school well-being but still leaves challenges related to leadership continuity and resource availability. The latest findings are in line with Anies Baswedan's practice of building a national vision on literacy, motivating stakeholders, and strengthening cross-sectoral collaboration in the School Literacy Movement (GLS).

### **21st century literacy and Digital Transformation**

The 2020-present period sees the expansion of the concept of literacy that not only includes the ability to read and write, but also includes digital literacy, media, information and data. Literacy as a 21st century skill Simarmata et al. (2022) mentioned that digital literacy and information literacy are now the main competencies of the 21st century, and education must adapt to these developments. Literacy challenge in Indonesia According to Nadifa et al. (2024), school literacy policies in Indonesia are indeed growing rapidly, but their implementation is still uneven.

Leadership factors, teacher assistance, and supporting facilities are the key to success. Digital readiness of teachers and students Suryaningsih et al. (2025) found that the biggest obstacle in digital literacy is not the facilities, but the competence of teachers in utilizing literacy technology (e-library, digital reading corner, digital teaching materials). Literacy policy in 2014-2016 has not focused on digitalization, but recent research reinforces the importance of digital capacity as a continuation of the literacy foundation built earlier. Anies ' literacy movement can be seen as the basis for today's digital literacy transformation.

### **School Literacy Culture**

Literature after 2020 emphasizes that literacy culture cannot be formed only through short-term programs, but must be through consistent managerial and leadership strategies. School Leadership Role Wulandari et al. (2023) affirm that visionary leadership supporting literacy innovation contributes directly to the improvement of students ' reading culture. Literature Management Culture Literacy Marmoah & Poerwanti's (2022) research states that strengthening literacy culture in primary schools can only be achieved through collaboration between principals, teachers, and school policies. This requires leadership that is able to create a literacy ecosystem. Practical Strategies For The Development Of Literacy Culture Anwar et al. (2024) showed that programs such as reading corners, literacy seminars, teacher training, and the use of digital technology significantly affect literacy culture. Consistent leadership is the main driving factor. The 15-minute reading Program, GLS development, and the National Literacy Culture campaign conducted by Anies are in accordance with the latest research findings that literacy culture must be created systemically, not just through the provision of facilities.

National Literacy Policy and GLS implementation a) positive impact of GLS Program Simarmata et al. (2022) in a literature study, it is stated that GLS is able to increase students' reading interest, but its success is strongly influenced by the commitment of school leaders, resource management, and government policy support. (a) the problem of access Research after 2020 highlighted the existence of literacy access gaps, especially between urban and rural schools (Nadifa et al., 2024).

This challenge shows that national policies such as GLS need strengthening at the local implementation stage. literacy in the Digital ecosystem The development of literacy policy is now moving towards the integration of digital literacy, media, and information in school curricula. This is the future direction of literacy policy. The National Literacy Policy during Anies' time became the foundation for the current digital literacy transformation. Recent literature confirms that policy sustainability is an important aspect in National Literacy reform.

### 3. Proposed Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to understand in depth the leadership of Anies Baswedan in the literacy campaign in the period 2014-2016. The qualitative approach is chosen because it aims to interpret social phenomena based on the meaning given by the subject or context under study. According to Sugiyono (2019), qualitative research is used to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects, such as behavior, perception, motivation, and action, holistically and by way of description in the form of words and using scientific methods (Sugiyono, 2019:9).

This approach allows researchers to interpret the meaning behind data that appears in a natural context, rather than in the form of numbers. The method used is a case study, which is an approach that seeks to intensively examine a particular case in a real-life context. Sugiyono (2016: 14) explained that case study research is one of the qualitative research strategies used to understand cases that are unique, special, and bound by a certain context (bounded system). Therefore, this study focused on one case, namely Anies Baswedan's leadership style and strategy in the National Literacy Movement. Research Data were collected through policy documentation, program reports, and literature studies relevant to leadership and literacy issues. According to Sugiyono (2020: 225), documentation is an important data collection technique in qualitative research because it can provide written information that supports analysis and interpretation of the research object.

Data analysis was conducted in a descriptive-qualitative manner using content analysis techniques to identify leadership strategies and their impact on literacy development in Indonesia. In Sugiyono's view (2019: 335), qualitative data analysis is carried out interactively and continuously until the data is saturated through three main stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion/verification. Thus, this method allows researchers to explore the meaning, value, and leadership strategies implemented by Anies Baswedan in depth based on documentary data and available literature.

### 4. Results and Discussion

The results showed that Anies Baswedan's leadership style during his tenure adopted a transformational leadership style that was effective in mobilizing various stakeholders. Anies managed to build a strong vision of the importance of literacy as the foundation of education and motivate teachers, students, and the community to actively participate through innovative programs such as the Reading Movement 15 minutes before the lesson begins.

Transformational leadership and Stakeholder Participation The applied transformational leadership style is highly relevant to the cutting-edge literature. For example, research by Susanti et al. (2023) shows that the transformational leadership of school principals has a significant effect on teacher professionalism through digital literacy. (Susanti et al., 2023) in addition, Gaspersz (2024) found that transformational leadership and teacher collaboration affect teachers' ability to apply cross-disciplinary learning. (Gaspersz, 2024) thus, Anies' actions in mobilizing teachers, students and the community are in line with evidence that transformational leadership increases motivation and collaboration in schools.

Strengthening literacy culture through policy and collaboration Anies' leadership also plays an important role in the formation of a literacy culture in schools through collaboration with various parties and strengthening supportive policies. Study by Marmoah et al. (2022) on the management of literacy culture in elementary schools in Indonesia shows that the implementation of literacy programs does require the active role of school principals, teachers, and school policy support. (Marmoah & Poerwanti, Suharno, 2022) meanwhile Wulandari et al.

(2022) shows that transformative leadership is able to develop a culture of literacy in elementary school through leadership transformation management. (Adventina Sunardiyah et al., 2022) this reinforces that leadership - driven visions and policies are indeed important to make literacy a part of school culture-not just an additional activity.

Cultural change processes and sustainability challenges From the perspective of organizational change theory, this literacy campaign can be analyzed through a change framework such as unfreezing → changing → refreezing. This process is seen when awareness of the importance of literacy is built (unfreezing), then followed by the implementation of massive programs such as 15-minute reading activities (changing), and finally the culture of literacy begins to take root as a habit (refreezing). However, the current literature also shows that the sustainability of cultural change requires strong supporting factors such as leadership that continues to oversee change, literacy infrastructure, and adaptation to digital literacy. For example, Suryaningsih et al. (2021) found that transformational leadership and cultural literacy contribute to school wellbeing in early childhood, but also emphasize challenges such as lack of continuity. (Firdaus Aprilia & Negeri Jakarta, n.d.) Plus, research by Anwar et al. (2024) suggests that the behavior of school principals significantly affects the culture of literacy through strategies such as reading corners, literacy seminars and the use of digital technology. (Kadikul Anwar et al., 2024) In the context of Indonesia, real challenges such as limited resources, disparities in access between urban and rural areas, and the digital readiness of teachers and students remain obstacles. The literature makes it clear that without aligning leadership with strengthening digital capacity and equitable access, literacy programs can have geographically or demographically limited impacts. For example, research on the implementation of digital literacy in primary schools by Aprilia (2024) shows that schools that facilitate reading corners and e-libraries but have poorly trained teachers still experience obstacles. (Suryaningsih et al., 2025) Thus, Anies' leadership has succeeded in initiating change, but sustainability and equitable impact still require significant attention — both in terms of policy, human resources, and digital infrastructure.

## 5. Conclusions

This study concludes that Anies Baswedan's transformational leadership during his tenure as Minister of Education and culture for the period 2014–2016 has an important role in driving the national literacy campaign, especially through the School Literacy Movement (GLS) program. Visionary, inspiring and collaborative leadership enables the creation of a shared vision of the importance of literacy as the main foundation of National Education. Through participatory approaches and inclusive policies, Anies managed to motivate teachers, students, and the community to be actively involved in strengthening the culture of literacy in schools. The results of the analysis show that transformational leadership strategies are able to drive a change in literacy culture from a mere program to a part of school habits and identity. However, this study also highlights sustainability challenges, such as limited resources, access gaps between regions, and the diverse digital readiness of teachers and learners. Therefore, although Anies Baswedan's leadership has contributed significantly to improving literacy and the quality of National Education, the continuity of the literacy movement requires cross-leadership commitment, ongoing policy support, and strengthening digital literacy infrastructure so that its impact can reach all levels of Indonesian society equally.

**Author Contributions:** A short paragraph specifying their individual contributions must be provided for research articles with several authors (**mandatory for more than 1 author**). The following statements should be used “Conceptualization: Siti Andriana; Methodology: Siti Andriana.; Software: Siti Andriana.; Validation: Siti Andriana, Hasnah Faizah.; Formal analysis: Siti Andriana.; Investigation: Siti Andriana.; Resources: Siti Andriana, Hasnah Faizah.; Data curation: Siti Andriana.; Writing—original draft preparation: Siti Andriana.; Writing—review and editing: Hasnah Faizah.; Visualization: Hasnah Faizah.; Supervision: Siti Andriana and Hasnah Faizah; Project administration: Siti Andriana.; Funding acquisition: Hasnah Faizah.”

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**Data Availability Statement:** We encourage all authors of articles published in FAITH journals to share their research data. This section provides details regarding where data supporting reported results can be found, including links to publicly archived datasets analyzed or generated during the study. Where no new data were created or data unavailable due to privacy or ethical restrictions, a statement is still required.

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