

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

At first glance, it seems that there is a little distinction between students from urban and rural areas; however, in educational environments, these students experience differ significantly. “Students in rural areas often lack similar access to opportunities as their urban counterparts, such as participation in seminars, competitions, specialized courses, and even academic Olympiads” (Karto, 2019, p. 166). “Urban students benefit from an environment that is both open and highly competitive, which allows them to explore and enhance their abilities more fully” (Aisyah, 2018, p. 18). This contrast highlights the essential role of the learning environment in fostering students’ skills and personal growth.

In generating students’s interest in learning, environment plays a fundamental role. “Learning environment plays a fundamental role in generating students' interest in learning, as it provides the context and support that can drive motivation and engagement” (Agistiawati 2020, p. 515). Furthermore, Agitiawati said that the family, the school, and society are three types of environments that significantly impact a student's learning experience. Each of these environments contributes uniquely to a student’s development. The family environment, as the initial and most personal setting, has a profound influence on a child’s learning process, as parents’ attitudes, behaviors, and values shape foundational aspects of a student's character and approach

to education. Society, meanwhile, provides a space for socialization, where students encounter cultural norms and community expectations that shape their perspectives and influence their academic motivations. Lastly, the school environment serves as a structured, formal setting that plays a vital role in students' academic progress by offering resources such as infrastructure, curriculum, and classroom settings tailored to support their learning.

In rural areas, students know the existence of English just from the school environment. Family environment and society environment do not provide much about the existence of English that happened to students in Jerusu Village of Romang Islands District, Southwest Maluku Regency, in the province of Maluku. Students learn English just in school, especially in classroom, because in Jerusu village their local language is dominant, used in their daily life. So, students in Jerusu village, just get English learning from classroom.

Classroom, in particular, is a critical component of the school environment, that makes students know many things about English. “Globally, classrooms are recognized as spaces where students not only acquire knowledge and skills but also engage in essential socialization processes” (Okeke, 2013, p. 101). Based on Khatimah, 2021 “classroom environment is divided into physical environment and social environment. Physical environment is physical things around classroom, meanwhile social environment related to teacher and classmate”. It is in these spaces that students engage with teachers and peers, developing both intellectually and socially. “Teachers, as key facilitators within the classroom, hold a vital role in cultivating students' motivation to

learn. Besides the teacher's role, physical environment also have a crucial thing in students' learning process" (Khatimah, 2021). A comfortable and supportive classroom environment can make students interested in the learning process.

In light of learning factors, it is evident that in rural settings, cultivating students in learning English requires focused attention on classroom environment which are physical environment, and teacher-student interaction, in this case discussion about the role of English teacher. This study, therefore, seeks to explore the classroom environment—particularly in terms of physical environment, and teacher's role,—on fostering rural students in learning English.

This study is conducted at SMP N 2 Pulau-Pulau Terselatan, this school has been selected as the research site due to its unique positioning within a rural setting. SMP N 2 Pulau-Pulau Terselatan, located in Jerusu Village, within the Romang Islands District, Southwest Maluku Regency, in the province of Maluku. Romang is just a small island and far from urban area. So, it provides an insightful context for exploring the impact of classroom environments on rural students in learning English.

Sighting of Romang island (Jerusu is a village in romang island)



Source: facebook @Kepulauan Romang

1.2 Research Problems

1. What are the physical environment in classroom among rural students on English learning?
2. What are English teachers' role of social environment in classroom among rural students on English Learning?

1.3 Aims of Study

1. To find out physical environment in classroom among rural students on English learning,
2. To find out English teachers' role in classroom among rural students on English Learning.

1.4 Significance of Study

This research seeks to make a meaningful and original contribution to the field of rural education by addressing unique challenges and opportunities inherent in village learning environments. Specifically, it examines critical role that classroom settings—designed and facilitated by teachers in rural areas—play in fostering students' engagement and motivation to learn English. By focusing on how classroom environments can either support or hinder language learning, this study highlights how tailored educational approaches can bridge the resource and opportunity gaps often faced by rural learners. Furthermore, this study offers a range of practical implications and potential applications for educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers, as detailed below:

1.4.1 Implication

This research aligns with theoretical framework proposed by Khatimah, (2021) defined classroom in to physical environment and social environment, in physical environment classified by Puteh et al (2015), and social environment by Okeke (2013), and Archana & Usha Rani (2017). These challenges encompass a range of critical elements, including the availability and quality of learning materials, the expertise and methodologies employed by teachers, and the physical learning environment. This study reinforces the understanding that these external variables are instrumental in shaping students' ability to engage with and effectively learning English, thus underscoring the need for targeted improvements in these areas to support language learning among rural learners.

1.4.2 Application

The findings of this study hold potential contributions across several key stakeholders:

1. **English Teachers:** For English teachers, particularly those working in rural assignments, this study serves as an evaluative tool to reflect on and improve classroom dynamics. The findings can guide teachers in creating a more engaging and supportive learning environment that addresses the needs of rural students, helping to foster a positive attitude towards English language learning and overcoming barriers that may inhibit student engagement.
2. **Rural Schools:** This study is also intended to offer actionable recommendations to rural schools, encouraging administrators to prioritize and invest in student learning facilities. By improving classroom settings, providing access to necessary materials, and creating spaces conducive to language learning, rural schools can better support their students' educational journeys, potentially increasing overall academic achievement and interest in learning English.