



Current Research in Education: Conference Series Journal

Journal homepage: <https://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/crecs>



Increasing Reading Interest and Reading Literacy Skill Through the GEMALISTA School Literacy Movement in Elementary Schools

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to describe the reading literacy movement, known as the Gemalista Program, at Ciulu 2 State Elementary School (SDN 2 Ciulu) for increasing students' reading interest and literacy skills. Employing an Action Research model with a qualitative approach, data collection utilized triangulation techniques (interviews, observations, and documents) alongside survey data for samples. The development of a literacy culture was structured in three stages: (1) planning (goal, program, strategy, and infrastructure formulation), (2) implementation (through processes of habituation, development, and teaching), and (3) evaluation (weekly, monthly, and annual). Based on the results of the Project Management Office (PMO) 1 school level which followed four stages: reflection, root of the problem, fix, and solution it was evident that students' reading interest and literacy skills required improvement. The proposed solution involves implementing a habituation program (a 15-minute reading activity before or after learning), a development program (via non-academic activities, extracurriculars, and library visits), and a learning program that incorporates literacy strategies with differentiated learning techniques in shared, guided, and independent reading. The research concludes that the implications of developing the Gemalista Program successfully increase the reading interest and reading literacy skills of students at SDN 2 Ciulu.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Submitted/Received 02 Nov 2023

First Revised 15 Jan 2024

Accepted 01 Mar 2024

First Available online 01 May 2024

Publication Date 01 Aug 2024

Keyword:

Interest in reading,
Reading literacy,
School literacy movement.

1. INTRODUCTION

Based on (OECD, 2019), Indonesia's position in 2018 for reading literacy was ranked 71st out of 77 countries. Culturally, Indonesian society does not have a high reading culture (Amin et al., 2024). Reading is the main thing that underlies the next basic abilities. This basic literacy must of course be trained from elementary school age because it directs a person to the ability to understand messages expressed in various forms of text (Surur et al., 2024). Implementation of reading practice activities to train basic literacy in Indonesia is carried out at the elementary school level in grades 1 and 2. At the next level students are encouraged to have a desire/interest in reading. However, in reality, interest in reading in Indonesia is very low.

The PISA results for the reading literacy aspect decreased from 2012, 2015 to 2018. It can be seen that reading literacy in Indonesia is very low, unlike developed countries. In several developed countries, to increase reading literacy, the number of books required for high school students to read is 13 countries, in the United States the number of books that must be read is 32 books, in the Netherlands 30 books, in France 30 books, in Japan 22 books, in Switzerland 15 books, in Canada 13 books, Russia 12 books, Brunei 7 books, Singapore 6 books, Thailand 5 books, and Indonesia 0 books (Joko, 2019). These data show that Indonesia's literacy level is still far from expected. Literacy is still not a habit and culture of Indonesian society. So, no matter how small, efforts to introduce literacy are very necessary to cultivate literacy in this beloved homeland. Cultivating literacy in schools is not as easy as turning the palm of your hand and will be full of challenges. This challenge can be seen from how difficult it is to implement and get used to literacy activities so that they become a desire or high interest.

The low interest in reading of elementary school age students affects their reading ability and intellectual abilities (Andajani et al., 2024). Students are more likely to be interested in using social media and playing with gadgets than reading books (Sari et al., 2023). Based on the results of interviews with parents, their children rarely read books unless given an assignment by their teacher. Parents are worried about this situation because it will result in their child's reading ability being low. It was also found that several students who took the national assessment in 2021 still had difficulty reading (Sinclair, 2020). To succeed in school, all children must be able to use prior domain knowledge to read and write about complex and challenging texts (Cabell et al., 2025).

Due to a lack of interest and literacy, student learning outcomes decrease (Hidayah et al., 2025). This problem is a challenge for the government, with the National Literacy Movement Program seen as an effort to increase the literacy of Indonesian society. Literacy ability must be a basic provision for life skills that Indonesian people must have in the 21st century in facing global competition and an international perspective (Aini et al., 2023). The ability to collaborate, think critically, be creative and communicate must be possessed by Indonesian people today. Through Minister of Education and Culture Regulation no. 23 of 2015 the government socialized the GLN Program (National Literacy Movement) which involved all aspects of central government, regional government and community policy makers to increase the sustainability of the GLN program as a supporter of families, schools and communities who play an active role in fostering a culture of literacy (Wijaya et al., 2022). The demand for literacy skills and interest, especially for students in schools and learning that does not yet support literacy competency, must be developed (Prasetyo et al., 2023).

Relevant research conducted by Sumiati et al. (2022), explains the impact of the school literacy movement program on reading interest in grade 3 and grade 5 elementary school students. Research on elementary school students took 15 minutes to read a story book, read aloud and read silently and students were asked to retell it orally by the teacher in front of the class. When the program was running, it was identified that students really enjoyed taking part in literacy activities and students' interest in reading increased (Sumiati et al., 2022).

Based on the results Project Manajemen Office (PMO) At 1 school level, the school implementing the driving school program identified a problem at SDN 2 Ciulu, Banjarsari District, Ciamis Regency, namely that students' interest in reading was very low and based on the education report card at SDN 2 Ciulu, literacy ability had decreased from the previous year by 11.01%. There is a library that does not function well and books that do not attract interest in reading. The class reading corner, class display board and wall magazine are not interesting so they are boring. Due to this problem, some students in each class are still unable to read and understand the text correctly. This is the focus of attention on reading skills which are very important for elementary school students. Apart from that, to improve students' literacy skills, there is not only a 15 minute habituation program before/after learning and a development program by scheduling library visits as well as a learning program by implementing literacy strategies in learning. All of these activities are planned in the GEMALISTA SDN 2 Ciulu Program.

2. METHODS

This research will use the Action Research model. Action Research is a research model that has the aim of; (1) improve a person's professional judgment, (2) provide insight into effective ways to achieve the expected educational results, (3) focus on solving problems in the classroom or school, (4) improve the quality of learning practices, (5) help make school decisions.

School action research is a collaborative effort in which school administrators and staff select the variables or strategies they want to research together. In many cases, school action research is spearheaded by a team, this team consists of the principal, teachers, other staff, parents, community members and even students. School action research examines school data to determine gaps in student performance or behavioral data where improvements are made. A typical action plan in a school action research project is to implement a school program to address the problem. Data collection is ongoing, and the program is monitored and refined along the way until the desired results are achieved (Crow et al., 2019).

School action research emphasizes the importance of collaboration and reflective practice in improving educational quality. Through active involvement of all stakeholders principals, teachers, staff, parents, and students—this approach ensures that the problems identified are contextually relevant and that the solutions developed are practical and sustainable. This research uses a qualitative approach with triangulation data collection techniques, namely interviews, observations and documents. This research also uses survey data collection techniques for samples. The following are details of the instruments that will be used at the school action research stage. Method of collecting data can be seen in **Table 1**.

Table 3.1 Method of collecting data.

Methods	Building Issue	Develop a program	Implementa program	Gather Datato Measure program"s Effectiveness	Reflect andMake Modifications Based on Results
Interviews					
Observations					
Document analysis					
Questionnaires					

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The process of developing a literacy culture is carried out through three stages, namely: (1) literacy development planning, realized in the form of goal formulation, program formulation, strategy formulation, and management of facilities and infrastructure. (2) implementation of a literacy culture development program. The implementation of growing a literacy culture consists of a process of habituation, development and teaching. (3) evaluations are carried out in the form of weekly, monthly and annual evaluations.

3.1. Literacy Development Planning Stages

At the literacy development planning stage, the school principal forms a development team for School Literacy Movement activities. Then, together with the Shool Literacy Movement team, we organized the GEMALISTA Program at SDN 2 Ciulu. GEMALISTA is the Reading, Writing, Storytelling Movement. GEMALISTA activities aim to train students' 4 language skills, namely reading, writing, listening and speaking skills so that it is hoped that students' literacy skills will increase. GEMALISTA Program Strategy: After students read the book, activities are carried out:

1. Students read different books after exchanging reading books with their classmates (reading different books again).
2. Students write a summary of the reading on their card/reading agenda/reading journal (writing activity).
3. Students retell the contents of the book they read to their classmates (storytelling/talking activities, other students listen/listen).

At the planning stage of literacy development, after the program and strategy have been created, the next step is the management of facilities/infrastructure including:

3.1.1. Reading Corner

The reading corner is a school to increase students' interest in reading. Reading corners are located in every corner of the classroom with a collection of story books and subject support books. The reading corner is arranged in such a way as to be interesting by involving the class community. The results of interviews with teachers and students show that the benefits of a class Reading Corner include:

1. The reading corner makes it easier for students to access storybooks or supporting books when the GEMALISTA Program is implemented.
2. The Reading Corner brings students closer to books. It is hoped that with the reading corner students will love opening more so that it can increase students' interest in reading
3. Reading corners can be used as a means to support learning activities

4. Having an organized reading corner makes the class more interesting and has a text-rich classroom environment.

Reading Corner can be seen in **Figure 1**.



Figure 1. Reading corner.

3.1.2. Work Display Board

Work display boards are provided in each class to display students' work related to literacy and numeracy work from the GEMALISTA Program. This is to appreciate students' work so that they are more motivated to continue working. A makes the classroom environment text-rich and can be used as a learning resource to increase students' reading interest and literacy skills. To make the classroom attractive and make students feel at home in class, one way is to put up displays. Displays can take the form of pictures, graphs, student work that contain educational messages. A classroom without displays looks empty and creates a scary and sad atmosphere.

In addition to serving as a medium for appreciation and motivation, display boards also function as tools for developing students' social and emotional skills. When students see their work and that of their peers exhibited, they learn to value effort, respect others' creativity, and develop a sense of belonging within the classroom community. The process of preparing and arranging displays can also foster collaboration, as students work together to decide which pieces to showcase and how to present them attractively. This involvement helps build responsibility, teamwork, and aesthetic awareness. Thus, display boards not only beautify the classroom but also play an important role in shaping students' character, fostering positive attitudes toward learning, and creating a supportive, engaging educational environment.

The benefits of display boards include making the class more interesting, children can easily get ideas from what is displayed, the work displayed is a good example for other students to follow and imitate, the display motivates the students whose work is displayed and also motivates other children to do the same thing. What must be displayed is children's writing such as stories, essays, poetry, reports, books made by children, models, graphs, drawings and crafts or arts. Children's work that shows an element of creativity and is interesting to look at and read should be displayed. Sometimes -Sometimes the work of

slow learners needs to be displayed to motivate them. Work Display Board can be seen in **Figure 2**.



Figure 2. Work display board.

3.1.3. Wall Magazine (Mading)

Mading or wall magazine is a form of communication media that is attached to the wall. Apart from containing important information about the school, the wall magazine is used as a means to display students' work to increase students' creativity and foster reading habits. With the presence of wall media, it is hoped that not only will the classroom environment be text-rich but the school environment will also be text-rich so that students' reading interest and literacy skills will increase. Wall Magazine (Mading) can be seen in **figure 3**.



Figure 3. Wall magazine.

3.2. Implementation of the GEMALISTA Program

Based on the results of PMO 1 at school level, it was agreed that the solution to overcome the root of the problem of students' low interest in reading so that reading literacy skills need to be improved is to carry out activities:

3.2.1. Habituation

1. 15 minute reading activity

The 15-minute reading habituation activity at SDN 2 Ciulu aims to cultivate students' reading interest and develop a consistent reading culture within the school environment. This activity is carried out daily, either before or after learning sessions, depending on the classroom schedule and conditions. During this time, students are encouraged to read various types of reading materials such as storybooks, fairy tales,

educational texts, or magazines that match their reading levels and interests. Teachers play an active role in guiding, supervising, and motivating students so that the activity runs effectively and meaningfully. Through this routine, students are expected to improve their reading comprehension, expand their vocabulary, and foster a lifelong love of reading as part of their daily learning habits.

This 15 minute reading habituation activity is carried out every day either before/after learning. Flexible implementation times are adjusted to suit class conditions by each class teacher. The description of the 15 minute reading activity carried out at SDN 2 Ciulu for students can be seen in table 1.

Table 1. Description of habituation activities 15 minutes reading.

No	Activity	Time
1.	Reading books are distributed to students choose reading material in the class reading corner	1 minute
2.	Students read reading books	5 minute
3.	GEMALISTA's chosen activities: Reading, Writing, Storytelling Movement. 1. Students read different books after exchanging reading books with their classmates (reading different books again) 2. Students write a summary of the reading on their card/reading agenda/reading journal (writing activity) 3. Students retell the contents of the book they read to their classmates (storytelling/talking activities, other students listen).	9 minute

3.2.2. Development

Developing literacy skills through non-academic activities, namely extracurricular activities and mandatory visits to the library. During the development of literacy activities at SDN 2 Ciulu, the Reading Literacy Movement was carried out with all students and school residents participating in various literacy techniques which were carried out every. The Development step can be seen in figure 4.



Figure 4. Development.

3.2.3. Learning

Other efforts that continue to be carried out to increase students' interest in reading and literacy skills at SDN 2 Ciulu are also carried out through the learning process. This activity is

an extracurricular/learning activity using literacy strategies. These include implementing differentiated learning by applying shared reading techniques using bigbook media, guided reading using Leveled Reading Book (B3) media and independent reading using storybook media. All types of learning can be seen in figure 5.



(Reading Together with Bigbook Media)



(Reading Independent Media Storybooks)



(Guided reading Media B3)

Figure 5. Differentiated learning.

3.3. Evaluations are carried out in the form of weekly, monthly, and annual evaluations.

In its implementation, the GEMALISTA program requires evaluation in order to measure the level of program achievement. The evaluation is carried out in the form of a weekly evaluation which is carried out every Saturday in learning reflection activities in the community as well as evaluating the Gemalista program and discussing follow-up plans. Evaluation of the Gemalista Program is also carried out every month after carrying out routine monthly service meetings to find out the progress of the achievements of students and each class. Each student is selected by the student who reads the most and understands the content of the reading to become the Class Reading Ambassador. And at the end of the Gemalista Program academic year by providing rewards for the best classes in implementing GLS in class and being able to create text-rich classes.

4. CONCLUSION

In its implementation, the GEMALISTA program requires evaluation in order to measure the level of program achievement. The evaluation is carried out in the form of a weekly evaluation which is carried out every Saturday in learning reflection activities in the community as well as evaluating the Gemalista program and discussing follow-up plans. Evaluation of the Gemalista Program is also carried out every month after carrying out routine monthly service meetings to find out the progress of the achievements of students and each class. Each student is selected by the student who reads the most and understands the content of the reading to become the Class Reading Ambassador. And at the end of the

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