

Exploring the Use of the Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) Method to Support Comprehension of Culture-Based Non-Fiction Texts Among Inclusive Students in Primary Schools: A Case Study

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Abstract. Low literacy levels remain a significant challenge in primary education in Indonesia, particularly among students with mild Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). This study explores the experiences of such students in applying the Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) method in third-grade primary school classrooms and describes the challenges and adjustments that occurred during the process. This qualitative case study involved three students with mild ADHD and one teacher, with data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Thematic analysis identified six main themes: classroom environment, adaptation of culturally based reading materials, implementation strategies of the SSR method, development of reading comprehension, challenges in maintaining focus, and the growth of self-confidence. Findings indicate that the SSR method encouraged student engagement and improved comprehension of non-fiction texts, particularly when supported by relevant materials and a conducive atmosphere. Moreover, integrating local cultural content increased students' motivation and facilitated meaningful connections to their daily lives. The results highlight the importance of adaptive and contextualized literacy approaches in inclusive education. Overall, the study suggests that the SSR method, when modified to suit individual needs, can serve not only as a literacy strategy but also as a tool for building self-efficacy and fostering active participation among students with special needs.

Keywords: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD); Culture; Comprehension; Literacy; Sustained Silent Reading (SSR).

1. Introduction

The approach to improving students' literacy skills has developed rapidly in recent years. Traditional methods, such as reading aloud individually, have been complemented by multimodal strategies, including watching videos related to the topics and discussing them in groups, as well as multisensory approaches such as reading while pointing to letters. These strategies can be adapted to meet the needs of 21st-century learners (Dian et al., 2022). For example, developed countries such as Finland emphasize pedagogical principles that foster deep understanding and inclusive literacy programs that accommodate diverse learning needs (Asmara & Raflesia, 2023). In contrast, the level of reading literacy in Indonesia remains relatively low compared to other countries, as reflected in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) scores. In 2018, Indonesia's reading score was 371, which declined to 359 in 2022—far below the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average of 500 (Sari & Setiawan, 2023). This decline represents a concerning learning loss, particularly at the primary school level, which serves as the foundation for literacy development (Ayu et al., 2025).

The openness of information due to technological advances and the widespread use of social media has also influenced literacy development. Primary school students can instantly access vast amounts of digital content. However, the rapid flow of information tends to reduce students' ability to sustain attention and limits opportunities for in-depth analysis. Consequently, many students struggle with critical and reflective thinking, contributing to a further decline in literacy levels (Aryfien et al., 2025).

Reading comprehension extends beyond understanding the literal content of a text. It involves assessing the accuracy of information, distinguishing facts from opinions, and making informed decisions based on complex texts. UNESCO (2023) emphasizes that strong reading literacy forms the foundation for lifelong learning and active participation in a changing global society (Melia, 2023). However, reading comprehension gaps remain a major challenge, especially in developing countries. Students from low socio-economic backgrounds, remote areas, or those with special needs are often left behind due to limited access to quality resources and non-inclusive methods. Consequently, many countries have initiated curriculum reforms, teacher training, and the development of literacy approaches relevant to the digital era (El-Hamamsy et al., 2024).

1.1. Problem Statement

Low literacy remains a major challenge among inclusive students, particularly those diagnosed with mild ADHD. Many students in lower grades are still unable to read fluently or comprehend texts effectively. One of the contributing factors is the tendency to apply the same instructional approach to both inclusive and non-inclusive students without considering their individual needs. Such uniform strategies overlook the unique characteristics of students with ADHD, who require more adaptive and meaningful learning methods, media, and support. In addition, limited access to engaging and appropriate reading materials, combined with teaching strategies that do not align with the characteristics of ADHD, negatively affects the learning process. As a result, students often experience difficulties in comprehension, which leads to reduced participation in classroom activities. They tend to remain passive, less engaged, and perceive learning as less meaningful, both personally and academically.

If these challenges persist without appropriate intervention, a significant gap will emerge between the reading abilities of inclusive and non-inclusive students. This gap can impact not only academic performance but also social development. Therefore, concrete efforts are required to strengthen the literacy skills of students with ADHD. One promising approach is the implementation of the Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) method, which provides opportunities for students to read independently and silently for a set period of time. To enhance its effectiveness, the SSR method can be combined with culture-based non-fiction texts. Texts that reflect students' cultural backgrounds are more relatable and engaging, facilitating comprehension and enriching the meaning-making process. The connection between reading content and cultural context can help students with ADHD achieve a deeper understanding of the text.

1.2. Related Research

Several previous studies have examined the use of the SSR method to improve students' reading skills. For instance, Munawaroh (2020) found that the use of story texts in SSR activities enhanced students' concentration and comprehension. Similarly, Lukman et al. (2023) reported that SSR contributed to better reading comprehension, with students becoming more active participants in classroom learning. In another study, Amalia et al. (2023) showed that the application of SSR using fiction books significantly increased students' interest in reading and improved their performance scores. These findings indicate that SSR has generally been applied to non-inclusive students and has often focused on fiction-based texts to foster reading interest and engagement. The novelty of the present study lies in its focus on inclusive students, particularly those with mild ADHD, and its use of culture-based non-fiction texts. This approach explores not only the effectiveness of SSR in improving reading comprehension but also its potential to make literacy learning more meaningful and relevant for students with special needs.

1.3. Research Objectives

This study aims to examine the effectiveness of the Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) method in improving the reading comprehension of inclusive students, particularly those with mild ADHD, when engaging with culture-based non-fiction texts. In addition, the study seeks to describe the process of implementing SSR in the classroom and to identify the obstacles and challenges that arise during its application, such as difficulties in maintaining focus and sustaining silent reading.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Sustained Silent Reading Method

SSR is a method in which students read independently and silently for 15–20 minutes. During this time, they are free to choose reading materials, such as non-fiction books, and are expected to read without interruption. The main goal is to encourage continuous reading development (Gardiner, 2005). SSR is considered one of the simplest approaches to indirectly enhance students' comprehension skills and foster self-confidence when engaging with reading tasks (Chua, 2008). In practice, students are asked to read attentively without speaking to teachers or peers. The method aims to expand vocabulary, strengthen comprehension, and cultivate positive reading habits in a calm, pressure-free environment (Wulandari et al., 2022). By allowing students to select their own texts and experience a supportive learning atmosphere, SSR promotes motivation and builds confidence in handling reading tasks. According to Cheriebelle and Markus (2023), SSR not only provides opportunities for independent reading but also develops students' ability to decode familiar words, thereby increasing their overall interest in reading.

SSR is not merely a strategy to establish reading habits but also has the potential to promote deep learning. Deep learning involves meaningful engagement characterized by critical processing, personal connection, and reflective thinking (Entwistle & Ramsden, 2015). In this study, the use of culture-based non-fiction texts in SSR was found to strengthen these dimensions. Furthermore, the success of SSR for students with ADHD is closely linked to mindfulness—defined as being fully aware of the activity being performed intentionally and without judgment (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). SSR encourages students to: (1) read silently without distractions, (2) focus their attention solely on the text, and (3) remain aware of their thoughts and comprehension during the reading process.

2.2.1. Steps for Implementing the Sustained Silent Reading Method

The SSR method allows students to read silently and without distractions, thereby facilitating concentration and comprehension. Nurbaiti (2023) outlines several steps in implementing SSR. First, the teacher orients students by explaining the importance of maintaining calm during silent reading and emphasizing that reading does not require sound so as not to disturb the classroom atmosphere. This introduction helps students focus more effectively on understanding the content. Next, students are guided to read culture-based non-fiction texts that reflect local values, which deepens their comprehension and strengthens the relevance of the material. The teacher also encourages students to apply effective reading strategies, such as identifying keywords or taking brief notes, to support their engagement. Finally, students are given approximately 15 minutes to complete the reading task, after which they are invited to participate in discussions to share their understanding. These follow-up activities not only reinforce comprehension but also provide opportunities for collaborative learning in an inclusive classroom setting.

2.2.2. Pros and Cons of the Sustained Silent Reading Method

The SSR method offers several advantages in literacy development. It helps students train their ability to concentrate on a single activity for a set period of time, thereby improving their comprehension skills. Independent reading also allows students to encounter new vocabulary in meaningful contexts, which expands their lexical knowledge and fosters greater interest in reading (Silfia & Jambi, 2024). In addition, the freedom to choose texts contributes to the development of intrinsic motivation and creates a sense of autonomy in the learning process. Despite these benefits, SSR also presents certain limitations. The quality and appropriateness of reading materials may vary, which can influence its effectiveness. Moreover, the method relies heavily on students' intrinsic motivation, meaning that less motivated learners—particularly inclusive students with ADHD—may not fully benefit from the activity. Another drawback is that reading is conducted individually and silently, offering limited opportunities for discussion and collaborative interaction that could otherwise deepen comprehension (Prasetyo, 2023).

2.2. Ability to Understand Culture-Based Non-Fiction Texts

The ability to comprehend non-fiction texts refers to the skill of recognizing logical relationships and connecting newly acquired information with prior knowledge. Comprehension also involves grasping the intended meaning of a text and applying the knowledge to solve related problems. Within Bloom's taxonomy (1956; revised 2001), comprehension is placed at the second cognitive level, above knowledge. This positioning indicates that comprehension requires not only memorization but also the ability to explain, interpret, and apply information (Day et al., 2024). Sudjana further classifies comprehension into three categories: translation, which refers to understanding meaning in its literal sense; interpretation, which involves linking previous information with new events and distinguishing important from less important details; and extrapolation, which requires making predictions or drawing conclusions based on prior understanding.

Non-fiction texts are based on factual information and are typically presented in expository, descriptive, or argumentative forms. They recount real-life events and are written in a denotative style that avoids ambiguity (Ramadhan & Indihadi, 2020; Poni Ernis & Retti, 2023). Such texts provide students with opportunities to engage critically with authentic content and apply knowledge in practical contexts. Integrating local culture into non-fiction texts strengthens students' critical thinking, speaking, and writing skills while also fostering connections to their cultural heritage (Romrome & Ena, 2022). Elements such as traditions, customary laws, and the physical environment form part of a community's cultural identity and can enrich the learning process. Local cultural values represent deeply rooted traditions and principles that must be preserved and transmitted to future generations to ensure continuity (Al Pansori et al., 2025). By engaging with culture-based texts, students not only enhance their comprehension but also learn to apply knowledge meaningfully in real-life contexts beyond the classroom.

2.3. Inclusive Education

Inclusive education, as defined in Article 1 of the Regulation of the Minister of National Education No. 70 of 2009, refers to an educational system that enables all learners—including those with disabilities as well as those with exceptional intelligence and talents—to study in the same environment alongside their peers. Letonja (2024) describes inclusive education as the full integration of students with mild to severe disabilities and learning challenges into mainstream classrooms. This perspective highlights the importance of general education settings as meaningful environments for diverse learners. In practice, inclusive education requires individualized support through collaboration between classroom teachers, special educators, and access to appropriate learning resources. Such an approach ensures that students are not only physically present but also actively engaged in the learning process. Inclusive classrooms therefore emphasize equal opportunities, differentiated instruction, and the recognition of individual learning needs to foster both academic and social development.

2.4. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Students with ADHD often experience difficulties in maintaining attention, controlling impulses, and regulating activity levels in the classroom. These symptoms may cause them to appear unfocused, restless, or overactive compared to their peers (Mansyur et al., 2024). Such challenges affect their ability to complete tasks, follow instructions, and interact effectively with teachers and classmates. ADHD is generally characterized by three core symptoms: inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity (Cahya et al., 2024). Inattention manifests in difficulty sustaining focus, forgetting to bring necessary materials, or being easily distracted. Hyperactivity includes behaviors such as being unable to sit still, moving excessively, or talking excessively (Anenda et al., 2024). Impulsivity, meanwhile, leads students to act without considering consequences, such as interrupting others or responding hastily. These behaviors often hinder their ability to follow classroom structures and routines, which in turn impacts their academic performance. Research shows that students with ADHD may require more time to complete tasks, struggle with organizing assignments, and find it challenging to manage homework materials (Karlenata & Mutiara, 2024). According to the American Psychiatric Association, children with ADHD are often described as having difficulty maintaining consistent engagement in tasks,

showing an inability to concentrate for extended periods, and struggling to process lessons despite being capable of reading and writing (Anenda et al., 2024).

3. Methods

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of the learning experiences of students in a real classroom context. The focus was on exploring how inclusive students with mild ADHD comprehend culture-based non-fiction texts, evaluating the effectiveness of the SSR method, and identifying the challenges encountered during its implementation (Collins et al., 2021). The case study approach was considered appropriate because it enables a detailed investigation of complex educational phenomena within their natural setting, allowing the researcher to capture both instructional practices and students' lived experiences.

3.2. Participants

The participants of this study consisted of one classroom teacher and three third-grade primary school students diagnosed with mild ADHD. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and document analysis. The teacher, who served as a key informant, had more than five years of teaching experience and was directly involved in supporting students with ADHD. This participant was selected because of her active engagement in classroom activities and her comprehensive understanding of the characteristics and learning needs of students with ADHD. The three student participants, aged between 8 and 10 years, demonstrated adequate verbal communication skills, which enabled them to participate effectively in interviews. Their inclusion provided valuable insights into how children with mild ADHD experienced the implementation of the SSR method in an inclusive classroom setting.

3.3. Data Collection

This study employed three main instruments: observation sheets, semi-structured interview guides, and documentation formats. Data collection was conducted in three stages—before, during, and after the implementation of the SSR method in a third-grade classroom with students diagnosed with mild ADHD. Observations focused on student behavior during SSR activities, including levels of engagement, concentration, and responses to the texts. Notes were recorded using observation sheets designed around indicators of reading engagement. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the classroom teacher as the primary informant to explore her perspectives on the implementation of SSR, student responses, and the challenges encountered. All interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and prepared for analysis. Visual documentation, in the form of photographs taken during SSR activities, was also collected to reinforce observation and interview data. Photographs were captured at an appropriate distance to maintain ethical standards. To ensure validity, data triangulation was applied by comparing results from different sources and methods. Observation findings were cross-checked with interview data, while visual documentation was used to confirm consistency across all sources. This process strengthened the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings.

3.4. Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study was conducted qualitatively through a thematic approach based on a layered coding process to obtain meaning from raw data derived from classroom observations, in-depth interviews, visual documentation, and reading test results. The analysis process took place in several interrelated stages, namely: data reduction, open coding, axial coding, grouping codes into thematic categories, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

The initial stage began with data reduction, which involved filtering important information from interview transcripts, observation notes, and visual documents to focus attention on issues relevant to the research questions. The researchers reread all data to understand the context and content thoroughly before entering the coding stage. Next, open coding was conducted, in which meaningful pieces of data were labeled or coded according to the meaning that

emerged inductively from the text. For example, students' statements about discomfort when reading in a noisy classroom were coded as "noisy classroom environment," while teachers' statements about text adaptation strategies were coded as "simplification of reading" or "use of visual illustrations."

These initial codes were then analyzed further through axial coding, which is the process of grouping codes into categories based on related meanings, contexts, and similar dimensions of experience. These categories reflect general patterns or themes that emerged from the data. For example, codes such as "individual reading in a quiet atmosphere" and "noisy classroom environment" were consolidated into the category Classroom Atmosphere and Environment. Codes such as "text simplification," "visual illustrations," and "local cultural content" were combined into the category Cultural Adaptation of Reading Materials. Codes such as "time determination," "explanation of SSR steps," and "monitoring of students with ADHD" were included in the category SSR Method Implementation. Similarly, codes such as "inability to read fluently" and "repeating parts of the text" were grouped under Reading Comprehension Development; codes such as "easily distracted" and "restless when reading" were classified into Challenges and Obstacles; and codes such as "requires intensive supervision" and "hesitation in asking or answering questions" were placed in Participation and Engagement of Students with ADHD.

All coding processes were conducted manually using Microsoft Excel to facilitate systematic tracking of codes and categories. To enhance reliability and accuracy, two strategies were employed. First, triangulation of techniques and sources was carried out by comparing data from observations, interviews, and documentation, and confirming information from multiple sources such as teachers, students, and visual artifacts. Second, member checking was conducted by returning interview transcripts to participants for confirmation, ensuring that the meanings captured by the researchers aligned with those intended by the informants.

Through these steps, the analysis not only described what happened in the classroom but also built a deeper understanding of how students with ADHD experienced the SSR method, as well as the factors that influenced its success or challenges in an inclusive learning context.

4. Findings

The findings of this study are based on in-depth interviews with classroom teachers and students, direct observations in the classroom, and reading comprehension test results. Through thematic analysis, the researcher identified six main themes that represent the participants' experiences during the implementation of the SSR method for students with ADHD.

4.1. Adaptation of Culture-Based Reading Materials

The adaptation of culture-based reading materials emerged as a crucial strategy in supporting the implementation of the Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) method for students with ADHD. Teachers carefully adjusted reading texts by simplifying sentence structures, using familiar vocabulary, and incorporating visual supports such as pictures and illustrations. This approach reduced cognitive overload and made the texts more accessible for students who often struggle with maintaining attention and decoding complex information. The teacher explained *"We select reading materials and questions that are shorter with language they can easily understand, and include illustrated materials to keep them interested."*

The integration of local cultural elements, such as Betawi folktales and stories about *Ondel-ondel*, further increased students' emotional engagement. A 9-year-old student commented, *"The reading text is fun, it's about Ondel-ondel."* Such responses show that connecting reading materials with students' lived experiences generates familiarity and intrinsic motivation. Observation data also confirmed that students were more focused and calm when reading texts that reflected their cultural environment. For example, during a session with Betawi-themed texts, students not only demonstrated greater enthusiasm in reading but also answered comprehension questions more confidently compared to sessions using generic non-fiction passages.

This finding highlights the pedagogical value of *culturally responsive teaching*, which posits that integrating learners' cultural backgrounds into instructional practices strengthens motivation, identity, and comprehension. Moreover, the adaptation of texts provided a sense of ownership, as students recognized their cultural heritage within the material. Teachers noted that such texts sparked discussions that extended beyond the classroom, enabling students to connect their reading with real-life community practices. Thus, culture-based adaptation did not merely simplify the reading process but also transformed it into a meaningful experience that combined literacy development with identity formation.

4.2. Implementation of the SSR Method

The implementation of the Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) method was carefully adjusted to meet the needs of students with mild ADHD, particularly their difficulty in sustaining attention for extended periods. Silent reading sessions were limited to approximately 10 minutes, a duration considered manageable and realistic for these learners. Active teacher supervision was a central feature, ensuring that students stayed on task and received direct support whenever their attention began to drift. As one teacher stated, *"Before starting, I give instructions to read silently and not speak. Then, I call on ADHD students to read and answer questions to keep them focused."*

Observation data revealed that such structured supervision was effective in maintaining engagement. For example, when students were occasionally asked to reread sentences aloud or respond to short questions, they appeared more alert and less distracted. Teachers also employed brief ice-breaking activities, such as clapping games or stretches, to facilitate smoother transitions between reading and comprehension tasks. These micro-adjustments helped minimize frustration and sustained students' motivation throughout the activity. Another important aspect of implementation was the flexibility of teachers in responding to student needs. Some students required prompts to refocus, while others benefited from visual cues like pointing to specific sentences. Teachers noted that the combination of explicit instructions, positive reinforcement, and short yet intensive reading practice improved not only attention but also students' willingness to persevere.

Overall, the implementation of SSR in this context demonstrated the importance of adaptive strategies that balance structure with responsiveness. By combining concise reading sessions with continuous teacher support, the method provided a learning routine that accommodated the unique challenges of ADHD students while gradually building their confidence and independence in reading.

4.3. Quiet Environment to Improved Focus

A quiet and well-structured environment played a central role in the effectiveness of SSR for students with ADHD. Classroom observations consistently showed that students were more comfortable and focused when the environment was free from noise and interruptions. Several students expressed their preferences explicitly, saying: *"I feel more comfortable alone when it's quiet so I can understand,"* and *"I feel calmer and more focused when I read silently"* *"When it's not noisy around me, I can focus more on what I'm reading"*. These statements illustrate that silence provided a sense of security and reduced distractions that otherwise triggered impulsive behaviors.

Despite efforts to maintain a quiet classroom, occasional disruptions were noted, such as noise from neighboring classes or hallway activities. Teachers responded by adjusting seating arrangements, moving closer to students, and giving gentle reminders to redirect their focus. This proactive management minimized the impact of external distractions and helped students return to their tasks more effectively. The findings suggest that a conducive physical setting is not just a supporting factor but an essential condition for ADHD students to thrive in reading activities. The environment provided a low-pressure context in which students could engage with the text without competing stimuli. Teachers emphasized that even small changes—such as closing classroom doors, minimizing movement in the room, and using visual cues—significantly improved concentration levels.

In inclusive classrooms, ensuring a quiet and predictable environment is part of respecting diverse learning needs. For ADHD students, silence and order foster not only better academic performance but also emotional comfort. By reducing unnecessary distractions, SSR sessions became moments where students could practice self-regulation and experience success in independent reading, which in turn enhanced their confidence and motivation to participate in future literacy activities.

4.4. Development of Reading Comprehension Skills

The findings indicate a gradual improvement in the reading comprehension skills of students with ADHD through the sustained use of the SSR method. Initially, students were only able to recall simple details such as names of characters or objects mentioned in the text. For example, one student stated, *"Ondel-ondel is used in events,"* without being able to explain its broader cultural meaning. This reflects that their comprehension was still situated at the literal level, where students mainly focus on explicitly stated information. Teachers confirmed these observations, noting that while students could answer straightforward questions, they struggled to provide coherent explanations of the text as a whole. A teacher remarked, *"They can answer simple questions, but when asked to explain the whole thing, they're still not very smooth."* Such responses demonstrate the difficulty ADHD students face in constructing higher-order meaning, which requires sustained attention and critical reflection.

Observation data also revealed moments of progress. Students began to engage more actively when encouraged to highlight keywords, make short notes, or participate in post-reading discussions. These activities provided scaffolding that helped them move toward interpretive and analytical thinking. Although the improvement was modest, the ability to link pieces of information together marked an important step in developing deeper comprehension skills.

In inclusive education, such incremental progress is significant. For ADHD students, whose attention spans are often fragmented, achieving literal comprehension consistently can serve as a foundation for moving toward inferential and evaluative comprehension. The SSR method, when accompanied by structured support and culturally relevant texts, fosters not only improved reading accuracy but also confidence in processing information. Over time, these experiences can strengthen students' ability to engage with more complex texts, demonstrating that gradual and structured strategies are essential for literacy development in inclusive classrooms.

4.5. Challenges in Implementing the SSR Method

The implementation of the Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) method presented several challenges for students with ADHD, which highlight the complex nature of creating inclusive literacy practices. One of the main difficulties observed was students' limited ability to sustain attention over time. During silent reading, many students became distracted by external stimuli, such as noises from outside the classroom or movements of their peers. Teachers often had to redirect students' focus by calling their names, giving gentle reminders, or physically moving closer to them to maintain engagement.

Another challenge was the slow reading pace exhibited by some students. Because of difficulties in decoding words fluently, these students struggled to complete passages within the allotted time. As a result, frustration occasionally emerged, which required teachers to shorten the reading duration or provide additional verbal encouragement. In one instance, a student expressed visible stress, and the teacher responded by modifying the activity into smaller tasks, demonstrating the need for flexible and responsive instruction. As a teacher remarked, *"ADHD students have a little difficulty maintaining focus, especially when reading silently. One student can read but slowly, so it is difficult for them to read continuously."*

The findings also indicate that continuous verbal reinforcement is critical. Teachers frequently offered prompts such as, "Good, keep reading," or "Try to focus a bit longer." These strategies provided immediate feedback and helped students persist in the task despite their challenges. Without such reinforcement, many students were prone to disengagement. From a pedagogical perspective, these challenges underline the necessity of differentiated instruction

in inclusive classrooms. SSR cannot be applied uniformly; instead, it requires individualized adjustments that address the diverse attention spans, reading speeds, and emotional needs of students with ADHD. By incorporating shorter sessions, supportive media, and responsive teacher interventions, SSR can remain accessible and beneficial despite the inherent obstacles. Such adaptations not only sustain students' participation but also model a flexible approach to literacy instruction that respects individual differences.

4.6. Student Participation and Engagement

Student participation and emotional engagement emerged as central aspects of implementing the SSR method with students with ADHD. While some students demonstrated enthusiasm and eagerness to engage, others expressed hesitation, embarrassment, or fear of making mistakes. These contrasting responses illustrate the diversity of emotional experiences among students with ADHD when faced with silent reading activities. One student said *"I feel very happy and I became active in answering even though I was wrong."* This reflects the student's growing sense of self-confidence and willingness to engage academically despite the possibility of error. In contrast, other students admitted, *"I feel embarrassed and nervous when answering,"* or *"I'm afraid my answer is wrong."* These responses highlight the vulnerability that accompanies participation in literacy tasks, especially for students who may struggle with self-esteem.

Observation data confirmed that teacher responses played a crucial role in shaping participation. When teachers provided praise or reassurance, such as saying, *"It's okay to be wrong as long as you try"* students who were previously hesitant began to take part in discussions. This indicates that supportive feedback not only builds confidence but also encourages risk-taking, a vital component of learning. Additionally, participation was observed to extend beyond verbal responses. Students displayed non-verbal signs of engagement, such as leaning forward during reading or maintaining eye contact when questions were posed. These subtle forms of engagement signal motivation and investment in the activity, even when verbal participation was limited.

From an educational perspective, these findings suggest that SSR can foster both academic and emotional growth when accompanied by a nurturing classroom climate. By creating a safe space for expression, teachers help students with ADHD develop resilience, self-efficacy, and a positive association with reading. Ultimately, engagement becomes not only a measure of academic involvement but also a foundation for inclusive classroom practices.

5. Discussion

5.1. Learning Environment and Focus among Students with ADHD

A well-organized learning environment with minimal distractions is a crucial element in supporting the successful implementation of the SSR method, especially in the context of students with ADHD. Field findings indicate that students show improved focus when the classroom is kept quiet, as expressed in the statement, *"I feel more comfortable alone when it's quiet so I can understand."* This finding reinforces the view (Gardiner, 2005) that SSR requires an environment free from external distractions.

In addition, a quiet learning environment reflects the school's mindfulness-based approach, which has been shown to enhance emotional regulation and attention in students with ADHD (Meppelink et al., 2024). When the learning environment is orderly and accompanied by clear instructions, students with ADHD tend to be better able to manage their attention and impulsivity. This environment also supports the mindfulness approach (Kabat-Zinn, 2003) in learning, which involves being fully aware of the activities being performed. SSR in a quiet learning environment creates space for students to practice focus in a low-pressure setting, as reinforced by (Zylowska et al., 2008), which shows that mindfulness strategies have a positive impact on emotional regulation and attention in children with ADHD.

This approach aligns with the principles of inclusive education outlined in Ministry of Education Regulation No. 70 of 2009, which emphasizes providing learning environments that support the development of all students, including those with disabilities. In this context, creating a quiet reading space is not merely a technical strategy but also a form of respect for individual learning needs.

5.2 Adaptation of Local Culture-Based Texts

One significant aspect of implementing the SSR method in inclusive classrooms is adapting reading materials to the local cultural context and student characteristics. Teachers actively simplify texts, select vocabulary familiar to daily life, and add visual elements to enhance comprehension. Student responses such as, *"The reading text is fun, about Ondel-ondel"* indicate that emotional engagement and personal connection with the content can strengthen students' interest and understanding. This approach aligns with the concept of meaningfulness in learning where students are able to connect the material with their personal experiences and values. This also supports the approach of culturally responsive teaching, which emphasizes that integrating students' cultural backgrounds can enhance learning motivation and comprehension (Kumi-Yeboah & Amponsah, 2023). Incorporating local cultural values into reading texts also contributes to strengthening students' self-identity and enriching meaning in the learning process (Al Pansori et al., 2025).

5.3. Adaptive SSR Strategies for Students with ADHD

The SSR method is implemented adaptively, taking into account the specific challenges faced by students with ADHD, particularly in sustaining focus. Reading sessions are limited to approximately 10 minutes, accompanied by active teacher supervision that includes providing clear instructions, guiding students toward appropriate text selections, and offering encouragement to sustain their engagement. Teachers also introduce additional stimuli through simple comprehension questions or light post-reading discussions. This approach reflects the principles of responsive scaffolding, in which the teacher acts as a flexible facilitator who adjusts strategies based on the individual needs of students (Ahmed Abdel-Al Ibrahim et al., 2023). In this context, scaffolding is not grounded in a strictly developmental framework but rather in a response-based instructional model that allows students to gradually build confidence and autonomy.

5.4. Development of Reading Comprehension

Students demonstrate gradual improvement in understanding non-fiction texts, particularly in identifying explicit information. However, some still struggle to comprehend the text holistically or to reconstruct its overall meaning. As one teacher noted, *"They can answer simple questions, but when asked to explain the whole thing, they are still not very fluent."* This suggests that students are still operating at the level of literal comprehension, or understanding, the ability to grasp explicitly stated information, as outlined in the revised Bloom's Taxonomy adapted for the digital age. Instructional efforts such as note-taking and guided discussions serve as essential steps in helping students progress toward higher-order thinking skills, such as interpretation and analysis. For students with ADHD, these structured, incremental strategies are particularly critical for fostering deeper and more sustained comprehension.

5.5. Challenges and Differentiated Instruction

The implementation of the SSR method is not without challenges, such as the tendency of students with ADHD to be easily distracted, read slowly, and require continuous verbal reinforcement. Teachers reported, *"Students with ADHD have a little difficulty maintaining focus, especially when reading silently."* This shows that the implementation of SSR requires a flexible and responsive approach. In the context of inclusive education, it is important to emphasize the importance of differentiated instruction (CAINGCOY, 2023) in inclusive learning. The individualized nature of SSR is more effective when accompanied by explicit guidance, the use of supporting media, and the provision of visual or verbal stimuli on a regular basis. Such support enables students to engage in the reading process at a pace and with strategies that align with their individual attention profiles.

5.6. Self-Engagement and Emotional Engagement

The implementation of the SSR method also has a positive impact on the emotional aspects of students with ADHD. Students show increased self-confidence, particularly in their willingness to answer questions and participate in discussions, even if their answers are not always correct. A student stated, *"I feel very happy and I actively answer even if I'm wrong."* This situation reflects the strengthening of self-efficacy and emotional engagement, which are important in the long-term learning process (Cicilia & Sofian, 2022). SSR method provides a safe space for expression without pressure and supports the development of intrinsic motivation. Within the framework of inclusive education, this experience serves as a valuable asset for the continued academic and social participation of students with ADHD.

5.7. Theoretical and Practical Implications

This study contributes to the understanding of the application of the SSR method in inclusive education, particularly for students with ADHD. Theoretically, the SSR method has been proven to support deep learning, mindfulness, and social constructivism approaches. This approach also shows that the integration of cultural values in literacy can increase student engagement and depth of understanding. Practically, the results of this study suggest several steps for educators, including: (1) Creating a quiet and structured learning environment. (2) Adapting reading materials to students' interests, abilities, and cultural backgrounds. (3) Providing active guidance during the reading process. (4) Offering post-reading activities that support the reinforcement of understanding and self-expression.

With the implementation of an adaptive and sensitive SSR method, the literacy process in inclusive classrooms can become more meaningful and effective. This approach offers opportunities to bridge participation gaps and develop the academic and social potential of students with special needs simultaneously.

6. Conclusion

This study shows that the implementation of the SSR method in an inclusive learning context in third-grade primary school provides meaningful learning experiences for students with mild ADHD. The SSR method is a strategy that enables students to gradually build reading engagement in a quiet and structured environment. When classroom conditions are minimized for distractions and teachers provide active guidance, students are able to demonstrate improved focus and comfort in silent reading activities. Adapting reading materials through text simplification, integration of local cultural elements, and the use of visual media contributed to students' emotional engagement and helped them understand literal information from nonfiction texts. Although students' comprehension was still at an early stage (surface-level understanding), supportive strategies such as note-taking and light discussions after reading served as tools to expand their thinking skills and ability to express ideas. The findings also show that challenges such as unstable focus, anxiety in silent reading, and the need for verbal guidance remain significant obstacles. However, with an adaptive and responsive approach to the characteristics of students with ADHD, teachers are able to create a supportive atmosphere, build self-confidence, and encourage active participation in the reading learning process. Thus, the SSR method is not only a literacy improvement method but also a pedagogical practice that aligns with the principles of inclusivity, differentiation, and students' emotional well-being. This study emphasizes the importance of environmental support, flexibility in teaching strategies, and the selection of culturally relevant materials in creating meaningful reading experiences for all students, including those with special needs.

Limitation

This study has limitations in terms of the focus of research conducted on subjects that are not broad, only the category of ADHD students with mild learning focus difficulties. And focusing on the effectiveness of learning methods in improving the ability to understand culture-based non-fiction text through the implementation of the SSR learning method for ADHD students.

Recommendations

For further research, it can be done using interesting visuals with writing that is easier to understand so that it covers the shortcomings in the process of applying the method.

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Conflict of Interest

This research was conducted with permission from the school and has been reviewed, so it is declared suitable for publication.

Declaration of Generative AI-assisted Technologies

This manuscript was developed with the assistance of generative AI tools, including *Perplexity*, *Quillbot*, and *Grammarly*, which were employed solely for the purpose of language refinement and enhancement. All substantive intellectual input, critical interpretation, thematic analysis, and final revisions were conducted by the author. The author assumes full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the content presented in this work.

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