

AN OVERVIEW OF READING CORNER UTILIZATION IN SUPPORTING STUDENTS' READING LITERACY AT SDN 4 DAWUAN

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Abstrak

Reading literacy among Indonesian elementary school students remains below international standards, while classroom reading corners as part of the School Literacy Movement (GLS) have received limited attention at the classroom level, particularly among upper-grade students. This study aims to describe the reading literacy of Grade IV–VI students at SDN 4 Dawuan, Cirebon Regency, and the utilization of the classroom reading corner in terms of design, book availability, time management, and student participation. A descriptive qualitative approach supplemented by simple descriptive quantitative data was employed, involving one principal, two teachers, and 15 students. Data were collected through a reading literacy test based on Barrett's Taxonomy, semi-structured interviews, structured observations, a four-point Likert-scale questionnaire, and documentation. Data were analyzed through reduction, display, and conclusion drawing, with validity established through source and method triangulation. Results showed reading literacy scores ranging from 37 to 100, with a mean of 67.53. All four comprehension indicators were in the strong category, with appreciation highest and evaluation lowest. Reading corner utilization received positive responses ranging from 65% to 88% across all aspects. The main obstacles were limited book collections, simple facilities, and budget constraints.

Keywords: *Reading Corner, Reading Literacy Test, Reading Corner Design, Book Availability, Student Participation, Elementary School Reading Literacy*

INTRODUCTION

Reading literacy is a foundational skill that plays a crucial role in students' cognitive, emotional, and social development at the elementary school level. Based on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Indonesian students' reading literacy scores remain below the international average (Kemendikbudristek, 2023), reflecting a gap between 21st-century literacy demands and students' actual capabilities (Amiroh, 2021). Strengthening reading literacy at the elementary level a critical phase for habit formation has therefore become an urgent agenda for the national education system (Prastiwi et al., 2025). The Indonesian government has responded through the School Literacy Movement (*Gerakan Literasi Sekolah*, GLS), regulated under Permendikbud No. 23 of 2015 on Character Building, which mandates at least 15 minutes of sustained silent reading before

lessons begin (Kemendikbud, 2016a). One form of GLS implementation at the classroom level is the reading corner, an extension of the library that brings books closer to students. Beyond the mere availability of reading materials, effective literacy development also depends on instructional conditions that actively support reading comprehension, such as sustained opportunities to read real texts and a classroom environment rich in discussion about text (Duke & Pearson, 2002). Numerous studies show that reading corners contribute to increased reading interest (Kasim et al., 2023; Seniani et al., 2023) and reading literacy skills (Afriani et al., 2021; Wihaya Kusumah et al., 2023).

This aligns with recent findings on literacy program implementation at the classroom level, where teachers' multidimensional roles as facilitators, models, and evaluators were found to shape both student engagement and

comprehension outcomes, though gaps between literal and inferential comprehension persisted even under consistent program implementation (Wajraprakara et al, 2025). Despite this well-established theoretical and policy framework, field implementation is often suboptimal, marked by static book collections (Amiroh, 2021; Wiyanti, 2023), unappealing designs, and teacher management that is not yet integrated into the daily curriculum (Prastiwi et al., 2025). A similar condition is suspected at SDN 4 Dawuan, Cirebon Regency, marked by low student use of the reading corner outside official class hours.

Prior research on reading corners has two notable limitations. First, most studies rely on a single data source, typically students, without triangulating the perspectives of principals and teachers as policy managers; for instance, Sari and Wulandari (2019) and Putra et al. (2021) emphasize changes in student interest and behavior without deeply examining school-level management factors. Second, existing studies rarely focus specifically on upper-grade students (Grades IV–VI), who are at the intermediate-to-advanced literacy stage, even though their needs and patterns of reading corner use may differ from those of lower-grade students. The novelty of this study lies in triangulating three data sources principals, teachers, and students-simultaneously to capture a more holistic picture of the planning, implementation, utilization, and management of the reading corner at the upper-grade level within a single school. This triangulated design is intended not merely as a methodological choice but as a means of surfacing an *implementation gap* that single source studies cannot capture namely, the divergence between generally favorable perceptions of reading corner design and the comparatively lower self regulated use of allocated reading time, a pattern only visible when principal, teacher, and student data are read against one another. Based on the description above, this study aims to

describe the reading literacy of grade IV–VI students at SDN 4 Dawuan, in terms of literal, reorganizational, evaluative, and appreciative comprehension, and to describe the utilization of the reading corner among the same students, in terms of design, book availability, time management, and student participation, relating these findings to the policies and management undertaken by the principal and teachers. This study is descriptive in nature and is not intended to measure the causal effectiveness or impact of the reading corner on reading literacy achievement.

METODE

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design supplemented with simple descriptive quantitative data (test scores, mean scores, and response percentages) from a reading literacy test and a questionnaire, used to enrich the qualitative account of students' reading literacy and reading corner utilization. The quantitative data were not used for hypothesis testing or inferential analysis, but rather as supporting evidence triangulated with interview and observation data (Sugiyono, 2017). The research was conducted at SDN 4 Dawuan, Dawuan Village, Tengah Tani District, Cirebon Regency.

Research subjects were selected using purposive sampling, based on the criteria that (1) the principal and teachers were directly involved in reading corner policy and management, and (2) students in grades IV–VI actively used the reading corner during the observation period. Subjects consisted of one principal, two classroom teachers, and 15 students. Data were collected using four techniques. A written reading literacy test was administered to the 15 students, developed according to four comprehension indicators from Barrett's Taxonomy: literal, reorganizational, evaluative, and appreciative comprehension; students read a researcher-prepared text and answered questions corresponding to each indicator,

with the test blueprint, answer key, and scoring guideline reviewed by the supervising lecturers. Semi-structured interviews were conducted face-to-face with the principal and teachers using an interview guide covering four aspects (design, book availability, time management, and student participation); interviews were recorded with informants' consent and transcribed verbatim prior to analysis. Structured observations were carried out over one month using an observation sheet covering indicators of students' visit frequency and their interaction with reading materials. A closed-ended questionnaire with a four-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree), comprising 31 statements, was administered to the 15 students. The interview guide, test, and questionnaire were developed based on a blueprint reviewed by the supervising lecturers (expert judgment) to establish content validity prior to field use. Documentation was used as supporting data. Data validity was established through method and source triangulation, with member checks conducted with informants. Data were analyzed following the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification, conducted interactively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To describe students' reading literacy, a written test based on four comprehension indicators from Barrett's Taxonomy (literal, reorganizational, evaluative, and appreciative) was administered to the 15 grade IV–VI students. Scores ranged from 37 to 100, with an overall mean of 67.53, indicating varied comprehension achievement among

students. When grouped into interpretation categories, most students fell into the high category, followed by the moderate and very high categories, while no student fell into the very low category, suggesting that all students had at least a basic level of reading comprehension despite differing levels of mastery. At the indicator level, all four comprehension indicators fell within the 51–75% range, classified as strong. Appreciative comprehension obtained the highest achievement, reflecting students' relative strength in responding to and connecting text content with personal experience, followed by literal and reorganizational comprehension, while evaluative comprehension obtained the lowest achievement among the four, reflecting that judging and reasoning about text content remains the aspect most in need of reinforcement. One month of direct observation also indicated some development in students' reading ability. At the start of observation, some students still struggled to pronounce words containing the syllable "nga" and read haltingly. Following regular reading activities through the reading corner, pronunciation errors decreased and reading fluency improved. These observations are qualitative in nature and were not measured using a standardized literacy test, and should therefore be read as an early indication of development rather than an objectively measured literacy outcome.

To determine students' responses to the reading corner program, a 31 item, four-point Likert scale questionnaire was administered to grade IV–VI students. Data were processed into mean scores and positive-response percentages per aspect, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Questionnaire Results on Student Responses to the Reading Corner Program

Aspect	Range (%)	Highest Item (%)	Category
Reading corner design	70–88	88	Good
Book availability	72–83	83	Good
Reading time management	65–85	85	Good
Student participation	73–85	85	Good
Overall	65–88	88	Good

The results indicate that all aspects of reading corner utilization fell into the strong category, with response percentages ranging from 65% to 88%. On the design aspect, the highest positive response was obtained by the statement "the reading corner has an attractive appearance" (88%), while the lowest was obtained by the statement "the reading corner is comfortable to use" (70%), though this item still fell within the strong category. On the book availability aspect, students reported being able to find both textbooks and story books suited to their needs (72–83%). On the time management aspect, students reported having a dedicated reading time before lessons (85%), while the item on optimal use of that reading time obtained the lowest response of the entire 31-item questionnaire (65%), indicating that although reading time was consistently provided, not all students used it optimally. On the participation aspect, the statement "I frequently use the reading corner" obtained the highest response (85%), while interest in trying new books was comparatively lower (73%).

Interviews with the principal showed that the school has implemented policies including reading corner provision, book collection supply, a 15–30-minute daily reading habit before lessons, and periodic evaluation. As the principal explained, *"the school facilitates reading habits by providing dedicated time before lessons begin as an effort to accustom students to reading every day."* Regarding design, the teacher similarly noted that *"the suitability of the reading corner's design in the classroom is a factor that influences students' reading interest."* Limited book numbers, simple facilities, and budget constraints were identified as the main obstacles, addressed through book donation programs and periodic rotation of the school library's collection.

The consistently positive response across all aspects of reading corner utilization (65–88%) indicates that the reading corner contributes to literacy

activities at the school, consistent with the theory of Free Voluntary Reading (Krashen, 2004), which holds that free access to reading materials fosters intrinsic reading motivation without academic pressure. The highest score for student participation (85%, for the statement "I frequently use the reading corner") reinforces Aswat and Nurmaya's (2019) view that proper reading corner management increases student engagement, supporting GLS's goal of building a reading culture that involves the entire school community (Kemendikbud, 2016a).

Students' sense of comfort in using the reading corner, along with their willingness to keep it clean and orderly, indicates that a supportive physical environment lowers the barrier to engaging with reading materials. This is consistent with Morrow and Gambrell's (2019) view that a reading-material-rich classroom environment plays an important role in building reading habits from an early age, and aligns with Duke and Pearson's (2002) synthesis of effective comprehension instruction, which emphasizes that sustained, low-pressure opportunities to read real texts rather than the availability of books alone are what ultimately support the development of reading comprehension. This engagement-oriented reading is further supported by Wigfield et al.'s (2020) account of reading motivation, which links intrinsic interest rather than facility access alone to sustained reading behavior, and by Neuman's (2022) observation that the richness of a school's reading facilities shapes the frequency, not merely the occurrence, of student reading. This suggests that the reading corner's contribution to literacy is likely to be strongest when it is paired with the kind of engaged reading practice these authors describe, rather than through book access alone.

However, the lowest single-item score across the entire questionnaire concerned students' optimal use of the reading time provided (65%), indicating

that although a dedicated reading slot is consistently available, not all students make full use of it, so teachers still need to provide guidance and motivation. In parallel, the principal interview revealed limited book collections, simple facilities, and budget constraints as the main obstacles, consistent with Amiroh (2021) and Wiyanti (2023), who note that reading corner book collections in many schools tend to be static and under-resourced. This pattern of resource-related obstacles constraining an otherwise well-received program echoes findings from a nearby elementary school, where limited book collections and curriculum overload similarly hindered teachers' capacity to sustain literacy activities despite strong principal and parental support (Wajraprakara et al, 2025).

The questionnaire and principal interview data mutually reinforce one another (source triangulation), suggesting that the program's primary obstacle lies not in the reading corner's design or in student participation both of which received strong positive responses but in the school's book and budget resource limitations, a finding with policy implications: strengthening reading corners in resource-limited schools requires external support (donations, community partnerships) alongside internal school policy, as also recommended by Kasim et al. (2023) and Prastiwi et al. (2025). These findings carry distinct implications for different stakeholders. For school leaders, the results point to the need for a formal budget allocation for book procurement, rather than continued reliance on ad hoc community donations. For teachers, targeted strategies such as periodic book-talk sessions and short reading-time check ins are needed to address the lowest-performing indicators identified in this study, namely optimal use of reading time (65%) and willingness to try new books (73%). For policymakers, reading-corner *management* quality, not merely provision, should be incorporated as

an explicit criterion in School Literacy Movement (GLS) monitoring frameworks.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that reading literacy among grade IV–VI students at SDN 4 Dawuan is good, with a mean test score of 67.53 and all four comprehension indicators (literal, reorganizational, evaluative, appreciative) in the strong category. Reading corner utilization has also run well, providing varied books used for reading before lessons, though comfort, collection diversity, and optimal use of reading time still require improvement. The study's main contribution lies in triangulating three data sources principal, teacher, and student a design rarely undertaken jointly in prior reading-corner research. These findings carry a practical implication for schools with similarly limited resources: reading corner effectiveness depends less on facility completeness than on consistent time management and active facilitation by teachers and principals. Given the limited sample, short observation period, and absence of a pre-test/comparison design, findings should be read as context-specific rather than broadly generalizable. Future research building on this triangulated approach using pre-test/post-test or comparative designs with larger samples is recommended to more objectively measure the reading corner's impact on literacy outcomes.

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