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## Implementation of School Literacy Movement through Reading Literacy Journals in Elementary School

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### Abstract

*The School Literacy Movement (Gerakan Literasi Sekolah/GLS) is a national program designed to enhance students' basic literacy skills, particularly reading, writing, and critical thinking. However, its implementation at the elementary school level has not always produced optimal outcomes. This study aims to analyze the implementation of reading literacy journals as part of the School Literacy Movement in a sixth-grade elementary school. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed, involving classroom observations, interviews with teachers and students, and documentation analysis. The findings indicate that the use of reading literacy journals contributes positively to students' reading habits and reflective skills, yet several challenges persist, including inconsistent implementation, limited reading materials, and varying levels of student motivation. Despite these constraints, the literacy journal serves as an effective medium for monitoring students' reading activities and encouraging reflective reading practices. The study concludes that strengthening teacher guidance, providing diverse reading resources, and ensuring consistent literacy routines are essential to optimize the effectiveness of literacy journals within the School Literacy Movement framework.*

**Keywords–** School Literacy Movement; Reading Literacy; Literacy Journal; Elementary School



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## 1. Introduction

Literacy is widely recognized as a foundational skill that supports students' academic achievement, critical thinking, and lifelong learning. In the context of elementary education, reading literacy plays a crucial role in shaping students' ability to access knowledge, interpret information, and construct meaning from texts. Nevertheless, various national and international assessments have indicated that elementary students' reading proficiency remains a significant challenge, particularly in developing countries.

In response to this condition, the Indonesian government initiated the School Literacy Movement (Gerakan Literasi Sekolah/GLS) as a national policy aimed at fostering a sustainable literacy culture in schools. GLS is designed to integrate literacy activities into daily school routines through three interconnected stages: habituation, development, and learning. One of the practical strategies implemented at the classroom level is the use of reading literacy journals, which function as tools for recording reading activities, summarizing texts, and reflecting on reading experiences.

Despite its widespread adoption, previous studies have reported that the implementation of GLS in elementary schools has not always achieved optimal results. Several constraints have been identified, including limited availability of diverse reading materials, low student motivation to read, and insufficient teacher guidance in facilitating reflective literacy activities. In many cases, literacy journals are treated merely as administrative records rather than pedagogical instruments that support critical and reflective reading.

Existing research has primarily focused on the impact of literacy programs on reading achievement or students' reading interest. However, limited attention has been given to examining how reading literacy journals are implemented in everyday classroom practices and how they function as part of the GLS framework at the elementary school level. This gap indicates the need for an in-depth qualitative analysis that explores not only the implementation process but also the challenges and potential benefits of literacy journals in fostering students' reading literacy.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the implementation of reading literacy journals within the School Literacy Movement in an elementary school setting. Specifically, the study seeks to examine the forms of implementation, identify supporting and inhibiting factors, and analyze the contribution of literacy journals to students' reading habits and reflective abilities. By addressing this gap, the study is expected to provide empirical insights that can inform the improvement of literacy practices in elementary education.

## **2. Method**

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of reading literacy journals within the School Literacy Movement. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore social phenomena in their natural contexts and to capture participants' experiences and perspectives in detail.

The research was conducted in a public elementary school, with sixth-grade students as the primary participants. The selection of the research site and participants was based on purposive sampling, considering that the school had formally implemented the School Literacy Movement and utilized reading literacy journals as part of its literacy activities.

Data collection techniques included classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation analysis. Observations were carried out to examine the implementation of literacy activities, teacher-student interactions, and students' engagement during reading sessions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with classroom teachers and selected students to explore their perceptions, experiences, and challenges related to the use of literacy journals. Documentation analysis involved reviewing students' literacy journals, lesson plans, and school literacy program documents to support and validate the data obtained from observations and interviews.

Data analysis followed an interactive model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. During data reduction, relevant information was selected, categorized, and organized according to the research focus. Data

display was conducted by presenting the findings in descriptive and thematic forms to facilitate interpretation. Finally, conclusions were drawn by identifying patterns and relationships among the data. To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, triangulation of data sources and data collection techniques was applied.

### **3. Result and Discussion**

The findings of this research indicate that reading literacy journals have been integrated into the educational framework as a core component of routine literacy activities, specifically during the scheduled silent reading sessions held immediately before formal instruction begins. During these sessions, students are tasked with the specific responsibility of documenting their literary journey, which includes recording the titles of the books they have explored, drafting concise summaries of the plots or main arguments, and articulating personal reflections on the content. This structured habit is designed to cultivate a heightened sense of metacognitive awareness, allowing students to become more conscious of their own reading patterns and cognitive engagement while simultaneously instilling a sense of accountability for their independent reading progress.

From the pedagogical perspective of the teaching staff, these literacy journals function as indispensable diagnostic tools for monitoring both the frequency and the qualitative depth of student reading. Teachers reported that the journals provide a transparent window into each student's academic habits, making it significantly easier to identify those who are highly engaged and intrinsically motivated, as well as those who are struggling and may require targeted intervention. By reviewing these entries, educators can gauge the reading stamina and comprehension levels of their classroom, transforming the journals from simple logs into strategic instruments for differentiated instruction and personalized student support.

Despite the clear conceptual benefits, the research findings also expose significant gaps in how these journals are currently being utilized, revealing that

their implementation has not yet reached its full potential. The data suggests that consistency remains a primary issue, with the practice being applied irregularly across different classrooms. A major contributing factor to this inconsistency is the limited window of time available for teacher supervision; overwhelmed by a dense curriculum and various instructional demands, many teachers find it difficult to provide the thorough, one-on-one oversight required to ensure that every student is deriving the maximum benefit from their journal entries.

A particularly pressing challenge identified during the study is the manifest lack of constructive feedback provided to the students regarding their written reflections. When students submit their journal entries, they often receive only a cursory check or a simple completion mark rather than detailed comments that could stimulate further critical thinking. This lack of feedback loop can inadvertently signal to students that the activity is merely a mechanical task to be finished quickly, rather than a meaningful academic exercise. Without the guiding voice of the teacher to challenge their interpretations or praise their insights, the potential for these journals to serve as a bridge to deeper literacy is often lost in the shuffle of daily school routines.

The study highlights a critical external constraint: the severe limitation regarding the availability and diversity of reading materials within the school environment. The current inventory is predominantly composed of standard textbooks, which are often perceived by students as strictly utilitarian and uninspiring. There is a noticeable scarcity of narrative storybooks, graphic novels, or contemporary non-fiction that might appeal to the diverse interests of a young demographic. This narrow selection directly restricts student choice, which is a fundamental driver of reading motivation, leading to a situation where students read out of obligation rather than genuine curiosity or enjoyment.

This observation regarding resource diversity aligns with established educational theories and previous studies, which emphasize that a rich and varied literary environment is essential for sustaining long-term interest in reading. When students are confined to a single genre or format especially one as rigid as a textbook their engagement with the text tends to remain superficial. The research

suggests that for a literacy movement to be truly successful, the school must transition toward a "literacy-rich" environment that offers various reading levels and topics, thereby allowing students to see themselves reflected in the stories they read and fostering a more profound connection to the written word.

Despite the various logistical and resource-based hurdles, the study demonstrates that literacy journals possess immense latent potential as reflective learning tools. The data shows a marked difference in quality when teachers are able to provide even minimal guidance or encouraging feedback; in such cases, students' entries evolve from simple plot recaps into more sophisticated and thoughtful reflections. This shift indicates that the literacy journal can successfully facilitate a transition from "mechanical" reading where a student simply decodes words on a page to "meaningful" reading, where the student actively synthesizes information and evaluates it against their own life experiences.

These findings strongly support the academic consensus that effective literacy programs must prioritize the quality of engagement over the sheer quantity of pages read. The goal of the School Literacy Movement should not merely be to increase the number of books a child finishes, but to cultivate a generation of critical thinkers who can interact with a text, question its premises, and derive unique meaning from it. By emphasizing the reflective component of the journal, schools can encourage students to move beyond the surface level of the text and begin to develop the analytical skills that are vital for success in higher education and lifelong learning.

The overall results of this study suggest that the effectiveness of reading literacy journals is not inherent in the tool itself, but is highly dependent on the ecosystem of its implementation. To truly harness their power, there must be a concerted effort to ensure consistent application, deeper teacher involvement through meaningful feedback, and a significant expansion of the school's library resources. By strengthening these three pillars, educational institutions can elevate the role of the literacy journal from a simple administrative requirement to a cornerstone of a vibrant, critical, and successful School Literacy Movement.

#### **4. Conclusion**

This study demonstrates that the implementation of reading literacy journals within the School Literacy Movement plays a positive role in fostering elementary students' reading habits and reflective skills. Literacy journals provide a structured medium for documenting reading activities and encouraging students to engage more thoughtfully with texts.

However, the effectiveness of literacy journals is influenced by several factors, including the consistency of implementation, the availability of diverse reading materials, and the level of teacher guidance and supervision. Inconsistent monitoring and limited resources may reduce the journals' potential impact on students' reading literacy.

Therefore, it is essential for schools to strengthen institutional support for literacy programs by ensuring regular implementation, enriching reading resources, and enhancing teachers' roles as facilitators of reflective reading activities. These efforts are expected to optimize the contribution of literacy journals to improving reading literacy and supporting the broader objectives of the School Literacy Movement in elementary education.

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