

## The Influence of Reading Corner Utilization on Students' Literacy Skill: An *Experimental Study* at Elementary School

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### Abstract

This study aims to analyze the effect of the use of reading corners on the literacy skills of elementary school students. This study uses a quantitative research method *Pre-Experimental Design* with the type of *One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design*. The subjects of this study were all fifth grade students of Bajangrejo State Elementary School, totaling 12 students. The data collection technique was in the form of a test. The sample used was the total sample. The data analysis used was in the form of descriptive statistics, normality tests, homogeneity tests and parametric statistical hypothesis tests. *in paired form sample t-test* using SPSS 26. The results of this study obtained an average pretest value of 43.33 and a posttest of 71.25. Based on the results of the hypothesis test using *Paired Sample T-Test* obtained information that the calculated t value obtained  $-5.786 > t_{table} 2.20099$  and the significance value in the Sig column. (*2-tailed*) 0.000 which means  $0.000 < 0.05$ , then it can be concluded that  $H_1$  is accepted and  $H_0$  is rejected. This study shows that the use of reading corners has a positive and significant influence on the literacy skills in Elementary School.

**Keywords:** Literacy Skill, Reading Corner, Elementary School Student.

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh pemanfaatan pojok baca terhadap kemampuan literasi siswa sekolah dasar. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kuantitatif *Pre-Eksperimental Design* dengan jenis penelitian *One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design*. Subjek penelitian ini yakni seluruh siswa kelas V SD Negeri Bajangrejo yang berjumlah 12 siswa. Teknik mengumpulkan data berupa test. Sampel yang digunakan yaitu sampel total. Analisis data yang digunakan berupa statistik deskriptif, uji normalitas, uji homogenitas dan uji hipotesis statistik parametrik berupa *paired sample t-test* dengan menggunakan bantuan SPSS 26. Hasil penelitian ini mendapatkan nilai rerata pretest 43.33 dan posttest 71.25. Berdasarkan hasil uji hipotesis dengan menggunakan *Paired Sample T-Test* didapat informasi bahwasannya perolehan nilai *thitung*  $-5.786 > t_{tabel} 2.20099$  serta nilai signifikansi pada kolom Sig. (*2-tailed*) 0.000 yang maknanya  $0.000 < 0.05$ , maka dapat diambil kesimpulan bahwasannya  $H_1$  diterima serta  $H_0$  ditolak. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pemanfaatan pojok baca memiliki pengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kemampuan literasi siswa di Sekolah Dasar.

**Kata Kunci:** Kemampuan Literasi, Pojok Baca, Siswa Sekolah Dasar.

### INTRODUCTION

One of the most important and necessary skills in the 21st century is literacy skills . Literacy is the ability to read and write. However, along with the development of technology, the concept of

literacy includes scientific, digital, and information literacy (Amri & Rochmah, 2021) . The development of literacy in elementary school students is closely related to reading and writing skills. Students' ability to master literacy is one of the main indicators in assessing the extent to which learning has been achieved (Qudsya et al., 2022) . The reading literacy skills of Indonesian students are currently in a very concerning condition. This is evidenced by the results of the 2019 PISA organized by the OECD that Indonesia is in 62nd position out of 70 countries, with the lowest literacy rate (Muharzie et al., 2023) . In line with Ngazizah's opinion et al. , (2022) Indonesian students have good skills in searching for information, evaluating, and reflecting on knowledge, but still have difficulty in understanding the information contained in reading texts. This condition is very worrying because reading literacy skills are an important foundation for students' future success. The government is trying to improve the quality of national education through the National Assessment which focuses on strengthening literacy , numeracy , and character education (Kiriana & Widiasih, 2023) . One type of National Assessment is the Minimum Competency Assessment (AKM) which is designed with the aim of evaluating students' critical thinking skills in analyzing reading texts (Meriana & Murniati, 2021) .

The results of observations at SD Negeri Bajangrejo that have been carried out by researchers, there are several obstacles. The obstacles are as follows: 1) Based on the results of the 2023 Education report card platform on indicator A.1 regarding literacy skill, it achieved 70% with a moderate category. Students have reached the minimum competency level in reading literacy, but still need efforts to stimulate students to achieve maximum competency. This literacy ability has decreased by 8.12% from the previous year. 2) There is a reading corner that is not well maintained and organized and is not utilized properly by students, due to the limited number of reading books, so it does not attract students' interest in reading and attention. 3) The reading corner is not well managed in terms of book arrangement and cleanliness. 4) Lack of collaboration between students and teachers in maintaining the reading corner. This is what causes students to be less interested in reading books regularly, resulting in low literacy skills.

The problems that have been described are interesting to conduct research, because they show a significant decline in students' literacy skills. This is indicated by the inadequate condition of the reading corner and the lack of collaboration between students and teachers, indicating a serious problem in efforts to improve students' reading literacy. Literacy activities can be carried out by utilizing the reading corner, including 1) Reading activities for 10 minutes before learning, 2) Summarizing the contents of the book that has been read, 3) Re-presenting the main points of the story in the form of a short text, and 4) Analyzing the book. The reading corner plays an important role in supporting the literacy program , which can stimulate students to enjoy reading (Sulistiyowati et al., 2023) . The reading corner is likened to a mini library located in the corner of the classroom and there are a number of book collections. Santi & Setyaningsih (2023) stated that the reading corner is the use of a corner of the room to motivate students, so that they can read books regularly and in a structured manner, so that students can get used to reading. In line with the opinion of Faiz et al. , (2022) reading corner is the use of a corner in the classroom which functions as a place to store books and student work, which aims to encourage reading habits. The reading corner functions as a development of the role of the library which provides easy and fast access to reading sources in the classroom (Nuraini & Amaliyah, 2024) . Through the reading corner, students are encouraged to actively participate in learning that focuses on reading and writing skills. Teachers must be creative in managing the reading corner to attract students' attention. The indicators for achieving the use of the reading corner according to Masruroh in Wiyanti, (2023) are: 1) There are varied reading materials. 2) Stimulate students' interest in reading. 3) As a reference source in learning. 4) Well maintained and managed at the end of each lesson by all class members. 5) Increase the frequency of reading. 6) Improve the communication skills of teachers with students. Through the availability of the reading corner, it is hoped that students will be able to get used to reading regularly and in a

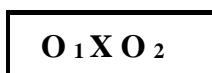
structured manner, so that they can develop critical thinking skills, foster literacy skills and improve AKM results in the following year.

Several previous studies discussing the same problem were conducted by Rahayu et al. , (2023) showed that reading corners can be used effectively as a learning tool that has a positive impact on the development of student literacy . Other research conducted by Astuti & Sholehuddin (2024) indicated that reading corners with a supportive atmosphere and a diverse collection of books are able to motivate students to read more often. Another study was also conducted by Ichwana & Pohan (2024) in their study showing that the use of reading corners is an important factor in efforts to improve reading literacy at the elementary school level. Similar to the research of Santi & Setyaningsih (2023) reading corners Reading contributes significantly to improving students' literacy skills by providing a pleasant and interesting atmosphere and offering a variety of reading materials. A reading corner that is designed comfortably and attractively can be an effective motivation for students to increase their interest in reading. This can be seen from the high enthusiasm of students in visit the reading corner.

The similarity of this study with previous studies is through the class reading corner which is used as a means and infrastructure to make it easier for students to read books. The use of a reading corner is an efficient way to develop reading and writing skills, as well as foster student motivation and involvement in learning activities. The difference between this study and previous studies is that it focuses on reading programs through reading corners as an effort to increase students' interest in reading. Although the objectives are similar, this study has a novelty, namely focusing on students' literacy skills through the use of reading corners through four activities and using pretests and posttests of class AKM before and after using reading corners to measure students' literacy skill. This study aims to determine the effect of literacy skills on grade V students of SD Negeri Bajangrejo through the use of reading corners.

## METHOD

This study uses a quantitative method through the Pre -Experimental Design approach , which is a dependent variable that is not merely influenced by the independent variable , because there is no control variable and the sample is not taken randomly (Agustina et al., 2021) . This type of research is One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design to determine the results of the treatment that are increasingly clear to compare students' abilities before and after being treated (Agustina et al., 2021) . This study uses the AKM class pretest and posttest as instruments to see the development of students' literacy skills before and after the treatment. This research was conducted in three stages. The first stage is to carry out an initial test (pretest) before four reading corner utilization activities are carried out to evaluate students' initial literacy skills . The second stage is to implement reading corner utilization activities which include: 1) Reading activities 10 minutes before learning, 2) Summarizing the contents of the book that has been read, 3) Re-presenting the core of the story in the form of a concise text, and 4) Analyzing the book. The final stage is to provide a final test (posttest) after the activity is carried out to determine changes in students' literacy skills before and after the activity is carried out. The following is the One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design research design (Markum et al., 2022) .



Picture 1. *One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design*

Information:

X = Treatment

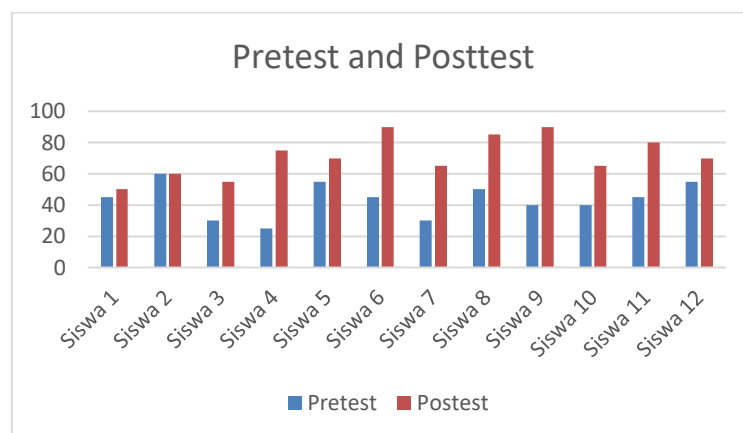
O 1 = Pretest (Before any treatment)

O 2 = Posttest (After treatment)

The population of this study was all fifth grade students of Bajangrejo State Elementary School in the 2023/2024 academic year, totaling 12 students. The sampling technique was a total sample involving all members of the population as a sample Sugiyono (in Khasanah & Abduh, 2023). The data collection technique was a test. The test was carried out 2 times in stages, including a pretest and posttest. The question instrument used was in the form of AKM literacy class questions with a total of 20 questions that had been provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture through the Pusmendik page. Kemdikbud. For the pretest questions, there were 7 multiple choice questions, 5 complex multiple choice questions, 7 true or false questions, and 1 matching question. While the posttest included 5 multiple choice questions, 6 complex multiple choice questions, 7 true or false questions, and 2 matching questions. AKM questions were worked on by students through the AKM student application. After all the data was collected, the next step was to analyze the data with the help of SPSS 26. The data was analyzed using techniques in the form of descriptive statistics, normality tests, homogeneity tests, and parametric statistical hypothesis tests in the form of paired sample t- test.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Before carrying out literacy activities as a treatment, the researcher first gave a pretest to determine students' literacy skills before being given treatment. After being given a pretest, the next step is to carry out literacy activities. This literacy activity is carried out by maximizing the use of the class reading corner which includes: 1) Reading 10 minutes before learning to get students used to reading books. 2) Summarizing the contents of the book that has been read, aims to train students' understanding of the text being read and improve memory, 3) Re-presenting the core of the story in the form of a concise writing, aims to train students in processing information from books into a concise writing. 4) Analyzing books, namely students analyze in depth the intrinsic elements of the story with the aim of developing critical thinking skills. This activity is carried out in the morning before learning and each activity is carried out according to a predetermined schedule by utilizing the reading material sources available in the reading corner. Students are given the freedom to determine the selection of books according to their wishes. The stages of this activity are that every day students read books for 10 minutes before learning, after that according to the predetermined schedule students continue by concluding the contents of the book, summarizing the book, and analyzing the book. The next step, the researcher gave a posttest after the students were given treatment to evaluate the students' literacy skills.



**Figure 1.** Obtaining Pretest and Posttest Result

Pretest and posttest results of 12 students with scores on a scale of 0 to 100. Based on the graph, it can be compared that the posttest score is higher than the pretest score, this indicates an increase in the literacy skills of grade V students of Bajangrejo Elementary School after being given

treatment. A significant increase was seen in several students, such as students 6 and 9 who got a posttest score of 90. Although student 4 had the lowest pretest score, there was a significant improvement in the posttest score. These results indicate that the implementation of four literacy activities as a treatment is effective in improving students' literacy skills.

The next step is to conduct a parametric statistical hypothesis test using paired sample t- test to determine the effect of the use of reading corners on the literacy skills of grade V students of Bajangrejo State Elementary School. The criteria for testing the hypothesis are if the sig. value (2-tailed)  $< \alpha$  with a value of  $\alpha = 0.05$  so that the decision is made that H1 is accepted or H0 is rejected. The hypothesis in this study is:

- (1) H<sub>1</sub> : There is an influence of the use of reading corners on the literacy skills of grade V students at Bajangrejo State Elementary School.
- (2) H<sub>0</sub> : There is no influence of the use of reading corners on the literacy skills of grade V students at Bajangrejo State Elementary School.

**Table 1.** Hypothesis Test Result

		Paired Samples Test							
		Paired Differences							
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pretest - Posttest	-27,917	16,714	4,825	-38,536	-17,297	-5,786	11	.000

Test results paired sample t- test shows a significant difference between the pretest and posttest results with a Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.000, which means  $0.000 < 0.05$ , so H1 is accepted and H0 is rejected. Table 2 also shows information that the calculated t value is -5.786. The distribution table uses a significance level of 0.05 with df (n-1, namely  $12-1 = 11$ ), then the t table value is 2.20099. The comparison criteria are if the calculated t value  $> t$  table then H 1 is accepted, while if the calculated t value  $< t$  table then H 1 is rejected. Based on the data obtained the calculated t result is greater than the t table, which is  $-5.786 > 2.20099$  which means H 1 is accepted. These results indicate a significant difference in the literacy skills of grade V students of Bajangrejo State Elementary School between before and after being given treatment. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the use of reading corners has a positive and significant effect on the literacy skills of grade V students of Bajangrejo State Elementary School. This study was supported by Lestari et al. , (2023) which indicates that literacy programs through the use of reading corners have proven to have a significant influence on students' literacy skills as evidenced by the results of paired tests. sample t- test with a significance value of  $0.001 < 0.05$ . These results emphasize the importance of implementing a reading corner as an effective learning strategy.

Similar research was conducted by Sadriani et et al. , (2023) which shows that the implementation of the reading corner program is able to increase the percentage of student independence levels to reach 65%, while literacy and numeracy skills reach 55%. In line with the research of Jamaludin et al. , (2023) emphasized that reading corners have an important role in improving reading literacy skills. In addition, reading corners function as important resources for educators to provide teaching materials needed in learning activities, and are effectively able to overcome various obstacles faced by teachers and students, especially in efforts to develop literacy skills for students who have difficulty understanding reading. In line with the research of Fithriyah &

Misnawati (2023), it states that improving student reading literacy requires innovations such as classroom corners that are easily accessible at any time. Thus, reading corners not only play a role in improving reading comprehension, but also encourage the creation of a strong literacy culture among students.

literacy skills before utilizing the reading corner through literacy activities were not optimal. This is due to several factors, such as minimal motivation to read, limited use of school facilities, and a lack of interesting and relevant reading sources. Students' habits of only reading during class hours make it difficult for them to understand, use, and reflect on the meaning in the reading text and relate it to everyday life. Khoirunnisa & Sukartono, (2024) revealed that although reading is considered boring by elementary school students, reading has great benefits in expanding knowledge, increasing vocabulary, and can train thinking skills. Reading is a cognitive activity that has the aim of understanding information in writing (Setiani et al., 2023). In line with the opinions of Idammatussilmi, (2020) and Robikho et al., (2024) reading is an activity of understanding the meaning contained in the reading text, so it is important to create an environment that supports reading habits. Poorly maintained and poorly managed reading corners are one of the causes of students' lack of interest in reading. Saputri & Rochmiyati, (2023) and Salsabila, (2023) in their research showed that reading corners play an important role in developing students' literacy and reading skills. Therefore, more effective management of reading corners is needed to support literacy activities in schools.

literacy skills have increased significantly after utilizing the reading corner through literacy activities, which play an important role in helping students understand and process information from reading texts and improving critical thinking skills. Reading as a basic skill plays an important role in building students' understanding of reading texts and connecting them to everyday life. The reading corner provides easy access, so that students can be motivated to read independently which can improve their literacy quality. Therefore, the reading corner is one of the effective strategies to encourage students' literacy skills. Reading is not only a basic skill to expand knowledge (Muliawanti et al., 2022), but can also make learning more meaningful and enjoyable (Hidayatulloh et al., 2019) and (Saragih et al., 2023). Therefore, optimization and implementation of literacy habits and development are very necessary (Madu & Jediut, 2022). Reading habits that are carried out routinely can significantly improve students' literacy skills, both in understanding reading texts and motivating students to read, as well as developing better cognitive potential and abilities. This is supported by Qiftiyah, (2020) that student involvement with the reading corner has been proven to improve students' cognitive abilities, including the assimilation and accommodation processes, as well as increasing enthusiasm and motivation to read. In addition, the habit of reading consistently every day contributes significantly to increasing vocabulary, text comprehension, concentration, and other positive impacts for students (Sulistiyowati et al., 2023) and (Salma & Madzanatun, 2019). Without reading activities, students' access to information on various sciences will be hampered, so reading is an important factor in gaining knowledge and the learning process (Ikrom et al., 2024). Therefore, creating consistent reading habits is an important step to improve students' literacy skills (Ramadhani et al., 2020).

Literacy plays an important role in equipping students in facing the development of information technology with critical and creative thinking skills (Harahap et al., 2022). Utilization of reading corners through literacy activities effectively develops reading, writing, speaking skills, and strengthens students' memory. Through literacy activities, students do not just read, but are able to analyze, conclude, and understand the contents of the book in depth. Literacy activities help students focus more on understanding the storyline, improve memory, and be able to express their thoughts well. Thus, reading corners become a strategic means to hone students' critical thinking skills and creativity holistically. This is supported by Anggraeni & Mukhlis, (2023) Literacy is not only reading and writing, but also includes a deep understanding of the social context, communication situations, and the goals to be achieved in the text. In line with the research of Zakiya et al., (2023)

explained that reading literacy skills do not only include reading fluency, but also a deep understanding of the contents of the reading. The implementation of literacy programs provides positive benefits for students, such as increasing knowledge, facilitating reading and understanding the material (Rokmana et al., 2023) . Therefore, literacy is an essential need in education and everyday life.

The reading corner is one of the factors that influences students' interest in reading books. To overcome boredom experienced by students, teachers design an attractive reading corner with different designs, and change books regularly once a month. The goal is to make the reading corner more interesting, fun, and comfortable for students to use (Megantara & BS, 2021) . The reading corner is a facility in the classroom that can be used at any time by students, its comfortable and easily accessible place makes it easier for students to use the classroom reading corner. In addition, a pleasant atmosphere can also encourage students to make reading a daily habit, which ultimately contributes to increased literacy. Utilizing the reading corner through literacy activities can strengthen students' analytical skills in evaluating situations and making the right decisions based on deep thinking, optimizing brain function, and expanding their horizons and knowledge. This is reinforced by research by Wijaya et al. , (2022) and Hiko et al. , (2022) which shows that the effective use of reading corners has an impact on increasing the intensity of reading and students' literacy skills . In addition, reading habits that are instilled from an early age make students more disciplined in reading, broaden their horizons, and increase their curiosity about something, thus supporting the optimization of students' potential as a whole (Jamaludin et al., 2023) .



**Figure 2.** Students Choose and Read Books in the Class Reading Corner

Reading corners have advantages that can improve students' literacy skills. The advantages of reading corners can be associated with indicators of the achievement of reading corner utilization as explained by Masruroh in Wiyanti, (2023) . In this study, the existence of varied reading materials is the main advantage of reading corners, because it provides students with access to choose reading materials according to their wishes so that they can broaden their horizons and knowledge. Reading corners are able to stimulate students' interest in reading, thus making a significant contribution to increasing the frequency of reading which has a positive impact on literacy skills. The increased frequency of reading not only strengthens students' understanding of the material, but also encourages active communication between teachers and students, thus creating a more dynamic learning process. In addition, the design of a comfortable reading corner equipped with attractive visual elements can create a conducive and enjoyable environment, so that students are more motivated to use these facilities optimally. Similar to the research of Kurniawan et al. , (2020) showed that a reading corner that is fun and full of attraction makes students more likely to spend their time there.

literacy skills because they provide a supportive environment and varied resources for reading. Reading corners that are well maintained and managed by all class members not only create a supportive learning environment but also train students' responsibility in maintaining the facilities.

Not only that, reading corners can also shape students' character, where students can learn positive values from the books they have read, so that they can form a better personality. In line with the research of Juliansyah & Rukmana, (2022) stated that the class reading corner must always be updated and preserved by all parties in the school so that students are interested in visiting it. The reading corner not only functions as a reference for information, but also provides a pleasant reading experience, helps students gain knowledge, and improves students' critical thinking skills (Khoirunnisa & Sukartono, 2024) . In line with the research of Janawati & Riantini , (2024) that the existence of a reading corner can significantly increase students' enthusiasm for learning by creating a deep interest in books and reading activities. In addition, the reading corner creates a conducive learning environment, making it effective in fostering a reading culture among students (Zakiya et al., 2023) . As an initial step in a literacy- based education approach , in addition to attracting students' attention, the reading corner also encourages students to make reading a sustainable habit, so that it can strengthen overall literacy skills (Subardin et al., 2023) .

## **CONCLUSION**

The use of reading corners can provide convenience for students to access reading books, increase knowledge, and motivate students to enjoy reading. This contributes to improving literacy skills and developing students' potential. With the presence of a reading corner, students are more enthusiastic in participating in literacy activities. Students' enthusiasm can be seen from their enthusiasm and interest in reading, as well as their desire to continue developing their literacy skill. In addition, the reading corner provides a pleasant atmosphere in the classroom and is able to maintain an interesting atmosphere and prevent boredom for students, because the design is attractive and the available reading books are replaced periodically. This illustrates that literacy activities through the use of reading corners are able to attract students' attention.

This study has several limitations, namely the relatively small sample size, so the results may not be representative of the population as a whole. In addition, there is a possibility of the influence of external factors that have the potential to affect students' literacy skills that are not measured or optimally controlled in this study. For further researchers who wish to conduct similar research, it is recommended to focus more on the characteristics and needs of students and adequate facilities. Suboptimal facilities and infrastructure are one of the main obstacles in implementing literacy activities. Meanwhile, supporting factors for literacy activities are the need for teacher enthusiasm and creativity in implementing literacy programs, as well as support from the principal who is highly committed to strengthening literacy in schools.

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