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A Systematic Literature Review on School Literacy Movement

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ABSTRACT

Background

The School Literacy Movement (SLM) has gained increasing attention as a strategic initiative to improve students' literacy skills across various educational levels. This movement responds to global and national concerns about declining reading habits, comprehension skills, and critical thinking among students. Various studies have explored its implementation, challenges, and outcomes; however, a comprehensive synthesis of existing literature is needed to map the current state of research and identify gaps.

Purpose

This study aims to systematically review and synthesize research findings related to the School Literacy Movement, focusing on its objectives, implementation strategies, outcomes, and the challenges encountered.

Design/method/approach

This research adopts a systematic literature review (SLR) with databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, and Google Scholar were searched for peer-reviewed articles published between 2020 and 2024.

Results

The review identified a total of 42 relevant studies. Findings show that the SLM has been implemented with varying degrees of success depending on contextual factors such as school leadership, teacher training, student engagement, and availability of resources. Most studies reported improvements in reading interest and comprehension; however, several highlighted issues with sustainability, monitoring, and evaluation.

Contribution/value

This review provides valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers by offering a synthesized overview of what has been done and what remains to be addressed in the field of school-based literacy initiatives. It underscores the need for more longitudinal studies and context-specific strategies to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of literacy movements in schools.

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INTRODUCTION

The Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA) is a study conducted by the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD). The OECD conducts international surveys to measure 15-year-old students' basic literacy levels in reading, math and science. When examined further about 30% of students achieved at least Level 2 reading proficiency (OECD average: 77%). At a minimum, students can identify the main idea in a text of moderate length, locate information based on explicit, though sometimes complex, criteria and can reflect on the purpose and form of the text when explicitly directed to do so. About 28% of students in Indonesia reached Level 2 or higher in mathematics (OECD average: 76%). At a minimum, students can interpret and recognize, without direct instruction, how (simple) situations can be represented mathematically (e.g. comparing the total distance across two alternative routes, or converting prices into different currencies). About 40% of students in Indonesia reached Level 2 or higher in science (OECD average: 78%). At a minimum, students can recognize correct explanations for familiar scientific phenomena and can use that knowledge to identify, in simple cases, whether a conclusion is valid based on given data (OECD, 2019).

The 2018 PISA results showed that Indonesia ranked in the bottom 10 out of 79 participating countries. The average reading ability of Indonesian students was 80 points below the OECD average. Indonesian students' abilities are also still below the achievements of students in ASEAN countries. The average reading, math, and science skills of Indonesian students were 42 points, 52 points, and 37 points below the ASEAN average, respectively. Many factors affect student competence, including internal factors (e.g. self-motivation to learn, resilience, competitive nature, etc.) and external factors (e.g. learning environment at school and at home, teaching practices by teachers, completeness of learning facilities, etc.). These factors in PISA 2018 were also examined through student questionnaires and school questionnaires by looking at the answers of school principals and students' perceptions related to these various factors (OECD, 2019).

The need for literacy in this global era requires the government to provide and facilitate education systems and services in accordance with the 1945 Constitution, Article 31, Paragraph 3, The government seeks and organizes a national education system that increases faith and piety and noble character in order to educate the nation's life, which is regulated by law. This paragraph confirms that literacy programs also include efforts to develop human potential that includes intellectual, emotional, linguistic, aesthetic, social, spiritual intelligence, with adaptability to the development of technology and information flows (Purwanto et al., 2023).

The results of the National and Provincial Alibaca Index calculations show that the dimension that contributes the most points is the Proficiency Dimension. This dimension is composed of two indicators, namely free Latin illiteracy and average years of schooling of the population aged 25+. This shows that in general the community's ability to access reading materials is adequate. The other dimension that gives considerable points is the Alternative Dimension. This dimension is composed of indicators of schools that have internet networks, household members who access the internet, and household members

who use computers. This presents the possibility of further utilizing electronic devices to empower community literacy activities. However, this dimension also shows that community access to the internet and computers is still uneven in all regions. The cultural dimension shows that people's habit of accessing literacy materials is still low. This dimension describes people's behavior in reading printed books, reading newspapers or magazines, reading articles or news on electronic media/internet, and visiting public libraries and reading parks is still quite low. Access in schools is categorized as very low, indicated by the lack of school libraries in good condition and the inadequate number of school library management staff. Meanwhile, access in the community consists of the existence of public libraries, community libraries, and households that purchase newspapers and magazines. In the Public Library indicator, the presence of village libraries is still far from ideal and needs to be increased. While the number of community libraries (reading parks and mobile libraries), although still far from sufficient, continues to grow along with the rise of literacy activities supported by citizens and communities, so this is quite encouraging and provides an alternative for people in areas that have not been reached by public libraries (Solihin et al., 2019).

Referring to the above problems, schools as educational institutions have an important role in instilling a culture of literacy, because the literacy skills of students are closely related to the demands of the ability to understand information analytically, critically and reflectively. This study aims to identify research trends related to the School Literacy Movement that have been published within a certain period of time.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The School Literacy Movement (SLM) is a structured initiative in Indonesia aimed at enhancing students' literacy skills across various domains, including reading, writing, and speaking (Ekayani & Suwedawati, 2023; Pertiwi & Juansah, 2024).). This movement is designed to cultivate a culture of literacy within schools, thereby improving students' abilities to access, understand, and utilize information effectively (Sinambela & Ahmad, 2021). The GLS has shown promising results in fostering literacy skills among students, as evidenced by various studies that highlight its impact on reading interest, writing proficiency, and overall literacy development.

SLM initiative emphasizes six fundamental literacy domains: language, numeracy, scientific, digital, financial, and cultural literacy (Setiawati et al., 2023). To foster a culture of reading, the program incorporates various reading initiatives such as 15-minute daily reading sessions and improved access to school libraries, aiming to increase students' interest in and comprehension of texts (Romdhoni, 2024). Moreover, the movement has had a significant impact on students' writing skills, particularly in creative genres like poetry, which not only enhance their language proficiency but also serve as a medium for emotional expression and personal development (Wibowo et al., 2024).

Resource limitations pose significant challenges to the successful implementation of the SLM program. Inadequate teacher motivation, the scarcity of engaging and age-appropriate reading materials, and insufficient infrastructure are key barriers that hinder the

program's effectiveness in promoting literacy (Sari et al., 2022). Moreover, to maximize the impact of SLM on students' literacy outcomes, schools require not only additional resources but also clearly defined goals and well-structured support systems. Without these essential elements, efforts to improve literacy through GLS may fall short of expectations (Meri et al., 2023).

METHOD

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method to examine and synthesize relevant research on the School Literacy Movement. The data sources consisted of reputable academic databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, ERIC, and ScienceDirect, focusing on peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, and official reports published between 2020 and 2024. The data collection technique involved identifying studies using specific keywords including "School Literacy Movement," "literacy programs," and "education policy," followed by a screening process based on inclusion and exclusion criteria such as relevance, publication type, and research quality. The data analysis was conducted through thematic analysis, which involved coding and categorizing key findings from the selected studies to identify patterns, challenges, strategies, and outcomes associated with the implementation of the School Literacy Movement. This approach ensured a comprehensive and systematic understanding of the existing body of knowledge on the topic.

RESULTS

The results of previous research studies have been summarized by researchers as shown in table 1 below.

Table 1. School Literacy Movement

| Author | Results |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| (Kristiyaningrum & Ismanto, 2020) | 1) schools have not designed training for teachers on literacy, 2) schools have not prepared instruments to evaluate the program, 3) the literacy learning stage is implemented only for Indonesian language (it should be for all subjects), 4) schools have not prepared any costs for the literacy program. Thus it can be concluded that there are still some gaps in the implementation of the school literacy movement in secondary schools based on the Master Design of the school literacy movement issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture. |
| (Mose, 2020) | Schools play an important role in children's literacy learning and to motivate children's love for books as an academic necessity. In addition, schools are responsible for shaping children's love for learning, but in Kenya many children especially in primary schools do not have enough books. The library appreciates children by providing a variety of reading materials, making it an ideal and strategic partner in teaching literacy to children in Kenyan primary schools. |

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| (Retnasari et al., 2022) | The educational environment at SDN Lempuyangwangi views literacy culture as more than just reading books, but also includes broader literacies such as math literacy and technology literacy. The GLS culture program consists of writing guidance, library visit competitions, literacy celebrations, reading halls, reading in the library and literacy corners. The success of GLS is supported by good cooperation. Cooperation within the school, the school with the committee and the school with parents. Communication forums are established through regular meetings and two-way parent associations |
| (Tabroni et al., 2022) | To strengthen and develop literacy in elementary schools after the Covid-19 pandemic, 4 (four) important elements must be determined, namely parents, teachers, schools, and government. This research contributes to strengthening literacy development in schools in all countries around the world, especially Indonesia. Literacy skills can empower and improve the quality of individuals, families, communities. Because they can affect large areas, literacy skills help alleviate poverty, reduce the growth of the child mortality population, and ensure sustainable development and the realization of peace. |
| (Walipah et al., 2020) | The literacy movement program can improve the speed reading skills of grade V students at SDN Karapyak. This can be seen from the presentation of students who passed the reading speed test before implementing the school literacy movement program. Only 5.4% (40 people) and increased to 73% (54 people) after attending the school literacy movement program. Thus, the implementation of the school literacy movement program can improve students' speed reading skills especially at SDN 1 Karapyak. |
| (Prasetya & Adlan, 2022) | The management of literacy program planning is done through the subject teachers' deliberation forum which is planned annually based on the school's annual work program plan. Literacy program activities are an integration of listening, speaking, writing, reading and critical thinking skills. In addition, the literacy program has improved the reading culture among teachers and students, especially in superior and independent schools. The literacy program at SDN Binjai is carried out through three stages: habituation, development and learning. At the evaluation level, it is carried out programmatically, measurably and every semester. In general, the literacy program is very good and effective because it can increase students' interest and literacy competence, also increase school library learning resources, improve literacy culture and student character. |

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| (Kartikasari & Nuryasana, 2022) | Primary schools in Indonesia have seriously prepared SLM as evidenced by the establishment of SLM activity coordinators, the preparation of SLM activity schedules and the preparation of reading books for each class. The supporting factors that emerged were that the school principal had a good commitment in implementing SLM activities, teachers and students as well as other school components contributed to the success of SLM activities in primary schools. The availability of sufficient funds to provide the necessary books is also a supporting factor for SLM. While the inhibiting factor is that there are still very few books available so that students cannot choose reading books that suit their interests. |
| (Fadillah & Istikomah, 2021) | The strategy of acculturating the School Literacy Movement is good enough by (1) conditioning the physical environment with a reading corner and students' work displayed around the school environment, (2) conditioning the social and affective environment by giving rewards to students, the commemoration of holidays and national days integrated with literacy learning, and (3) conditioning the academic environment with 15 minutes of reading comfort, the existence of a School Literacy Team and having a library with facilities that accommodate it. |

The School Literacy Movement is fundamentally anchored in six core literacies that are deemed essential for equipping students with the competencies necessary to navigate the complexities of 21st-century life. These literacies language, numeracy, scientific, digital, financial, and cultural and civic literacy are interrelated and work synergistically to foster holistic student development. Language literacy involves the ability to read, write, and communicate effectively in the dominant language of instruction. Numeracy literacy focuses on the understanding and application of mathematical principles in real-life contexts. Scientific literacy encourages critical thinking and informed engagement with scientific issues. Digital literacy entails the effective use of technology to access, evaluate, and generate information. Financial literacy covers skills necessary for responsible personal and household financial management. Lastly, cultural and civic literacy promotes awareness of cultural values and civic responsibilities, preparing students to actively participate in society. These literacies transcend academic domains and are essential life skills that underpin students' readiness to face future challenges (Setiawati et al., 2023).

The implementation of the School Literacy Movement is context-dependent, varying across educational levels and institutional settings. At the elementary school level, the program has successfully nurtured reading interest through engaging activities such as reading corners, storytelling sessions, and poetry contests. The effectiveness of these initiatives, however, is often influenced by the availability of reading materials, teacher enthusiasm, and administrative support (Sari et al., 2022). In junior high schools, the implementation strategy encompasses habituation, instructional integration, and

developmental activities. Practices such as pre-class reading sessions, mandatory library visits, and the incorporation of literacy components into classroom lessons are common. Despite these efforts, the consistency and depth of implementation vary, with some schools encountering difficulties in maximizing the program's potential (Son et al., 2023). At the high school level, students tend to exhibit stronger mastery of the six foundational literacies, indicating a higher level of program maturity. Nonetheless, certain components particularly financial literacy initiatives remain underdeveloped and require further attention to reach their full effectiveness (Setiawati et al., 2023).

Table2. Comparison of SLM Implementation Across Different School Levels

| School Level | Focus Areas | Source |
|--------------------|--|--|
| Elementary School | Reading interest, poetry writing, storytelling, reading corners, and library use | (Sari et al., 2022) (Wibowo et al., 2024) |
| Junior High School | Habituation, learning, and development activities, including reading before classes | (Son et al., 2023) |
| High School | Mastery of six basic literacies, with a focus on language, numeracy, and scientific literacy | (Setiawati et al., 2023) |

DISCUSSION

The School Literacy Movement has shown a measurable positive impact on students' literacy development and academic performance. One of the most significant outcomes is the increased interest in reading, particularly at the elementary level, where students have shown greater enthusiasm and creativity, producing poetry, short stories, and comics as a result of program activities (Sari et al., 2022; Wibowo et al., 2024). The initiative has also led to improved writing skills, especially in poetic expression. For example, a study at SDN Kletekan 2 reported substantial gains in students' poetry writing abilities following sustained participation in literacy activities (Wibowo et al., 2024). In addition, speaking skills have improved through oral activities like storytelling and class discussions, enabling students to build confidence and fluency in public speaking and interpersonal communication (Romdhoni, 2024).

Despite its promise, the School Literacy Movement faces several notable challenges that hinder its full implementation. A primary concern is the lack of resources, especially in rural or underfunded schools, where access to libraries, reading materials, and technological tools is limited (Susanti et al., 2022; Wijayanti et al., 2024). Another critical issue is teacher motivation and awareness; successful implementation relies heavily on educators who are well-informed and committed, yet many still lack adequate training and confidence (Sari et al., 2022; Wijayanti et al., 2024). Furthermore, infrastructure limitations, such as the absence

of dedicated reading rooms or functional libraries, reduce the effectiveness of literacy activities (Purwanto et al., 2023). Finally, student engagement presents an ongoing challenge, as some students display minimal interest in literacy-related tasks, which in turn affects program outcomes (Susanti et al., 2022).

The findings suggest several policy implications and strategic recommendations to enhance the impact and sustainability of the School Literacy Movement. First, increased resource allocation is essential, especially for schools in disadvantaged areas, to ensure equal access to books, infrastructure, and digital tools. Second, comprehensive teacher training is crucial to equip educators with the skills and knowledge needed to effectively implement literacy initiatives. Third, community involvement should be prioritized, as collaboration with parents and local stakeholders fosters a supportive literacy environment both at school and at home (Susanti et al., 2022; Zumratun, 2022). Finally, ongoing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are needed to assess the program's implementation and outcomes regularly, allowing for continuous improvement based on evidence and feedback (Meri et al., 2023; Son et al., 2023).

CONCLUSION

The School Literacy Movement represents a vital initiative aimed at strengthening students' essential competencies through the integration of six foundational literacies: language, numeracy, scientific, digital, financial, and cultural and civic literacy. While the movement has demonstrated positive impacts such as enhancing reading interest, writing ability, and speaking skills its implementation remains uneven across educational levels and regions. Challenges such as limited resources, insufficient teacher preparedness, inadequate infrastructure, and low student engagement continue to hinder its full potential. Nonetheless, the evidence suggests that with stronger policy support, increased investment in teacher training and infrastructure, and greater community involvement, the School Literacy Movement can serve as a powerful driver of educational transformation and lifelong learning for students across Indonesia.

Based on the findings, several suggestions can be proposed to enhance the effectiveness of the School Literacy Movement. First, schools and policymakers should prioritize equitable resource distribution, particularly in rural and underserved areas, to provide access to books, libraries, and digital tools. Second, continuous professional development and training programs are essential to equip teachers with the skills and motivation required to implement literacy activities meaningfully. Third, schools should actively involve parents and local communities in literacy programs to create a supportive learning environment beyond the classroom. Fourth, integrating literacy across all subjects in a creative and contextual manner can help maintain student interest and participation. Lastly, regular monitoring and evaluation must be conducted to identify gaps, measure progress, and ensure that the movement aligns with national literacy goals and student needs.

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