

Literacy Program to Foster Reading Habits from an Early Age for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Students

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the implementation of a literacy program to introduce early reading habits for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Students and analyse its impact on students' reading interest. The background of this research is based on the low literacy culture of Indonesian students and the importance of fostering early reading habits as a foundation for learning and character development. The approach used in this study was qualitative with descriptive methods. Data collection techniques were conducted through interviews, observation, and documentation. The research subjects included the principal, literacy mentor teachers, students, and parents in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. The results show that the literacy program at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Students is implemented through various strategies, such as a 15-minute reading habit, story reading by teachers, the provision of reading boxes in each classroom, and parental involvement. This program has been proven to increase students' interest in reading, as evidenced by changes in student behaviours, who have begun actively reading during their free time, and increased student comprehension of the reading material. Challenges faced in program implementation include limited facilities, lack of teacher training, and a lack of engaging reading materials. However, active teacher participation and parental support are crucial factors in the success of this literacy program. This research recommends developing more engaging literacy resources and establishing reading communities, such as book clubs, to strengthen the reading culture among students. Thus, literacy programs not only play a role in improving reading skills but also serve as a foundation for students' character and love of knowledge.

Keywords: Literacy Program, Reading Habit, Early Age, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Students



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Introduction

Implementing a structured literacy program in elementary schools is crucial for building a strong literacy foundation. This program aims to introduce students to reading habits in a fun and engaging way, thereby motivating them to read independently outside of the school environment. Activities such as shared reading, storytelling, and literacy games need to be integrated into the program to increase students' interest and understanding of texts. With this literacy program, students will naturally seek and understand ways to solve personal problems and become critical thinkers (Arum Nisma Wulanjani & Candradewi Wahyu Anggraeni, 2019). The implementation of the literacy program is a national program, so it needs to be implemented early, such as by including it in elementary school education and continuing through to junior high school. Its existence is an integral part of education to improve the quality of learning in schools. Therefore, the development of school literacy programs requires special attention so that they can be optimized by the entire school community (Nuryana et al., 2020).

Literacy programs are also essential for introducing students to the habit of reading from an early age, as they foster strong, unique characteristics. Study from Celik show that Reading is a fundamental aspect of a child's education and personal development (Celik, 2019). Good reading skills are crucial not only for academic success but also for the development of critical thinking skills, creativity, and social skills, Indonesia, many children still struggle with reading and lack a strong reading habit. This can be caused by various factors, including a lack of access to quality reading materials, minimal support from the community, and a lack of systematic programs to encourage reading (Majid & Tan, 2021). Reading is an activity or cognitive process that seeks to discover various information contained in writing. By reading, one can acquire various information and knowledge that is currently developing, both local and global, from the simplest to the most complex. Furthermore, reading is a language skill that plays a crucial role in the learning process. Reading is inherently complex and involves many things, not just reciting written text, but also visual, thinking, psycholinguistic, and metacognitive activities.

The habit of reading can be defined as a routine and repeated activity to obtain information, knowledge, or entertainment through various reading media, such as books, articles, journals, and other reading materials. This habit involves a person's interest in and commitment to reading as part of a lifestyle or routine focused on improving literacy and understanding of the world around them (Megantara & Abdul Wachid BS., 2021). A reading habit that is ingrained in every child will improve academic achievement, producing individuals with high-quality competencies. Success in school and in society will be more assured, opening opportunities for greater success. It must be acknowledged that literacy, particularly reading, is very low among Indonesian students. Yet, reading is crucial to the student learning process. Reading is closely linked to the pathways necessary to acquire knowledge.

Furthermore the study from (Helena Arisandi et al., 2018) and (Ilhaq & Parveen, 2020) explore that the habit of reading can begin at an early age because children at this age have so many unique qualities. During this period, children are experiencing rapid physical and psychological development. This stage of development is also known as the golden age. Introducing children to reading from an early age is crucial. One way to do this is by providing engaging reading books. This fosters early reading habits and foster a love of reading. Furthermore, other benefits for children from early reading include enriching vocabulary, increasing reading speed, improving understanding of meaning and word structure, and so on.

Another study from (Efendi et al., 2022) shows that there is a long-term benefits of literacy programs that can Improved Quality of Life: Literacy enhances critical thinking skills, helping people make better decisions. Poverty Reduction: Literacy enables individuals to access better educational and employment opportunities. Increased Social Participation: Literate individuals tend to be more active in social activities and have a better understanding of their rights and obligations. Advancing the Economy: Having a literate society increases opportunities for innovation, productivity, and economic progress. Literacy programs are an essential foundation for individual and societal progress. With good literacy skills, individuals can access information, improve their skills, and make smarter decisions in their daily lives. Literacy programs focus not only on reading and writing skills but also on developing critical thinking skills, which are essential in today's information age. Integrated initiatives, strong support from various parties, and creative methods are key to advancing literacy for a better generation. The government, educational institutions, communities, and the private sector must work together to provide the necessary facilities, infrastructure, and training. With a holistic approach, this literacy program can have a broad positive impact, building a more empowered society that is ready to face future challenges

The role of teachers and parents is also crucial in supporting literacy programs (Alam, 2021). Teachers must play an active role in creating a conducive learning environment and inspiring students to read. They need to be equipped with adequate training and resources to implement literacy activities in the classroom. This way, teachers can develop effective and engaging teaching methods for students. Furthermore (Yunita & Apriliya, 2022) in their study explore that parents are also expected to participate

in reading activities at home. Parental involvement in the reading process can foster consistent reading habits in children. Support from both teachers and parents is considered crucial to creating a strong and sustainable literacy ecosystem. The study form (Ranti Wulandari, 2017) stated that Teachers and parents also play a crucial role in the success of literacy programs. Teachers act as facilitators, providing motivation and engaging literacy learning methods, while parents are responsible for creating a supportive environment for children to read and write at home. Parents can also introduce a reading culture from an early age by providing engaging reading materials at home.

Literacy program development must consider Indonesia's cultural and linguistic diversity. Providing relevant and engaging reading materials, including folktales and local books, can increase students' motivation to read. The program also needs to address individual student needs and interests so that each child feels valued and motivated to engage in reading activities (Hidayatullah et al., 2023). The challenges of today's era demand that everyone develop. Therefore, creativity development must be cultivated from an early age, so that children will eventually possess extensive knowledge and adequate skills, supported by positive habits. To ensure these habits are ingrained in everyone, the process of developing creativity and skills needs to begin at an early age.

Methods

In this study, the author used a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is a research approach that aims to understand phenomena in depth and holistically by generating descriptive data in the form of observable words, behaviours, or documents (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Furthermore this research uses descriptive study (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2019) to focuses on the meanings individuals give to their experiences in a natural context without variable manipulation. This method emphasizes in-depth exploration, understanding, and interpretation of the research subjects.

The data is collected through interviews, observation and Documentation (Silverman, 2019). The subject of this study including students, teacher, principal and parents of MI Mambaul Khairat Bulangan Branta Pegantenan Pamekasan in which this school implementing literacy program to foster student reading habit in their school. This research explored the process, impact and factors affected the literacy program. Data analysis process through data reduction, data display and conclusion. The findings were then verified through a process of triangulation validation of sources and techniques to ensure the reliability and credibility of the data.

Results and Discussions

1. Results

a. Method and strategy of Literacy Program to Foster Reading Habits from An Early Age for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Students

Based on interviews conducted by researchers with the principal, literacy teacher, and parents of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students, data shows that the literacy program at the institution has been implemented. Although relatively new, this program has been systematically designed and implemented using various methods and strategies to support the development of reading habits from an early age. The findings related to the methods and strategies used in implementing the literacy program are as follows:

1) Teacher Role Model in Reading

Teachers act as role models in reading activities. Before students are directed to read, teachers first demonstrate reading habits in front of them. This strategy aims to foster students' interest in reading through direct examples. This approach is considered effective because students are more likely to imitate the positive behaviours demonstrated by their teachers.

2) Utilization of Break Time and Dedicated Time for Reading

The school encourages students to use break time to visit the library. In this activity, students do not read independently, but are accompanied by teachers to ensure a more effective

reading process. Furthermore, teachers also allocate dedicated time in daily classroom activities for reading, both in formal and informal settings. c. Provision of Reading Boxes in Every Classroom. One innovation implemented by the school is the provision of reading boxes or cupboards in every classroom. These facilities serve as storage for reading materials that students can access directly without having to go to the library. This strategy aims to bring students closer to reading materials and facilitate access, fostering a reading habit.

3) Use of the Story Reading Method

Teachers read engaging stories as part of literacy activities. This method is chosen to engage students and foster a sense of enjoyment in reading. Through reading stories, students not only receive entertainment but also learn to understand the content and foster motivation to read independently.

4) Providing Freedom in Choosing Reading Materials

In the implementation of the literacy program, students are given the freedom to choose types of reading materials according to their interests. This is done to ensure students feel comfortable and unburdened in their reading activities. However, teachers still insert certain thematic reading materials, such as those related to science lessons, to continue to direct students towards reading that is also educational.

5) Teacher-Based Reading Assistance

In reading activities, both in class and in the library, students are accompanied by teachers to ensure that reading activities are aligned with the program's objectives. This assistance is also provided to ensure students understand the reading content and foster discipline and consistency in reading.

6) Collaboration between School and Parents

The school actively invites parents to discuss effective ways to foster students' interest in reading at home. Parents provide support for the literacy program by suggesting that activities be conducted regularly and by providing engaging reading materials. This collaboration is important to ensure that reading habits are not only formed at school but also reinforced at home.

7) Literacy Facility and Activity Development Plan

Teachers have future to improve supporting facilities for the literacy program, including creating comfortable and attractive reading corners within the school environment and forming book clubs. These book clubs are expected to serve as a forum for students to discuss and share reading experiences, both in formal and informal contexts.

8) Utilization of the Library as a Literacy Resource

Currently, the school environment supports the literacy program by utilizing the library as the primary place for reading. However, teachers recognize the need for further development to create a more comprehensive literacy ecosystem.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that this Madrasah Ibtidaiyah has implemented a literacy program through various methods and strategies, including role models, provision of facilities, engaging learning methods, and collaboration with parents. Although the program is still in its early stages, the steps taken demonstrate the school's commitment to instilling a reading culture in students from an early age. It can be seen in the following table:

No	Aspect/Strategy	Brief Description	Purpose/Benefit
1	Teacher as Reading Role Model	Teachers read in front of students before reading activities begin.	To cultivate reading interest through teacher modelling.

2	Use of Break Time and Dedicated Reading Time	Students are encouraged to read in the library during breaks and given dedicated reading time in class.	To develop a daily reading habit among students.
3	Provision of Reading Boxes in Each Classroom	Each classroom has a reading box or cupboard that is easily accessible.	To bring reading materials closer and encourage consistent reading.
4	Story Reading Method	Teachers read engaging stories to students as part of literacy activities.	To increase students' engagement and comprehension in reading.
5	Freedom to Choose Reading Materials	Students are free to choose books according to their interests, with some thematic materials added by teachers.	To make reading enjoyable and motivating for students.
6	Teacher-Guided Reading Assistance	Teachers accompany students during reading sessions in class and the library.	To help students understand reading content and build reading discipline.
7	Collaboration Between School and Parents	The school involves parents in fostering reading habits at home.	To strengthen reading culture within the family environment.
8	Development of Literacy Facilities and Activities	Plans to create reading corners, book clubs, and comfortable reading spaces.	To enhance literacy activities and make them more attractive.
9	Utilization of the Library as a Literacy Resource	The library serves as the main hub for reading activities.	To expand the school's literacy ecosystem.

b. The impact of implementing a literacy program on students' reading interest at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students.

Based on interviews with the principal, literacy mentor teacher, students, and parents of MI Mambaul Khairat, it was found that the implementation of the literacy program had a significant impact on increasing students' interest in reading. The impacts found can be described as follows:

1) Improving Student Reading and Comprehension Skills

The principal stated that through the literacy program, students are not only encouraged to read but also guided to understand the content of the reading. Literacy is considered an important foundation for students' learning. By making reading a habit, students are better prepared to receive lessons because they already have strong basic literacy skills.

2) Changes in Leisure Habits

The literacy mentor teacher observed changes in student behaviour. Previously, they preferred playing or buying snacks during recess, but now they are increasingly spending their recess time in the library reading. This indicates that the literacy program has been able to shift students' interests from non-academic activities to more intellectually productive ones.

3) Growing Reading Interest Gradually

Based on student interviews, it was discovered that the literacy program helped foster a love of reading, especially if the books provided were interesting. Although there was still the temptation to play, students showed enthusiasm for reading when the reading material matched their interests. This indicates that reading interest develops along with a fun and relevant approach.

4) Increasing Self-Confidence and Enthusiasm for Learning

Students feel smarter and more capable of learning new things since participating in the literacy program. This shows that reading not only forms a habit but also increases students' self-confidence and broadens their horizons. The program has an intellectual impact that encourages students to be more active in the learning process.

5) More Positive Learning Environment Changes

The literacy program creates a more enjoyable learning atmosphere. Students feel happy and proud to attend due to the regular and varied literacy activities. This demonstrates that literacy has successfully created a conducive learning environment and motivated students to develop a love of books from an early age.

6) Encouraging Parental Involvement in Children's Literacy

Parents stated that the literacy program has had a positive impact on the development of children's reading skills. They responded to this program by actively providing books at home and reading bedtime stories. This demonstrates that the impact of the literacy program is not only felt at school but also raises parental awareness to support reading habits at home.

7) Formation of a Collective Literacy Culture

The literacy program implemented not only has an impact on individuals but also fosters a collective culture among students. Many students have begun to enjoy reading with their friends, both in class and in the library. This culture reinforces reading as a fun and valuable social activity.

8) Encouraging the Development of Literacy Facilities

The accompanying teacher emphasized the importance of developing attractive reading corners and reading rooms to enhance student comfort while reading. This demonstrates that the literacy program encourages the school to continuously improve and develop facilities that support reading activities.

Overall, it can be concluded that the literacy program implemented at this Madrasah Ibtidaiyah has had a positive impact on increasing students' interest in reading. This impact is evident in aspects of reading ability, behavioural changes, increased enthusiasm for learning, parental involvement, and the formation of a collective literacy culture. This program has demonstrated its effectiveness in forming reading habits from an early age, although further development is still needed in terms of facilities and variety of activities so that the program can continue to be sustainable and have a long-term impact. It can be seen in the following table:

No	Impact	Brief Description	Evidence/Findings
1	Improved Reading and Comprehension Skills	Students not only read but also understand the content.	Students are better prepared to learn new lessons.

2	Changes in Leisure Habits	Students now prefer reading in the library during breaks.	A shift from playing activities to reading activities.
3	Gradual Growth of Reading Interest	Students begin to enjoy reading, especially when books are interesting.	Interest develops through enjoyable and relevant approaches.
4	Increased Self-Confidence and Learning Motivation	Reading helps students feel smarter and more motivated to learn.	Students become more active in the learning process.
5	More Positive Learning Environment	Learning becomes more enjoyable and conducive to reading habits.	Students feel happy and proud to join literacy activities.
6	Parental Involvement in Literacy	Parents provide books and read together with their children at home.	Reading culture extends into the home environment.
7	Formation of a Collective Literacy Culture	Students start reading with their friends in class and in the library.	Reading becomes a fun and social activity.
8	Encouragement for Facility Development	Teachers are motivated to create more reading corners and spaces.	The program encourages continuous improvement of literacy facilities.

2. Discussion

a. Method and strategy of Literacy Program to Foster Reading Habits from An Early Age for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Students

One of the main strategies implemented is providing reading examples by teachers. Reading is not just about reading, but more than that, teachers provide concrete examples through consistent reading behaviour in front of students. This role-modelling strategy is crucial because elementary school-aged children tend to imitate what they see from authoritative figures like teachers. When students see their teachers reading enthusiastically, they are encouraged to imitate that habit. This aligns with Bandura's social learning theory in McLeod, which states that individuals learn through observing the behaviour of others who are considered role models (McLeod, 2016). In this context, teachers serve as effective role models in building motivation and positive attitudes toward reading.

Furthermore, teacher role models serve to create a conducive literacy environment. Teachers who regularly read in the classroom will create a reading culture that becomes part of the daily routine. Thus, reading is no longer seen as merely an obligation but becomes part of the students' lifestyle. When this culture is established, students will more easily develop their literacy skills naturally and sustainably. With this role model, it is hoped that behavioural changes in students will occur, from simply following instructions to actively participating in literacy activities (Hasibuan & Ain, 2024). Teachers are not just transmitters of material, but also moral and intellectual guides who instils important values in students' lives, including a love of reading. This strategy has proven effective in initiating and guiding reading habits from an early age.

Second is using break time for reading is an effective strategy because it is conducted in a less formal setting. Students feel unburdened but still receive positive incentives to read. Teacher guidance in this activity provides added value, as teachers can guide students in selecting reading materials appropriate to their interests and age, while also helping them understand the content in depth (Rahim & Hulukati, 2021). Furthermore, schools also provide dedicated reading time outside of core class hours. This time is utilized through literacy activities integrated into the daily

schedule. This strategy is essential for establishing a consistent reading routine, which forms the foundation for strong reading habits. With this dedicated time, reading becomes more than just an additional task, but rather an enjoyable part of the learning process. Habits formed through regular activities are more durable, and ultimately, students will develop awareness and responsibility for independent reading.

It is also noted that strategies used in implementing the literacy program include a 15-minute reading habit before class, establishing a reading corner in the classroom, and assigning reading assignments at home. These strategies align with the concept that teacher implementation of a literacy program refers to a planned effort undertaken by educators to improve students' literacy skills through structured and continuous learning (Nguyen, 2022). A 15-minute reading activity before class, for example, aims to establish a reading habit from an early age. This strategy demonstrates that teachers not only structure reading activities as routines but also involve students in the process of selecting reading materials and post-reading evaluations, such as retelling the book's content. Teachers' implementation of literacy strategies not only focuses on the classroom but also extends to students' homes (Novitasari et al., 2023). Teachers encourage parental involvement through reading assignments with their children at home. This step reinforces the view that effective literacy programs must involve collaboration between schools and families. Effective literacy programs must be comprehensive, consider the social and cultural context, and involve various parties, including schools, families, and the community.

Third is provision of reading facilities by providing reading boxes or reading cabinets in each classroom. This strategy makes it very easy for students to access reading materials whenever they have free time (Nurdianingsih, 2021). Providing a reading box is a concrete step in creating a classroom environment that supports literacy. With books in the classroom, students do not have to go to the library to read. This creates a close relationship between students and books and eliminates technical barriers that might hinder their interest in reading. Books become part of students' daily lives, not just for assignments or teacher instructions. The reading box facility can also spark students' curiosity about the available reading materials. Teachers can rotate the contents of the reading box regularly to maintain students' enthusiasm for the diverse collection. Books that are age-appropriate and interest-appropriate will more easily capture their attention, encouraging them to read voluntarily, rather than under duress. In the context of literacy development, easy access to reading materials is one indicator of a program's success. With strategies like the reading box, schools have taken a step forward in providing resources that support the development of a reading culture among elementary school students.

Forth is the storytelling method is highly suitable for elementary school students because it aligns with their cognitive developmental stage. At this age, children are more easily captivated by oral narratives, especially when accompanied by engaging expressions and intonation. Storytelling is not only entertaining but also instils new vocabulary, moral values, and good listening habits in students. In the context of literacy learning, storytelling plays a crucial role as a bridge between children and reading texts. Children who are not yet fluent readers can still enjoy the story and be drawn to books. As they become familiar and comfortable with books, they will develop a desire to read independently. In other words, storytelling is a transitional method toward stronger active reading skills. These results align with other research that shows that teacher-led story reading increases children's enthusiasm and understanding of the reading content, especially in the lower elementary grades (Apriyani & Suyadi, 2023). Similar findings also explain that the storytelling method can create a fun learning environment and is effective in instilling a love of reading. Implementing this method strengthens the emotional bond between teachers and students and fosters the perception that reading is a fun and meaningful activity.

Another strategy implemented by teachers in literacy programs is to give students the freedom to choose their own reading books. Freedom to choose reading material is part of a student-centered learning approach. With this strategy, students have the autonomy to read books that suit their interests, making their engagement in reading activities more active and meaningful. This freedom also fosters a sense of responsibility and ownership of their own learning process. Providing freedom to choose reading material also has a positive impact on students' intrinsic motivation. Children who are allowed to choose tend to feel more excited and enthusiastic about reading. They do not feel pressured to read a particular book, but instead feel valued for their choice. This strategy strengthens their emotional engagement with literacy activities, which is an important aspect of building lasting reading habits. This finding aligns with other research, which states that students who are given the freedom to choose books show increased participation and longer reading duration than those who are randomly assigned books (Boyask et al., 2023). It also aligns with research confirming that this approach increases students' independence and responsibility in reading activities (Muttaqien Al-Manduriy et al., 2023). Therefore, this strategy not only encourages reading interest but also supports the development of positive character traits in students.

The last is parents' collaboration. This collaboration demonstrates that literacy is not solely the responsibility of the school, but also involves the family as the primary learning environment. Involving parents in literacy programs has a significant impact because students spend more time at home than at school. When parents accompany, model, or simply make time to read with their children, reading habits are more likely to develop and persist. This role cannot be completely replaced by teachers or schools. This strategy also strengthens communication between schools and families in a joint effort to build a culture of literacy. Parents can share their children's progress at home and gain an understanding of the importance of accompanying their children in reading. Thus, this approach not only supports reading activities but also strengthens the relationship between formal and informal education. Other research supports this approach by stating that collaboration between schools and parents plays a significant role in fostering a culture of literacy at home, especially in early childhood students. Furthermore, research from (Romero-González et al., 2023) and (Jamshidifarsani et al., 2023) shows that parental involvement in home reading programs has a positive impact on children's reading abilities and motivation. Therefore, this collaboration is an important strategy in building sustainable reading habits.

b. The impact of implementing a literacy program on students' reading interest at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students

From all the findings of the literacy program there must be the impact of implementing this program. The first is Improving Students' Reading and Comprehension Skills. One of the main impacts of the literacy program at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah is improved students' reading and comprehension skills. The principal explained that the program aims to improve not only technical reading skills but also understanding the content of the reading. This aligns with constructivism theory, which emphasizes the importance of a learning process that involves students' active understanding of the information they acquire to foster meaningful knowledge (Ismail, 2019). In this literacy context, strong reading skills provide a foundation for students to more easily follow other subjects. The literacy program helps students gradually recognize letters, vocabulary, and reading contexts, thereby building a strong cognitive foundation. This aligns with the Zone of Proximal Development theory (Suardipa, 2020), which states that with the help of adults or more capable peers, children can develop skills they previously couldn't master independently.

Furthermore, interviews with mentor teachers also indicated that students were beginning to develop motivation to read independently. This is important because, according to self-

determination theory, intrinsic motivation will improve the quality and duration of students' learning, including reading. A literacy program that successfully builds this intrinsic motivation has the potential to create sustainable reading habits. Previous research supports this finding, finding that structured literacy programs can significantly improve students' literacy and comprehension skills. Therefore, the literacy program at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah can be considered successful in improving students' reading and comprehension skills.

Second is the literacy teacher explained that the program successfully changed students' free-time habits, especially during school breaks. Students began using this time to read in the library, having previously spent more time playing or engaging in non-academic activities. This change in habits is a positive indication of the internalization of a literacy culture in the school environment. In social learning theory, new behaviors can be formed through observation, imitation, and reinforcement from the social environment. In this regard, the role of teachers and peers is crucial in motivating students to make reading a habit in their free-time. A conducive environment in the library also supports the formation of these positive habits (Ali et al., 2021). Furthermore, the habit of reading in their free-time also indicates that students are beginning to develop self-control and responsibility for their own learning habits, which aligns with the theory of moral development at the conventional stage, where individuals begin to understand good social norms. This indicates the maturity of student behaviours shaped through the literacy program. Changes in free-time reading habits significantly increased children's reading interest and literacy skills. These findings strengthen the argument that the literacy program is effective in building positive habits in students.

Students stated that the literacy program successfully fostered a gradual interest in reading, even though the temptation to play remained. They believed that engaging and relevant books could increase their interest in reading. This aligns with the ARCS (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, Satisfaction) learning motivation theory, where attention and relevance of the material significantly determine students' interest in learning (Herianto & Wilujeng, 2021). This gradual growth of interest in reading is crucial because it develops from a sparked interest to an internalized and sustained interest if properly supported. Therefore, the success of the literacy program in providing engaging books is a key factor in developing students' interest in reading. The program also implements a fun and interactive learning approach, in line with the theory of multiple intelligences, which states that a variety of learning approaches can meet the different learning needs of each student. This makes students more interested and motivated to read. Other research shows that reading interest increases when the literacy environment provides a variety of reading materials that are appropriate to the students' characteristics (Carroll et al., 2019). These findings support the results of interviews at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students, which found that book diversity is a crucial factor in fostering students' interest in reading.

Students reported that the literacy program increased their self-confidence and enthusiasm for learning. They felt smarter and gained a wealth of new knowledge through regular reading. This self-confidence is crucial for students to be more active and enthusiastic in participating in the learning process. According to the hierarchy of needs theory, self-confidence is a crucial psychological need that must be met for individuals to achieve self-actualization and optimal development (Kaur, 2013). The literacy program helps students meet this need by developing reading and comprehension skills. Furthermore, learning motivation theory emphasizes that self-efficacy plays a significant role in influencing learning motivation and academic success. By improving literacy skills, students have greater confidence in facing learning challenges in the classroom. Other research has found a positive correlation between literacy skills and students' self-confidence and learning motivation (Nurhayati et al., 2023). Therefore, the literacy program at

Madrasah Ibtidaiyah can be said to have successfully impacted students' psychological and academic aspects.

The learning environment at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah has become more positive and enjoyable thanks to the regular and varied literacy program. Students feel proud and enjoy attending school because of the structured reading activities. This conducive environment is crucial for fostering a culture of literacy from an early age. The theory of human developmental ecology explains that microenvironments, such as schools, significantly influence the development of children's behaviour and habits (Soyer, 2019). With the support of a positive school environment, reading habits can be more easily formed and maintained. Furthermore, learning environment theory states that a supportive and comfortable environment can increase student engagement and motivation to learn. The library and reading corner at school are favourite places, providing easy access to various learning resources, encouraging students to read more frequently. A school environment that consistently supports literacy activities will increase students' interest in reading and a culture of literacy. Thus, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah success in creating a positive learning environment significantly contributes to increasing students' interest in reading.

Parental involvement plays a crucial role in supporting the success of literacy programs in schools. Parents actively read to their children before bed and provide books at home, which is part of efforts to foster reading habits outside of the school environment. According to parental involvement theory, active parental participation in children's education can significantly improve learning outcomes and reading interest (Damayanty & Sofyan, 2023). Parents' role as literacy facilitators at home reinforces what is taught in school and provides emotional and motivational support. Furthermore, social learning theory emphasizes the importance of social interactions, including within the family, for children's cognitive development. Reading books together with parents not only improves reading skills but also strengthens emotional bonds and creates enjoyable learning experiences. Parental involvement in children's literacy activities at home contributes to increased reading interest and overall academic achievement. Therefore, parental involvement at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students is a crucial factor in the success of the literacy program.

Conclusion

The implementation of the literacy program at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah demonstrates a strong commitment from all school elements to fostering early reading habits in students. Although the program is still relatively new, its implementation has been systematically and structured through a variety of mutually supportive methods and strategies. The approach implemented includes teacher role models in reading, utilizing dedicated time and break times for reading activities, providing reading boxes in the classroom, using storytelling methods to attract students' attention, allowing freedom to choose reading materials that suit their interests but remain educational, and mentoring in the reading process both in the classroom and in the library. Furthermore, the program development strategy also includes long-term plans such as the establishment of reading corners and book clubs to strengthen the culture of literacy in the school environment.

The active role of teachers as facilitators and reading role models is one of the main keys to the program's success. Furthermore, parental involvement also strengthens the program's implementation, as they contribute to establishing reading routines at home and provide support for children's age-appropriate reading materials. This collaboration between the school and parents demonstrates that the success of a literacy program depends not only on the school environment but also requires synergy with the family environment. Through a collaborative approach involving teachers, students, and parents, along with the provision of supportive literacy facilities, the literacy program at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah has created a literate, enjoyable learning environment that encourages active student

participation in reading activities. Although still in its early stages, the various strategies implemented show positive signs of developing sustainable reading habits and serve as a crucial foundation for increasing students' overall interest in reading. Thus, the implementation of the literacy program at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah has successfully integrated pedagogical approaches, role models, supporting facilities, and partnerships between the school and parents into a single, complementary system. This provides a solid foundation for fostering a culture of reading from an early age within the madrasah and opens opportunities for sustainable, long-term literacy development.

The literacy program at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah has had a significant positive impact on increasing students' interest and reading ability. Students have demonstrated behavioral changes, including increased reading habits in their free time, reflecting a growing interest in reading, increased comprehension, self-confidence, and enthusiasm for learning. The success of this program is supported by the active role of principals, teachers, students, and parents, who work together to create a collective culture of literacy at school and at home. A positive learning environment and family involvement are crucial factors in fostering a culture of literacy from an early age and shaping students' character, which fosters a love of reading and critical thinking. While the results have been effective, further development of facilities and a variety of literacy activities are needed to ensure the program's sustainability and long-term impact.

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