

Literacy Program Management in Improving Students' Reading Interest: A Qualitative Case Study in Indonesian Elementary Schools

Author:

Ressy Risthiany¹
Maman Suherman²

Affiliation:

Universitas Islam
Nusantara Bandung^{1,2}

Corresponding email

ressyalmahyra@gmail.com

Histori Naskah:

Submit: 2026-02-05
Accepted: 2026-03-31
Published: 2026-04-05



*This is an Creative Commons
License This work is licensed under
a Creative Commons Attribution-
NonCommercial 4.0 International
License*

Abstract:

This study examines how literacy program management contributes to improving students' reading interest in elementary schools. Using a qualitative descriptive case study design, the research was conducted at SDN 1 Rawa and SDN 2 Lumbungsari in Ciamis Regency, Indonesia. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, field observations, and document analysis, and analyzed using an interactive model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that the effectiveness of literacy initiatives is strongly influenced by principals' managerial and leadership capacities rather than solely by the availability of facilities. Strategic planning, clear task organization, consistent daily reading routines, and continuous evaluation enabled literacy practices to be embedded into everyday school activities and learning processes. Despite challenges such as limited resources, low student motivation, and time constraints, schools adopted adaptive strategies including collaboration with stakeholders, material rotation, and creative literacy activities to sustain engagement. The study concludes that literacy development should be viewed as a systematic and school-wide management process. This research contributes to educational management literature by highlighting principal leadership as a key mediating factor linking literacy policy to sustainable reading culture in elementary education.

Keyword: Elementary Education; Literacy Culture; Literacy Program Management; School Leadership

Introduction

Literacy has long been recognized as a foundational competence that determines students' academic success and lifelong learning capacity (Anwar, Saeful & Umam, 2023; Kern, 2000). Beyond the basic ability to read and write, literacy encompasses the capacity to comprehend, analyze, and utilize information critically in everyday life. Students with strong literacy skills tend to demonstrate better cognitive development, higher academic performance, and stronger character formation (Farrington et al., 2012). Consequently, strengthening literacy practices in elementary education has become a global priority for improving the overall quality of education systems (Nasrullah, Laksono, Prayogi, Parmin, & Inayatillah, 2024; Zuilkowski, Sowa, & Ralaingita, 2023).

Despite its importance, students' reading interest in many developing countries, including Indonesia, remains relatively low (Hapsarini, Erliana, Irwansyah, & Abdullah, 2023). Various national assessments and reports indicate that elementary students often read only when required for academic tasks rather than out of intrinsic motivation (Thomas & Oldfather, 1997). This condition suggests that literacy challenges

are not merely related to students' reading abilities but also to their reading habits and engagement (Gottfried, 1990). Scholars argue that sustainable reading culture must be cultivated through structured school programs, supportive environments, and consistent encouragement from teachers and families. Without systematic management, literacy initiatives risk becoming temporary activities rather than embedded school practices (Comber, 2012).

In response to these challenges, schools have implemented various literacy programs such as classroom reading corners, library optimization, and daily reading routines. However, the effectiveness of such initiatives depends largely on how they are managed. Educational management theories emphasize that the success of school programs is strongly influenced by managerial functions, including planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating activities (Fayol, 2016; H. E. Mulyasa, 2010). In the context of literacy development, principals and teachers must not only provide facilities but also design coordinated strategies, allocate responsibilities, and monitor progress to ensure program sustainability (Rincones-Delgado & Feig, 2018).

Empirical evidence suggests that structured literacy activities, such as the 15-minute reading habit and classroom reading corners, can positively influence students' reading behaviors (Hijriani & Humairah, 2025; I. A. Lestari & Ramadan, 2025). Nevertheless, most previous studies tend to focus on specific literacy activities or instructional techniques rather than examining literacy management comprehensively as an integrated program. As a result, limited attention has been given to how managerial practices particularly at the school leadership level shape the effectiveness and sustainability of literacy initiatives, especially in schools with limited resources.

This issue is particularly relevant for public elementary schools such as SDN 1 Rawa and SDN 2 Lumbungsari in Ciamis Regency, which face different contextual constraints. SDN 1 Rawa encounters challenges related to limited diversity of reading materials, whereas SDN 2 Lumbungsari struggles with budgetary and infrastructural limitations. These conditions indicate that the success of literacy programs is not determined solely by the availability of facilities but also by how schools strategically manage available resources and mobilize stakeholders.

Addressing this gap, the present study aims to analyze literacy program management in improving students' reading interest at SDN 1 Rawa and SDN 2 Lumbungsari. Specifically, this research examines how schools plan, organize, implement, and evaluate literacy initiatives, as well as how they address constraints through adaptive strategies. The novelty of this study lies in its managerial perspective, emphasizing literacy programs not merely as instructional practices but as systematically managed school-wide processes. By highlighting the role of leadership and management in building sustainable reading culture, this study contributes to both educational management literature and practical efforts to strengthen literacy development in elementary schools.

Literature Study

The development of reading interest in elementary education has increasingly been conceptualized not merely as a pedagogical issue but as an organizational and managerial challenge. While reading motivation theories emphasize engagement, autonomy, and access to meaningful texts (Gambrell, 2011), the sustainability of literacy programs depends on how schools structure, coordinate, and institutionalize these principles within their management systems. In Indonesia, the Gerakan Literasi Sekolah (GLS) policy provides a formal framework that guides schools through stages of habituation, development, and integration. However, policy presence alone does not guarantee cultural transformation; its effectiveness depends on leadership and managerial capacity at the school level.

From an educational management perspective, literacy initiatives require strategic planning, resource allocation, stakeholder coordination, and continuous monitoring. Antoro argues that creating a “literate environment” demands systemic integration across curriculum, infrastructure, and school routines. This aligns with strategic management theory, which posits that organizational goals must be embedded into institutional vision, operational planning, and performance indicators to ensure sustainability. Without such integration, literacy programs risk becoming symbolic compliance rather than transformative cultural practices (Antoro, 2018).

International scholarship further supports the importance of management alignment in literacy reform. Biswas highlights that effective school leaders treat libraries not as auxiliary facilities but as central learning hubs, reflecting the organizing and resource-management functions of leadership (Biswas, 2023). Similarly, Lestari identifies time management—particularly the structured implementation of daily reading sessions—as a critical managerial lever for maintaining program consistency. These findings suggest that literacy promotion is shaped by how principals coordinate physical space, allocate instructional time, and institutionalize routines (S. I. Lestari & Kusumawati, 2025).

However, previous studies often isolate literacy engagement from leadership theory. Gambrell (2011) emphasizes student autonomy and motivation, yet does not fully address how schools operationalize these principles structurally. Conversely, management studies frequently discuss strategic planning and resource mobilization without examining their pedagogical implications. This conceptual fragmentation limits understanding of how educational management directly mediates literacy outcomes. In Indonesian contexts, (Darmawan, Suryadi, Budimansyah, & Susilo, 2024) note that mismatches between book collections and students’ developmental interests persist, indicating managerial gaps in needs assessment and program evaluation.

Distributed leadership theory offers a useful lens for bridging this divide. (Cremin, Mottram, Collins, Powell, & Safford, 2014) argues that cultivating “teachers as readers” requires professional development systems that embed literacy values within organizational culture. Salisiya further demonstrates that school–home partnerships amplify literacy outcomes when systematically managed rather than informally encouraged. These findings reinforce the view that literacy reform depends on collaborative leadership structures rather than isolated teacher initiatives (Salisiya, Puspita, Rahmawati, & Museyibzada, 2025).

Moreover, qualitative research suggests that reading culture becomes sustainable when management shifts from compliance-driven monitoring toward participatory and celebratory practices (Hartley, 2025). This aligns with organizational culture theory, which emphasizes that long-term reform occurs when shared values and rituals are institutionalized through consistent leadership practices. Thus, literacy management must move beyond logistical coordination toward cultural leadership that shapes attitudes, motivation, and collective commitment.

Conceptually, therefore, school literacy practices can be understood as the intersection of three interrelated domains: (1) reading engagement theory, which explains motivational drivers; (2) educational management theory, which structures planning, organizing, and evaluation processes; and (3) leadership theory, which shapes organizational culture and stakeholder collaboration. When these domains operate in alignment, literacy programs are more likely to transition from temporary initiatives to embedded school culture.

This synthesis highlights a critical gap: while numerous studies examine literacy engagement or GLS implementation, limited research explicitly analyzes how principals integrate management functions with literacy theory to institutionalize reading interest in elementary schools. Addressing this gap requires an in-

depth qualitative case study approach to uncover how leadership strategies, resource management, and cultural practices interact within specific school contexts.

Methods

This study employed a qualitative approach using a descriptive case study design to explore in depth the management of literacy programs in improving students' reading interest. A qualitative methodology was selected because it allows researchers to understand social and educational phenomena holistically within their natural settings and to capture participants' experiences, perceptions, and practices related to literacy program implementation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The case study design was considered appropriate as it enables comprehensive investigation of complex managerial processes within real-life school contexts where the boundaries between the program and its environment are closely interconnected (Adrias & Ruswandi, 2025; Yin, 2017).

This research was conducted at two public elementary schools in Ciamis Regency, Indonesia: SDN 1 Rawa and SDN 2 Lumbungsari. These schools were purposively selected because both actively implement school literacy programs but operate under different contextual conditions, particularly in terms of reading material availability, facility adequacy, and budget constraints. The variation in institutional characteristics provided contrasting cases that enabled a more comprehensive understanding of literacy program management across diverse resource settings. A total of 14 participants were involved in this study. The participants consisted of 2 school principals (one from each school), 6 classroom teachers (three from each school), 2 school librarians or literacy coordinators, and 4 parents actively involved in school literacy activities. Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that they had direct involvement in planning, implementing, or evaluating the school literacy program. Data collection was conducted over a period of three months (March–May 2025). During this period, the researcher carried out non-participant observations in each school for approximately six weeks, totaling 12 weeks of observation across both sites. Each school was observed for an average of 8–10 literacy-related sessions, including daily 15-minute reading routines, literacy events, classroom reading activities, and coordination meetings.

In addition to observation, **semi-structured interviews** were conducted with all 14 participants, each lasting between **45–60 minutes**. Document analysis was also undertaken, including review of school literacy plans, meeting minutes, reading activity schedules, student reading logs, and evaluation reports. This detailed description of participants and duration of engagement enhances the transparency and replicability of the study while maintaining alignment with qualitative case study standards (Tisdell, Merriam, & Stuckey-Peyrot, 2025).

Data were collected through methodological triangulation, including observations, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Observations were conducted to examine routine literacy activities such as the 15-minute reading program, classroom reading corners, library utilization, and literacy-related events. In-depth interviews were used to explore managerial strategies, challenges, and solutions from the perspectives of principals, teachers, and librarians. Document analysis involved reviewing relevant materials, including literacy program plans, school work plans, activity reports, attendance records, and documentation of literacy initiatives (Patton, 2014).

In qualitative research, the researcher served as the primary instrument (human instrument), directly interacting with participants and interpreting the data gathered from the field (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Supporting instruments, such as interview guides, observation checklists, and document analysis formats, were employed to ensure systematic and consistent data collection. To ensure trustworthiness, the study applied four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Credibility was strengthened through source and method triangulation, prolonged engagement in the field, and member checking with participants to validate interpretations. Transferability was supported by providing detailed contextual descriptions of the schools (thick description). Dependability and confirmability were enhanced through an audit trail and systematic documentation of research procedures to minimize researcher bias (Shenton, 2004).

Data analysis followed the interactive model of (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014), which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction involved selecting, coding, and categorizing relevant information. The data were then organized into narrative descriptions, thematic matrices, and comparative patterns to facilitate interpretation. Conclusions were drawn iteratively and continuously verified throughout the research process. Data collection and analysis were conducted simultaneously to allow adaptive responses to emerging findings. Through this methodological approach, the study aimed to generate comprehensive and contextually grounded insights into how literacy program management influences students' reading interest in elementary school settings.

Results

Planning of Literacy Program Management

The findings indicate that the planning stage served as the fundamental foundation for the implementation of literacy programs at SDN 1 Rawa and SDN 2 Lumbungsari. In both schools, literacy development was not treated as incidental classroom activity but was strategically incorporated into institutional planning. The principals played a central role in designing structured literacy initiatives, aligning them with school goals, and ensuring that reading activities became an integral part of daily learning routines. This demonstrates that literacy improvement was approached as a managed program rather than a spontaneous effort.

Interview data reveal that planning began with an assessment of students' reading conditions and the availability of school resources. Principals and teachers evaluated students' reading interest, library utilization, and the adequacy of reading materials before designing appropriate strategies. One principal explained:

“Before starting the literacy program, we first observed students' reading habits and checked what facilities we had. From there, we planned simple but consistent activities that could realistically be implemented every day.” (Interview, Principal of SDN 1 Rawa)

This statement suggests that planning was evidence-based and context-sensitive. Rather than adopting standardized models, both schools adapted literacy strategies according to their capacities and limitations. Observational findings further confirmed that planning activities were conducted collaboratively. Coordination meetings were organized at the beginning of each semester involving principals, teachers, and library staff to discuss literacy targets, activity schedules, and task allocation. The researcher observed that literacy programs such as the 15-minute daily reading habit, classroom reading corners, and scheduled library visits were carefully scheduled and integrated into the academic timetable. Such systematic scheduling ensured that literacy activities were conducted consistently rather than sporadically.

Document analysis provided additional evidence of structured planning. School work plans, literacy program proposals, activity schedules, and budget allocations were formally documented. These documents indicated that literacy initiatives were embedded within official school policies and annual programs. For

instance, both schools included literacy improvement as part of their school development plans, demonstrating long-term commitment rather than short-term projects.

Teachers emphasized that early planning facilitated smoother implementation and clearer responsibilities. One teacher noted:

“When the program is planned at the beginning of the year, we already know who prepares the reading materials, who manages the library, and who supervises students. Everything becomes more organized.” (Interview, Teacher, SDN 2 Lumbungsari)

This perspective highlights that participatory planning strengthened coordination and accountability among school members. By clarifying roles and expectations in advance, the schools minimized confusion during daily literacy activities.

Despite similarities, both schools exhibited contextual differences in their planning approaches. SDN 1 Rawa focused more on diversifying reading materials and strengthening classroom reading corners, while SDN 2 Lumbungsari prioritized optimizing limited facilities and allocating budgets efficiently. Nevertheless, both strategies reflected adaptive planning tailored to local conditions. A summary of the planning practices is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of Planning Practices for Literacy Program Management

Planning Aspect	SDN 1 Rawa	SDN 2 Lumbungsari	Data Sources
Needs assessment	Analysis of reading habits and material diversity	Evaluation of facilities and budget constraints	Interviews
Program design	Daily reading habit and reading corners	Library optimization and scheduled reading	Documents
Stakeholder involvement	Teachers and librarians	Teachers and school staff	Observation
Scheduling	Integrated into daily timetable	Weekly and daily literacy sessions	Observation, documents
Policy integration	Included in school work plan	Included in annual development plan	Documents

Overall, these findings demonstrate that systematic and participatory planning played a crucial role in establishing a strong foundation for literacy program implementation. By aligning goals, resources, and responsibilities from the outset, principals were able to create structured and sustainable literacy practices. This suggests that improving students’ reading interest begins not only with providing books or facilities but with strategic managerial planning that ensures continuity and collective commitment.

Organizing Literacy Program Management

Following the planning stage, organizing became a critical managerial function that translated literacy plans into structured responsibilities, coordinated actions, and collaborative participation among school members. The findings show that both SDN 1 Rawa and SDN 2 Lumbungsari systematically arranged their human and institutional resources to ensure that literacy activities were not dependent on individual initiative but were embedded within the school’s organizational system. Through clear task delegation and teamwork, literacy programs were implemented more consistently and sustainably.

Interview data indicate that principals recognized that improving students’ reading interest required collective involvement rather than isolated teacher efforts. Consequently, both schools formed literacy

teams composed of teachers, library staff, and homeroom teachers. Each member was assigned specific roles, such as preparing reading materials, managing classroom reading corners, supervising daily reading sessions, or maintaining the library collection. One principal explained:

“We cannot rely on one or two teachers only. Therefore, we created a literacy team so that each person has clear responsibilities. When everyone is involved, the program runs more smoothly.”
 (Interview, Principal of SDN 2 Lumbungsari)

This statement highlights that organizing emphasized shared responsibility and distributed leadership. By delegating tasks, principals reduced workload concentration and encouraged broader ownership of the literacy program.

Observational findings further confirmed that structured organization improved daily operations. The researcher observed that classroom teachers routinely supervised the 15-minute reading sessions, while library staff prepared and rotated reading materials. In several classes, student volunteers were appointed as “literacy ambassadors” responsible for organizing books and encouraging peers to read. Such arrangements fostered both teacher coordination and student participation, creating a supportive reading environment.

Document analysis also revealed formal organizational mechanisms. Both schools issued official decrees establishing literacy teams, along with duty schedules, task descriptions, and activity rosters. These documents demonstrate that literacy management was institutionalized within the school structure rather than treated as informal practice. The existence of written procedures enhanced accountability and clarified expectations for each staff member.

Teachers emphasized that the clear division of tasks facilitated smoother program execution. One teacher noted:

“Because each of us has specific duties, we know exactly what to prepare every day. It prevents confusion and helps the literacy activities run regularly.” (Interview, Teacher, SDN 1 Rawa)

This finding suggests that organizing not only improved efficiency but also strengthened consistency, which is crucial for cultivating reading habits among students. In addition, both schools sought support from external stakeholders to strengthen their organizational capacity. School committees and parents contributed by donating books, supporting library maintenance, and encouraging reading activities at home. This collaboration expanded literacy efforts beyond the classroom and reinforced the program’s sustainability.

Comparatively, SDN 1 Rawa adopted a more structured organizational approach with clearly defined hierarchies and scheduled reporting, while SDN 2 Lumbungsari applied a more flexible system that allowed teachers to adjust responsibilities based on daily needs. Despite these differences, both approaches effectively promoted coordination and collective engagement. A summary of the organizing practices is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of Organizing Practices for Literacy Program Management

Organizing Aspect	SDN 1 Rawa	SDN 2 Lumbungsari	Data Sources
Organizational structure	Formal literacy team with clear hierarchy	Flexible team-based coordination	Documents

Task distribution	Specific duties for teachers and librarians	Shared and adaptive responsibilities	Interviews
Teacher involvement	Supervision of daily reading sessions	Classroom-based coordination	Observation
Student participation	Literacy ambassadors and helpers	Peer support roles	Observation
External collaboration	Parent and committee support	Community and donor involvement	Interviews

Overall, these findings demonstrate that effective organization of literacy programs significantly contributed to the sustainability and regularity of reading activities. By establishing clear structures, delegating responsibilities, and encouraging collaboration, principals transformed literacy initiatives into collective school practices rather than individual efforts. This confirms that organizing is a strategic managerial process that strengthens accountability, participation, and long-term program success.

Implementation of Literacy Program Management

Following the planning and organizing stages, the implementation phase represented the practical enactment of literacy management strategies within the daily routines of SDN 1 Rawa and SDN 2 Lumbungsari. The findings indicate that both schools actively translated their literacy plans into consistent and structured activities designed to foster students' reading habits. Rather than treating literacy as occasional events, the programs were embedded in everyday learning processes, creating a continuous and supportive reading environment.

Interview data reveal that principals emphasized consistency as the key principle of implementation. Literacy activities were conducted regularly to ensure that reading became a habitual behavior rather than a temporary practice. One principal explained:

“The most important thing is not how many programs we have, but how consistently we implement them. Even simple activities like 15 minutes of reading every day can make a big difference if done regularly.” (Interview, Principal of SDN 1 Rawa)

This statement underscores that sustainability and routine were prioritized over complexity. Both schools preferred manageable activities that could be implemented daily within existing schedules. Observational findings further confirmed that literacy activities were systematically integrated into school routines. The researcher observed that students engaged in a 15-minute reading session before formal lessons began each day. During this time, students read storybooks, textbooks, or other reading materials quietly under teacher supervision. In addition, classroom reading corners were frequently utilized, allowing students to access books easily during free time. The library was also used more actively, with scheduled visits organized by teachers to encourage broader exposure to reading materials.

Beyond routine reading, several complementary literacy activities were implemented. These included storytelling sessions, book summaries, reading competitions, and writing reflections about books read. Such activities aimed to deepen comprehension and engagement rather than focusing solely on mechanical reading. Teachers reported that these varied strategies helped maintain students' interest and motivation.

Document analysis supported these observations. Activity logs, reading attendance records, and literacy program reports were regularly maintained. These documents indicated that literacy sessions were conducted consistently and monitored by teachers. Some classes also kept simple reading journals to track students' progress and participation, providing tangible evidence of program implementation.

Teachers noted positive changes in students' behavior as a result of these consistent practices. One teacher commented:

“At the beginning, some students were reluctant to read, but after several months, they started bringing their own books and reading without being told. It shows that the habit is gradually forming.” (Interview, Teacher, SDN 2 Lumbungsari)

This observation suggests that repeated exposure and structured routines contributed to gradual improvements in reading interest and self-initiative among students.

However, implementation approaches differed slightly between the two schools. SDN 1 Rawa focused more on maximizing classroom-based literacy through reading corners and daily supervision, while SDN 2 Lumbungsari emphasized library utilization and group-based reading activities due to limited classroom resources. Despite these contextual differences, both schools demonstrated adaptive strategies that aligned with their capacities. A summary of the implementation practices is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Summary of Implementation Practices for Literacy Programs

Implementation Aspect	SDN 1 Rawa	SDN 2 Lumbungsari	Data Sources
Daily reading routine	15-minute classroom reading	15-minute scheduled reading	Observation
Learning integration	Reading corners and book summaries	Library-based reading sessions	Observation, interviews
Supporting activities	Storytelling, writing reflections	Group reading and competitions	Interviews
Monitoring tools	Reading logs and attendance lists	Reading journals and reports	Documents
Main focus	Classroom-based literacy	Library optimization	Observation

Overall, these findings demonstrate that effective implementation of literacy programs relies on consistency, routine integration, and active supervision. By embedding reading activities into daily school life and providing diverse opportunities for engagement, both schools gradually cultivated students' reading habits. This suggests that the success of literacy initiatives depends not only on program design but also on sustained and disciplined execution supported by strong managerial oversight.

Evaluation and Monitoring of Literacy Program Management

Evaluation constituted an essential managerial function that ensured the continuity and effectiveness of literacy programs at SDN 1 Rawa and SDN 2 Lumbungsari. The findings indicate that evaluation was not conducted merely as a formal administrative requirement but as an ongoing reflective process aimed at assessing progress, identifying challenges, and improving subsequent literacy practices. Through regular monitoring and collaborative review, principals were able to maintain the consistency and sustainability of reading activities across both schools.

Interview data reveal that principals viewed evaluation as a mechanism for continuous improvement rather than fault-finding. Literacy programs were routinely reviewed during teacher meetings to discuss students' participation, the adequacy of reading materials, and the effectiveness of daily reading sessions. One principal stated:

“We evaluate the literacy program regularly. We ask whether students are truly reading, whether the books are sufficient, and what needs to be improved. Without evaluation, we cannot know if the program is working.” (Interview, Principal of SDN 2 Lumbungsari)

This statement highlights that evaluation functioned as a diagnostic and developmental tool. By systematically reflecting on implementation outcomes, schools could refine their strategies and address emerging issues promptly.

Observational findings further demonstrated that monitoring occurred during daily literacy sessions. Teachers supervised students’ engagement, checked reading participation, and ensured that activities were conducted according to schedule. The researcher observed that some teachers recorded students’ attendance and reading behavior, which encouraged accountability and discipline. Regular supervision also helped maintain students’ focus and seriousness during reading time.

Document analysis provided additional evidence of structured evaluation practices. Both schools maintained literacy reports, reading logs, and simple progress records documenting the frequency of activities and student involvement. These documents served as references during evaluation meetings and supported data-based decision-making. In several cases, evaluation results led to practical improvements, such as rotating book collections, adding more interesting reading materials, or adjusting schedules to avoid conflicts with other lessons.

Teachers emphasized that collaborative evaluation strengthened collective responsibility. One teacher noted:

“After each month, we discuss the literacy activities together. If students seem bored or the books are not interesting, we change the strategy. It helps us improve continuously.” (Interview, Teacher, SDN 1 Rawa)

This finding indicates that evaluation was participatory and adaptive. Teachers were not passive recipients of directives but actively contributed ideas for program enhancement.

In addition, some innovative monitoring strategies were identified. For instance, SDN 1 Rawa introduced simple reading journals where students recorded the titles of books they read, while SDN 2 Lumbungsari conducted periodic library usage checks to measure student interest. These practices provided tangible indicators of literacy engagement and enabled schools to track behavioral changes over time.

Comparatively, SDN 1 Rawa applied a more structured and documentation-based evaluation approach, whereas SDN 2 Lumbungsari adopted a more flexible and discussion-oriented process. Despite these differences, both approaches aimed at continuous refinement and sustainability of literacy practices. A summary of the evaluation practices is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Summary of Evaluation and Monitoring Practices for Literacy Programs

Evaluation Aspect	SDN 1 Rawa	SDN 2 Lumbungsari	Data Sources
Monitoring method	Daily supervision and reading logs	Classroom checks and participation review	Observation
Documentation	Reading journals and reports	Library usage records and reports	Documents
Meeting frequency	Monthly evaluation meetings	Periodic reflective discussions	Interviews

Improvement actions	Book rotation and material updates	Schedule and strategy adjustments	Interviews
Approach	Structured and formal	Flexible and participatory	Observation

Overall, these findings demonstrate that systematic evaluation and monitoring played a critical role in sustaining literacy programs. By combining regular supervision, documented evidence, and collaborative reflection, principals were able to ensure that literacy activities remained effective and responsive to students' needs. This suggests that evaluation is not merely a control mechanism but a strategic learning process that strengthens the long-term success of literacy management.

Challenges and Adaptive Strategies in Literacy Program Management

Despite systematic planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation, both SDN 1 Rawa and SDN 2 Lumbungsari encountered several challenges that influenced the effectiveness of their literacy programs. The findings indicate that literacy development was not solely a pedagogical issue but also closely related to managerial, infrastructural, and motivational factors. These challenges required principals to adopt adaptive and context-sensitive strategies to sustain the continuity of literacy initiatives.

One of the primary challenges identified in both schools concerned limited learning resources, particularly the availability and diversity of reading materials. Interview data revealed that the number of books in classroom reading corners and libraries was often insufficient to accommodate students' varied interests. As a result, some students became less enthusiastic due to repetitive or outdated materials. One principal explained:

“Our main problem is the limited number of books. If students read the same books repeatedly, they lose interest. We try to rotate and add materials gradually, but the budget is limited.” (Interview, Principal of SDN 1 Rawa)

This statement suggests that resource constraints directly affected students' reading engagement. Observational findings confirmed that some classrooms had only a small collection of books, limiting students' choices during reading sessions.

Another significant challenge related to students' reading motivation and habits. Teachers reported that not all students initially demonstrated enthusiasm for reading activities. Some students perceived reading time as an obligation rather than a pleasurable activity. A teacher noted:

“At first, several students were reluctant to read. They preferred to play or talk with friends. We had to guide them repeatedly and create more interesting activities.” (Interview, Teacher, SDN 2 Lumbungsari)

This finding indicates that developing a reading culture requires behavioral change, which takes time and consistent reinforcement. Literacy habits cannot be formed instantly, even when structured programs are in place.

Time constraints and workload also emerged as managerial challenges. Teachers had to balance literacy supervision with regular teaching responsibilities, which occasionally limited the depth of monitoring. Observations showed that during busy academic periods, literacy sessions were sometimes shortened or less intensively supervised. This suggests that competing priorities within the school schedule can affect program consistency.

To address these challenges, both schools implemented various adaptive strategies. Document analysis and interviews revealed efforts such as book donation programs, collaboration with parents and community members, rotating reading materials between classes, and maximizing existing facilities. Principals also encouraged creative literacy activities, including storytelling sessions, reading competitions, and peer-assisted reading, to increase student motivation.

One principal described these adaptive efforts:

“Because we cannot always add new facilities, we focus on creativity. We ask parents to donate books, organize reading games, and make literacy activities more enjoyable. The key is to keep students interested.” (Interview, Principal of SDN 2 Lumbungsari)

These strategies demonstrate that schools compensated for material limitations through innovation and stakeholder engagement. Observational data showed that such initiatives increased student participation and enthusiasm during literacy sessions.

Comparatively, SDN 1 Rawa emphasized improving material diversity and classroom-based resources, whereas SDN 2 Lumbungsari focused more on community involvement and motivational strategies. Despite different approaches, both schools demonstrated resilience and adaptability in sustaining their literacy programs. A summary of the challenges and solutions is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Summary of Challenges and Adaptive Strategies in Literacy Program Management

Challenge Category	SDN 1 Rawa	SDN 2 Lumbungsari	Adaptive Strategies	Data Sources
Limited books	Lack of material diversity	Insufficient library collection	Book rotation and donations	Interviews, observation
Low motivation	Passive reading habits	Limited enthusiasm	Storytelling and competitions	Interviews
Time constraints	Limited supervision time	Overlapping schedules	Flexible scheduling	Observation
Budget limitations	Restricted procurement	Minimal facilities	Community and parent support	Documents, interviews

Overall, these findings demonstrate that literacy program implementation is shaped by both structural constraints and human factors. However, adaptive leadership, collaboration, and creativity enabled both schools to mitigate these obstacles effectively. This suggests that the sustainability of literacy initiatives depends not only on resource availability but also on the managerial capacity of school leaders to mobilize stakeholders and innovate within existing limitations.

Discussion

This study examined how literacy program management contributes to improving students' reading interest through four interrelated managerial functions: planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation. The findings demonstrate that the success of school literacy initiatives is influenced not merely by the availability of reading facilities but, more importantly, by how literacy programs are strategically managed and led at the school level. In both SDN 1 Rawa and SDN 2 Lumbungsari, literacy development became more sustainable when it was treated as a structured organizational process rather than an incidental instructional activity. These results highlight that leadership and management capacity play a decisive role in transforming literacy policies into consistent daily practices.

First, the planning practices identified in this study reflect the principles of strategic school management, where programs are designed based on contextual needs and institutional readiness. Needs assessments, integration of literacy goals into school work plans, and collaborative decision-making enabled schools to align resources with realistic targets. This finding supports management theory that positions planning as the foundational function determining organizational effectiveness (Bush, 2020; Miskel & Hoy, 2002). Similarly, (E. Mulyasa, 2013) emphasizes that educational programs are more sustainable when embedded in formal school planning rather than implemented ad hoc. The present study confirms that systematic planning enhances coordination and ensures continuity of literacy activities.

Second, the organizing stage demonstrates the importance of distributed leadership and shared responsibility. By forming literacy teams, delegating tasks, and involving teachers, librarians, and students, principals reduced dependency on individual actors and strengthened collective ownership. This aligns with (Hallinger, 2011) concept of instructional and collaborative leadership, which suggests that effective school programs require coordinated efforts across organizational members. When literacy responsibilities are shared, program implementation becomes more consistent and less vulnerable to staff workload fluctuations. These findings also resonate with (Yulianawati, Nurhadi, & Mayasari, 2022) , who reports that teacher collaboration significantly improves the effectiveness of literacy initiatives in elementary schools.

Third, the implementation phase reveals that consistency and routine integration are critical in cultivating students' reading habits. The daily 15-minute reading sessions, classroom reading corners, and library-based activities observed in both schools demonstrate that literacy practices were embedded within everyday learning rather than treated as occasional events. This supports (Krashen, 2004) theory of free voluntary reading, which argues that frequent and enjoyable reading experiences are central to developing intrinsic reading motivation. Musthofa (2021) similarly found that structured daily reading habits positively influence students' literacy engagement. The current study extends these findings by showing that routine practices become effective only when supported by systematic managerial oversight.

Fourth, continuous evaluation and monitoring emerged as key mechanisms for sustaining program quality. Regular supervision, documentation, and reflective meetings enabled schools to identify weaknesses and refine strategies. Such practices correspond with the concept of continuous improvement in educational management, where feedback loops facilitate organizational learning and adaptation (Miles et al., 2018). Rather than functioning solely as control measures, evaluations in these schools served as developmental tools that informed better planning and implementation. Shenton (2004) also emphasizes that systematic review enhances credibility and accountability in educational programs.

Despite these strengths, the study identified persistent challenges related to limited resources, low student motivation, and competing instructional demands. These constraints illustrate that literacy improvement is influenced by structural and behavioral factors simultaneously. Previous studies similarly report that limited facilities and reading materials hinder literacy development in primary schools (Rahim, 2011; Suryani, 2020). However, the adaptive strategies observed—such as book donations, material rotation, and community collaboration—demonstrate that effective leadership can mitigate resource limitations through creativity and stakeholder engagement. This finding underscores the importance of adaptive leadership, where school leaders respond flexibly to contextual constraints (Heifetz et al., 2009).

Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature by linking literacy education with school management frameworks. While earlier research often focused on instructional methods or specific literacy activities, this study emphasizes literacy as a school-wide managerial process. By applying a management lens to

literacy development, the research demonstrates that planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating functions are critical mechanisms that mediate the relationship between literacy policy and student outcomes. This managerial perspective represents the primary novelty of the study, offering a more holistic understanding of how literacy programs can be institutionalized and sustained in resource-constrained contexts.

Overall, the discussion suggests that improving students' reading interest requires more than providing books or facilities; it requires strategic leadership, collaborative organization, consistent practice, and reflective evaluation. When literacy initiatives are supported by strong management and participatory leadership, they are more likely to evolve into enduring school culture rather than temporary projects. Therefore, strengthening principals' managerial competencies should be considered a key strategy in promoting effective literacy development in elementary education.

Conclusions

This study concludes that the effectiveness of literacy programs in improving students' reading interest is determined not merely by the availability of reading materials or facilities, but fundamentally by how literacy initiatives are strategically managed at the school level. Through systematic planning, clear task organization, consistent daily implementation, and continuous evaluation, principals at SDN 1 Rawa and SDN 2 Lumbungsari successfully embedded literacy practices into routine school activities and learning processes. Although challenges such as limited resources, low motivation, and time constraints persisted, adaptive leadership, collaboration, and creative problem-solving enabled schools to sustain their literacy efforts. These findings demonstrate that literacy development is essentially a managerial and cultural process rather than solely an instructional activity.

Practically, schools should institutionalize literacy programs through structured planning, participatory teamwork, and regular monitoring to ensure sustainability. Principals are encouraged to strengthen coordination among teachers, librarians, parents, and communities to optimize limited resources and foster shared responsibility. At the policy level, education authorities should provide leadership training, adequate support, and flexible frameworks that allow schools to adapt literacy programs to their local contexts. Theoretically, this study contributes to educational management literature by highlighting principal management as a critical mediating factor linking literacy policy to student outcomes. Future research may employ broader samples or mixed methods to examine the long-term impact of literacy management on students' academic achievement and reading culture.

Referensi

- Adrias, & Ruswandi, A. (2025). *Desain Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan Mix Method*. Depok: Rajawali Pers.
- Antoro, B. (2018). *Gerakan Literasi Sekolah dari pucuk hingga akar: sebuah refleksi*. Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah, Kementerian Pendidikan
- Anwar, Saeful & Umam, H. (2023). Transformative Education: Emphasizing 21st Century Skills And Competencies In The Independent Learning Curriculum. *AIM: Journal of Islamic Education Management*, 1(1), 1–16.
- Biswas, M. S. (2023). Pleasure reading and the role of libraries: A review of the literature. *Indian Journal of Information Sources and Services*, 13(1), 32–38.
- Bush, T. (2020). *Theories of educational leadership and management*.

- Comber, B. (2012). Mandated literacy assessment and the reorganisation of teachers' work: Federal policy, local effects. *Critical Studies in Education*, 53(2), 119–136.
- Cremin, T., Mottram, M., Collins, F. M., Powell, S., & Safford, K. (2014). *Building communities of engaged readers: Reading for pleasure*. Routledge.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Fifth Edit). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Darmawan, I. G. N., Suryadi, A., Budimansyah, D., & Susilo, S. (2024). *Indonesian Education: Past, Present, and Future*. Routledge.
- Farrington, C. A., Roderick, M., Allensworth, E., Nagaoka, J., Keyes, T. S., Johnson, D. W., & Beechum, N. O. (2012). *Teaching Adolescents to Become Learners: The Role of Noncognitive Factors in Shaping School Performance--A Critical Literature Review*. ERIC.
- Fayol, H. (2016). *General and industrial management*. Ravenio Books.
- Gambrell, L. B. (2011). Seven Rules Of Engagement: What's Most Important to Know About Motivation to Read. *Reading Teacher*, 65(3).
- Gottfried, A. E. (1990). Academic intrinsic motivation in young elementary school children. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 82(3), 525.
- Hallinger, P. (2011). Leadership for learning: Lessons from 40 years of empirical research. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 49(2), 125–142. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09578231111116699/full/html>
- Hapsarini, D. R., Erliana, C. I., Irwansyah, D., & Abdullah, D. (2023). Analyzing strategies for strengthening literacy competence at the junior high school level among school teams at the district and city levels in Indonesia. *Indonesian Journal of Education (INJOE)*, 2(3), 561–581.
- Hartley, S. K. (2025). *Parent Perspectives on Home Learning Environments: A Qualitative Study of Shared Literacy Practices with Children*. National University.
- Hijriani, F., & Humairah, W. (2025). Librarian Strategies to Enhance Students' Reading Habits at SD Negeri 33 Banda Aceh. *JURNAL HURRIAH: Jurnal Evaluasi Pendidikan Dan Penelitian*, 6(4), 1353–1363.
- Kern, R. (2000). *Literacy and Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Krashen, S. D. (2004). *The power of reading: Insights from the research*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA.
- Lestari, I. A., & Ramadan, Z. H. (2025). The Impact of the 15-Minute Reading Program on the Reading Culture of Elementary School Students. *Scaffolding: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Dan Multikulturalisme*, 7(1), 518–537.
- Lestari, S. I., & Kusumawati, T. I. (2025). Literacy culture and its effectiveness in improving Indonesian students' writing skills. *JMKSP (Jurnal Manajemen, Kepemimpinan, Dan Supervisi Pendidikan)*, 10(1), 217–232.
- Lincoln, Y., & Guba, B. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications. Inc.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*

- (Third edit). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Miskel, C., & Hoy, W. K. (2002). *Theory and Research in Educational Administration Vol. 1*. IAP.
- Mulyasa, E. (2013). *Pengembangan dan Implementasi Kurikulum*. Bandung: Rosdakarya.
- Mulyasa, H. E. (2010). Implementasi Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP). *Kemandirian Guru Dan Kepala Sekolah, PT Bumi Aksara, Jakarta*.
- Nasrullah, R., Laksono, K., Prayogi, A., Parmin, P., & Inayatillah, F. (2024). Establishing Literacy Foundations: Policies and Interventions for Indonesia's Future Excellence. *Jurnal Kependidikan: Jurnal Hasil Penelitian Dan Kajian Kepustakaan Di Bidang Pendidikan, Pengajaran, Dan Pembelajaran*, 10(3), 1219–1230.
- Patton, M. Q. (2014). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice*. Sage publications.
- Rincones-Delgado, R., & Feig, A. D. (2018). Principles and principals: Leveraging K-12 principal training and evaluation standards to support environmental, ecological, and sustainability education. *School Leadership Review*, 13(2), 3.
- Salisiya, I. S., Puspita, T. N. Dela, Rahmawati, A. A., & Museyibzada, R. (2025). Strengthening Early Childhood Literacy and Numeracy Through the GeLiNuBiLing Program (Environment-Based Numeracy Literacy Movement) at TK Garuda Surabaya. *Sustainable Human Capital Development Journal*, 93–103.
- Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information*, 22(2), 63–75.
- Teddlie, C., & Tashakkori, A. (2009). *Foundations of mixed methods research: Integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches in the social and behavioral sciences*. Sage.
- Thomas, S., & Oldfather, P. (1997). Intrinsic motivations, literacy, and assessment practices: That's my grade. That's me.". *Educational Psychologist*, 32(2), 107–123.
- Tisdell, E. J., Merriam, S. B., & Stuckey-Peyrot, H. L. (2025). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Yin, R. K. (2017). *Case study research and applications*. SAGE Publications US.
- Yulianawati, I., Nurhadi, K., & Mayasari, A. D. (2022). Elementary students reading engagement: the impact of story-telling in EFL reading comprehension. *Riwayat: Educational Journal of History and Humanities*, 5(1), 159–167.
- Zuilkowski, S., Sowa, P., & Ralaingita, W. (2023). Initial teacher training to promote sustainable education system improvement: A review of the evidence on pre-service teacher education for primary grade literacy and numeracy in low-and middle-income countries. *Global Education Review*, 10(3), 1–28.