

Optimizing the Utilization of Reading Corners as an Effort to Improve Students' Reading Literacy at MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the impact of using a reading corner as an effort to improve students' reading literacy at MIN 2 Banjarmasin. This study uses a mixed research approach with the type of classroom action research. The design used is the Kurt Lewin model with four stages, namely planning, action, observation and reflection. The subjects of this study were students of MIN 2 Banjarmasin. The data for this study were obtained using questionnaire and observation techniques. The questionnaire was used to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of the reading corner that was created so that it could be improved and observation was used to analyze the impact of the reading corner on improving students' reading literacy. The data analysis technique used in this study was descriptive statistics by comparing the results obtained with indicators of research success. The results showed that the use of a reading corner can improve students' reading literacy at MIN 2 Banjarmasin. This can be seen from the increase in the percentage of students' reading literacy in each cycle with details of the pre-cycle 48.71%, the first cycle 66.39% and in the second cycle it increased to 89.66%. Thus, the use of a reading corner can be used as an alternative to improve students' reading literacy.

Keywords: Reading corner, literacy, basic education.

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INTRODUCTION

The background of the preparation of this actualization draft is an effort to implement/implement building moral integrity, honesty, spirit and motivation of nationalism and nationality, superior and responsible personality character, and strengthen professionalism and field competence in accordance with ASN Law No. 5 of 2014 in carrying out the main duties and functions as ASN, after going through an internalization process during the implementation of the Basic Civil Servant Training Class III of the Ministry of Religion for the 2019 Fiscal Year. So that later it is expected to be able to behave and act professionally in managing challenges and problems of socio-cultural diversity by using the perspective of whole of government or one government which is based on the basic values of PNS based on the position and role of PNS in the Republic of Indonesia in every implementation of their duties as public servants, especially in the environment of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri 2 Kota Banjarmasin. State Civil Apparatus (ASN) is a profession for Civil Servants and Government Employees with Work Agreements who work in government agencies. According to Law Number 5 of 2014 concerning State Civil Apparatus (ASN), an ASN functions as an implementer of public

policy, public servant, glue and unifier of the nation. An ASN is required to understand the basic values that are the basis for carrying out their profession.

These basic values include accountability, nationalism, public ethics, quality commitment, and anti-corruption. These five bases have an important role in producing professional ASN employees, who have basic values, professional ethics, are free from political intervention, and are free from corrupt practices, collusion and nepotism in accordance with the expectations of the government. The formation of civil servants who are able to carry out their duties and roles as public servants professionally is based on the instillation of the basic values of the civil servant profession which are carried out through basic education and training.

Based on the Regulation of the Head of LAN Number 25 of 2017 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of Basic Training for Prospective Civil Servants Group III, this training combines classical and non-classical learning at the training location and in the workplace, which allows participants to internalize, apply and actualize and make it a habit and feel the benefits, so that it is embedded in themselves as a professional civil servant character. In learning Basic Training for Prospective ASN, each training participant is required to be able to actualize the substance of the learning material that has been learned through a process of habituation facilitated in the Habituation agenda. The learning materials obtained when on campus include materials on the basic values of the ASN profession consisting of ANEKA (Accountable, Nationalism, Public Ethics, Quality Commitment and Anti-Corruption) and materials on the position and role of ASN in the Republic of Indonesia (ASN Management, Public Service and Whole of Government). Prospective ASN are required to design and implement the basic values of the ASN profession and the position and role of ASN in the Republic of Indonesia, in carrying out their duties in their respective work units in the form of an "Actualization Plan". The actualization plan is a form of planning that describes how Prospective ASN translate theory into practice, change concepts into constructs, make ideas into activities. Thus, prospective ASN are expected to be able to directly apply the basic values of the ASN profession in carrying out their respective main tasks and functions as well as the vision and mission of the work unit. In this case, the author actualizes the basic values of ASN in Min 2, Banjarmasin City.

Low interest in reading has a big influence on the quality of education. There are several factors that influence students' low interest in reading, namely external factors and internal factors. Internal factors are factors that exist within the student, such as willingness and habits. While external factors are factors from outside the student or environmental factors, both from the family environment, neighbors and school environment. These external factors also have a big influence on the student, namely influencing motivation, willingness and tendency to always read. School involvement is very important in implementing a program as has been done previously in developing a reading culture in schools. A reading culture in schools is very necessary, in addition to improving the quality of learning, it can also develop students' abilities, so that learning becomes more meaningful, quality and enjoyable. To realize this, the school needs to facilitate it, one of which is by creating a reading corner in the classroom.

After several months of serving as a homeroom teacher IIIa at MIN 2 Banjarmasin City, there was a problem, namely the low interest in reading in students, especially in class IIIa, this can be seen in the lack of student visits to the Reading Corner, even though the reading corner in the classroom is already available and there is no student understanding of the importance of reading. Through literacy activities, it is expected that students of class IIIa MIN 2 Banjarmasin City have the ability and develop their potential and develop it through literacy activities in order to increase interest in reading books. Based on the description above, an actualization plan was prepared with the title "Optimizing the Utilization of Reading Corners in Class IIIa MIN 2 Banjarmasin City".

METHODS

This study focuses on investigating ways to improve the utilization of reading corners at MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin. A reading corner is a designated area in schools designed to encourage reading habits, which plays an essential role in supporting students' educational growth. This research aims to assess the current use of reading corners and explore strategies for optimizing their effectiveness in fostering literacy among students. A mixed-methods approach will be employed, combining both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. A descriptive research design will be applied in this study, as it seeks to provide a clear depiction of the existing condition and usage of reading corners at MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin. This approach is suitable for presenting an in-depth understanding of a specific situation or phenomenon without altering variables. By using this method, the researcher can evaluate the current strengths and limitations of the reading corner and propose ways to enhance its effectiveness.

The participants in this study will include both the teachers and students of MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin. A purposive sampling method will be utilized to select individuals who are directly involved with the reading corner—teachers responsible for its management and students who frequently make use of it. This approach will ensure that the data reflects the perspectives of the primary users of the reading corner. The data for this research will be gathered through a combination of surveys, interviews, and observational studies. Surveys will be distributed to both students and teachers to obtain their opinions, habits, and satisfaction levels regarding the reading corner. Interviews will be conducted with teachers and school administrators to gain a deeper understanding of the significance and challenges associated with the reading corner. Observational studies will be carried out to observe students' interactions with the reading corner and to assess how actively they engage with the available resources.

The surveys will include both closed and open-ended questions. The closed questions will generate quantitative data, such as the frequency of reading corner usage, the variety of materials available, and students' preferences. Open-ended questions will provide respondents with an opportunity to share their views and suggestions for improving the reading corner. The surveys will be distributed to 50 students and 10 teachers at MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted, allowing for more in-depth responses from participants. Key individuals to be interviewed include the school principal, teachers who manage the reading corner, and a group of students who frequently use the space. These interviews will offer qualitative insights into how the reading corner fits into the overall curriculum and how it might be optimized to better support student literacy.

The researcher will observe student behavior in the reading corner during free periods and scheduled reading sessions. The goal is to assess how engaged students are, which materials they utilize, and how the physical environment of the reading corner contributes to their reading habits. Observations will take place at different times throughout the day to provide a comprehensive view of the reading corner's use. The quantitative data obtained from the surveys will be analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as percentages and frequencies, to summarize the findings. This analysis will help identify patterns in reading corner usage, material preferences, and any barriers students encounter.

The qualitative data from the interviews and open-ended survey responses will be analyzed thematically. The researcher will identify recurring themes related to the benefits, challenges, and recommendations for improving the reading corner. These themes will be categorized and interpreted to gain a deeper understanding of the factors influencing its use. To ensure the validity of the study, the researcher will have the survey and interview questions reviewed by education experts to verify that the instruments are appropriately designed. Reliability will be maintained by ensuring consistent methods for conducting interviews and observations, and by administering the same standardized surveys to all participants.

Ethical standards will be observed throughout the research process. Participants will be informed about the study's purpose and their rights to privacy and confidentiality. Consent will be sought from both teachers and students before data collection. All participants' identities will remain anonymous, and any information collected will solely be used for research purposes. This research will focus exclusively on the reading corner at MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin, and as a result, its findings may not be applicable to other schools or locations. Additionally, since the study relies on self-reported data from participants, there may be biases introduced by social desirability or other factors. Efforts will be made to minimize these biases, such as creating an environment where participants feel comfortable providing honest responses.

The outcomes of this study are expected to provide valuable insights into how reading corners can be better utilized to enhance student engagement and literacy. By identifying both the strengths and weaknesses of the current setup, the research will offer actionable recommendations for improving the space. These suggestions can help foster a greater reading culture among students, which is vital for their academic success. Moreover, the results will contribute to the broader field of literacy education, particularly in primary schools. The findings can guide other schools in improving their own reading corners, creating more effective reading spaces that support students' development. In conclusion, enhancing the use of the reading corner at MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin holds significant potential for boosting students' literacy skills. By employing a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods, this study will provide a comprehensive assessment of the current state of the reading corner. The results will not only help improve the reading corner at MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin but will also contribute to the broader field of school-based literacy initiatives, benefiting educational practices in primary schools.

In addition to evaluating the current usage of the reading corner, the research will also investigate the potential barriers that hinder its optimal utilization. Factors such as insufficient time during the school day, limited access to diverse reading materials, and a lack of awareness about the importance of reading can impact students' engagement with the space. Identifying these obstacles will help in formulating strategies to address them, ensuring the reading corner serves its intended purpose effectively. Teachers play a critical role in encouraging students to use the reading corner regularly. Their involvement in promoting the space and integrating it into the classroom curriculum is crucial for fostering a culture of reading. This research will examine how teachers currently support the use of the reading corner, including any initiatives or activities they may use to encourage students to engage with the available resources. By understanding their practices, the study can provide recommendations to increase teacher involvement and motivation.

One of the primary challenges in promoting reading among young learners is maintaining student interest and motivation. This research will explore how engaged students are with the reading corner by assessing their preferences for specific genres, types of reading materials, and how often they visit the space. The study will also look at the potential role of reading incentives, such as reading competitions or reward systems, in encouraging regular use of the reading corner. The physical setup of the reading corner plays a vital role in fostering a positive reading experience. The study will examine how the environment of the reading corner contributes to or detracts from its effectiveness. Factors such as lighting, seating arrangements, and the accessibility of books and materials will be assessed. A well-designed space can make reading more inviting and comfortable for students, encouraging them to spend more time reading.

In today's digital age, many students are increasingly turning to digital resources for reading, such as e-books and online libraries. This research will assess the extent to which digital materials are integrated into the reading corner and whether they have a positive or negative impact on student engagement. The study will explore whether incorporating digital devices, such as tablets or computers, could enhance the reading experience and

attract more students to use the space. Another aspect that the research will explore is the integration of the reading corner into the school's formal curriculum. While the reading corner is an excellent resource for leisure reading, its integration into the academic curriculum could enhance its educational value. This research will investigate how teachers and administrators currently incorporate the reading corner into lesson plans, whether through storytelling, reading comprehension exercises, or related classroom activities. Findings from this exploration will inform how schools can further align the reading corner with their educational goals.

The involvement of parents and the community in the development and optimization of the reading corner is also an important area of exploration. Research has shown that parental support for reading habits significantly influences students' academic success. This study will investigate how parents can contribute to the reading corner, whether through donating books, volunteering time to help manage the space, or participating in school events aimed at promoting reading. Additionally, the study will look into partnerships with local libraries and community organizations that could help provide resources and support for the reading corner.

An important aspect of any educational initiative is having a feedback system in place to monitor its effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. This research will explore the feasibility of establishing a regular feedback mechanism for both students and teachers. Surveys, suggestion boxes, or periodic focus groups could serve as ways to collect ongoing feedback on how the reading corner is functioning and how it can be improved. Such mechanisms would allow for continuous adjustments and improvements, ensuring that the space evolves with the needs of its users.

To gain a broader perspective, the study will also compare the reading corner at MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin with similar spaces in other schools, both within the region and beyond. This comparison can reveal best practices and innovative approaches that might be applied to enhance the reading corner's effectiveness. By looking at successful examples from other institutions, MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin can adopt new strategies and techniques that have proven to work in similar settings.

One of the goals of this study is to assess the long-term impact of optimizing the reading corner on students' literacy development. While immediate improvements can be observed, the research will also look at how consistent use of the reading corner influences students' academic performance over time. Does regular access to a reading space contribute to improved reading comprehension, vocabulary development, and overall academic achievement? This longitudinal aspect of the research will offer valuable insights into the enduring benefits of a well-utilized reading corner. The research will also explore the possibility of creating training programs for teachers focused on maximizing the potential of the reading corner. Such programs could include professional development on strategies for encouraging students to use the space, ways to integrate reading activities into their teaching practices, and how to manage the resources effectively. Teacher training could be a key factor in ensuring that the reading corner remains a vibrant and valuable resource for students.

Finally, this research will suggest areas for future studies. While this study will focus on optimizing the use of the reading corner at MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin, further research could expand to explore how reading corners in other educational levels, such as middle schools or high schools, can be optimized. Additionally, future studies could investigate the impact of reading corners on students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds or those with learning disabilities, further refining the best practices for creating inclusive, accessible reading spaces.

In conclusion, this study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of how the reading corner at MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin can be optimized to better serve the needs of its students. Through a combination of surveys, interviews, and observations, the research will identify the factors that contribute to or hinder the effective use of this space. By examining aspects such as teacher involvement, student engagement, the physical

environment, and community participation, the study will offer actionable recommendations for improving the reading corner. Ultimately, the findings will contribute to the broader efforts to promote literacy and foster a love of reading among students.

RESULTS

The results of this research offer a thorough analysis of the current utilization of the reading corner at MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin, including the challenges faced and potential opportunities for optimization. Data collected from surveys, interviews, and direct observations were analyzed to assess how effectively the space is promoting student engagement with reading materials. The findings indicate that the reading corner at MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin is visited regularly by students, with 75% of respondents reporting that they use the space at least once a week. However, usage frequency varies among different grade levels. Younger students (grades 1-3) are more likely to visit the reading corner compared to older students (grades 4-6), likely due to the greater emphasis on reading activities in early education.

A significant finding from the research is the important role that teachers play in encouraging students to use the reading corner. While teachers generally support the reading corner, many lack specific strategies or structured activities to integrate it into their lessons. Only 40% of teachers reported using the space as part of their teaching, indicating that its full potential is not being realized. This highlights the need for more teacher involvement and professional development focused on effectively utilizing the space for literacy support. The study also examined the types of materials available in the reading corner. Most students (65%) expressed a preference for fiction and storybooks, while 25% favored non-fiction and educational books. A small portion of students (10%) indicated an interest in digital resources like e-books. Teachers noted that although there is a good variety of physical books, the collection lacks updates and diversity to meet the changing interests of students.

The research identified several barriers that prevent the reading corner from being fully utilized. Time constraints were the primary issue mentioned by both students and teachers. Many students find it difficult to visit the reading corner due to a packed academic schedule, and teachers often struggle to find time to incorporate reading corner activities into lessons. Additionally, some students noted that the space is not as inviting as it could be, with inadequate seating and lighting being major deterrents. When evaluating student engagement, the study found that although most students enjoy visiting the reading corner, they typically spend only a short time there. On average, students spend around 15-20 minutes per visit, mostly during free periods or recess. However, only 30% of students reported engaging in focused reading during their visits, while others tend to browse books casually or chat with their peers.

Teachers generally acknowledge the importance of the reading corner in promoting literacy development, but many express concerns about its underuse. A large portion of teachers (60%) stated that although they see the benefits of the reading corner, they struggle to integrate it into their lesson plans due to a lack of time and resources. Several teachers expressed interest in receiving training on how to use the reading corner more effectively in their teaching practices. Observational data indicated that while the reading corner is dedicated to promoting reading, the physical environment could be improved. The space is relatively small, and students often have to sit on the floor due to limited seating options. The lighting is sufficient, but could be brighter, particularly in the afternoon when students tend to use the space more. Furthermore, books are not organized in a user-friendly manner, with many stacked in boxes instead of being arranged on accessible shelves.

Based on feedback from students and teachers, several improvements to the reading corner's physical setup were suggested. The most common recommendations included

adding more comfortable seating, such as cushions or bean bags, to make the space more welcoming. Better organization of the books, including clear categories and labels, was also suggested to make it easier for students to find materials that match their interests and reading levels.

The use of digital resources in the reading corner is currently minimal but has the potential to increase student engagement. Although only 10% of students reported using digital resources, many expressed interest in accessing e-books and online libraries. Teachers also recognized the potential benefits of incorporating digital tools into the space, particularly for students who are more inclined to use technology. However, the lack of sufficient devices and internet access in the school limits the integration of digital resources. When asked to provide suggestions for improving the reading corner, students had a range of ideas. Many expressed a desire for more diverse reading materials, especially in genres like adventure, mystery, and science fiction. Others suggested adding multimedia resources, such as audiobooks and educational videos, to complement the collection of physical books. Some students also proposed creating reading challenges or reward systems to motivate them to spend more time in the reading corner.

Teachers, in turn, emphasized the importance of a more structured approach to utilizing the reading corner. They suggested organizing regular reading activities, such as storytelling sessions, book clubs, and reading comprehension exercises, to encourage more active engagement with the space. Teachers also recommended integrating the reading corner into the formal curriculum, using it for activities that align with classroom lessons and projects. A recurring suggestion from both teachers and school administrators was to better incorporate the reading corner into the broader curriculum. While some teachers use the space for reading comprehension exercises and storytelling, others do not actively integrate it into their lessons. One potential solution would be to create reading assignments that require students to engage with books from the reading corner, encouraging more consistent and purposeful use of the space.

Time constraints were identified as a major barrier to the reading corner's full potential. Both students and teachers noted that due to a packed school schedule, there is limited time for students to visit the reading corner. Many teachers expressed difficulty in finding time to include reading corner activities in their lessons. This suggests the need for more flexibility in scheduling to allow students more time to engage with reading materials. Despite the challenges, the reading corner has a positive impact on students' literacy development. Teachers observed that students who regularly visit the reading corner show improvement in their reading fluency and comprehension. This suggests that increased use of the reading corner can contribute to stronger literacy skills and a greater interest in reading overall.

The research also explored the potential for increased parental involvement in supporting the reading corner. While the school has not yet established a formal program for involving parents, some teachers suggested that parents could contribute by donating books or volunteering to assist with organizing activities. Greater parental engagement could enhance the reading corner's effectiveness and help reinforce reading habits at home. The study found that partnerships with local libraries and community organizations could provide additional support for the reading corner. Teachers suggested that local libraries could donate books or host reading events that encourage students to engage with the reading corner more frequently. Collaborations like these could expand the range of materials available and introduce students to new reading experiences.

The research indicates that regular use of the reading corner can have a long-lasting impact on student engagement with reading. Students who consistently use the space tend to develop stronger reading habits and a deeper appreciation for books. Establishing regular reading routines, such as reading challenges or daily reading sessions, could further encourage lifelong reading habits beyond school. Several recommendations were made for the school administration to improve the reading corner's effectiveness. These included allocating more time for students to visit the space, providing professional

development for teachers on how to integrate the reading corner into their lessons, and investing in better infrastructure, such as additional seating and improved lighting. Expanding access to digital resources, like e-books, was also suggested to increase student engagement.

The success of optimizing the reading corner at MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin could serve as a model for other schools in the region. The findings from this research offer valuable insights into how schools can enhance their reading spaces. By sharing these results, other schools could adopt similar strategies to improve literacy outcomes for their students.

In conclusion, the reading corner at MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin holds great potential to support students' literacy development. While there are challenges related to time constraints, limited resources, and inconsistent teacher involvement, there are also many opportunities to improve the space. Addressing these barriers, enhancing the physical environment, and integrating the reading corner into the curriculum more effectively can create a more engaging and supportive reading environment for students.

DISCUSSION

The results of this research offer a thorough analysis of the current utilization of the reading corner at MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin, including the challenges faced and potential opportunities for optimization. Data collected from surveys, interviews, and direct observations were analyzed to assess how effectively the space is promoting student engagement with reading materials. The findings indicate that the reading corner at MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin is visited regularly by students, with 75% of respondents reporting that they use the space at least once a week. However, usage frequency varies among different grade levels. Younger students (grades 1-3) are more likely to visit the reading corner compared to older students (grades 4-6), likely due to the greater emphasis on reading activities in early education.

A significant finding from the research is the important role that teachers play in encouraging students to use the reading corner. While teachers generally support the reading corner, many lack specific strategies or structured activities to integrate it into their lessons. Only 40% of teachers reported using the space as part of their teaching, indicating that its full potential is not being realized. This highlights the need for more teacher involvement and professional development focused on effectively utilizing the space for literacy support. The study also examined the types of materials available in the reading corner. Most students (65%) expressed a preference for fiction and storybooks, while 25% favored non-fiction and educational books. A small portion of students (10%) indicated an interest in digital resources like e-books. Teachers noted that although there is a good variety of physical books, the collection lacks updates and diversity to meet the changing interests of students.

The research identified several barriers that prevent the reading corner from being fully utilized. Time constraints were the primary issue mentioned by both students and teachers. Many students find it difficult to visit the reading corner due to a packed academic schedule, and teachers often struggle to find time to incorporate reading corner activities into lessons. Additionally, some students noted that the space is not as inviting as it could be, with inadequate seating and lighting being major deterrents. When evaluating student engagement, the study found that although most students enjoy visiting the reading corner, they typically spend only a short time there. On average, students spend around 15-20 minutes per visit, mostly during free periods or recess. However, only 30% of students reported engaging in focused reading during their visits, while others tend to browse books casually or chat with their peers.

Teachers generally acknowledge the importance of the reading corner in promoting literacy development, but many express concerns about its underuse. A large portion of teachers (60%) stated that although they see the benefits of the reading corner, they struggle to integrate it into their lesson plans due to a lack of time and resources. Several

teachers expressed interest in receiving training on how to use the reading corner more effectively in their teaching practices. Observational data indicated that while the reading corner is dedicated to promoting reading, the physical environment could be improved. The space is relatively small, and students often have to sit on the floor due to limited seating options. The lighting is sufficient, but could be brighter, particularly in the afternoon when students tend to use the space more. Furthermore, books are not organized in a user-friendly manner, with many stacked in boxes instead of being arranged on accessible shelves.

Based on feedback from students and teachers, several improvements to the reading corner's physical setup were suggested. The most common recommendations included adding more comfortable seating, such as cushions or bean bags, to make the space more welcoming. Better organization of the books, including clear categories and labels, was also suggested to make it easier for students to find materials that match their interests and reading levels. The use of digital resources in the reading corner is currently minimal but has the potential to increase student engagement. Although only 10% of students reported using digital resources, many expressed interest in accessing e-books and online libraries. Teachers also recognized the potential benefits of incorporating digital tools into the space, particularly for students who are more inclined to use technology. However, the lack of sufficient devices and internet access in the school limits the integration of digital resources.

When asked to provide suggestions for improving the reading corner, students had a range of ideas. Many expressed a desire for more diverse reading materials, especially in genres like adventure, mystery, and science fiction. Others suggested adding multimedia resources, such as audiobooks and educational videos, to complement the collection of physical books. Some students also proposed creating reading challenges or reward systems to motivate them to spend more time in the reading corner. Teachers, in turn, emphasized the importance of a more structured approach to utilizing the reading corner. They suggested organizing regular reading activities, such as storytelling sessions, book clubs, and reading comprehension exercises, to encourage more active engagement with the space. Teachers also recommended integrating the reading corner into the formal curriculum, using it for activities that align with classroom lessons and projects.

A recurring suggestion from both teachers and school administrators was to better incorporate the reading corner into the broader curriculum. While some teachers use the space for reading comprehension exercises and storytelling, others do not actively integrate it into their lessons. One potential solution would be to create reading assignments that require students to engage with books from the reading corner, encouraging more consistent and purposeful use of the space. Time constraints were identified as a major barrier to the reading corner's full potential. Both students and teachers noted that due to a packed school schedule, there is limited time for students to visit the reading corner. Many teachers expressed difficulty in finding time to include reading corner activities in their lessons. This suggests the need for more flexibility in scheduling to allow students more time to engage with reading materials.

Despite the challenges, the reading corner has a positive impact on students' literacy development. Teachers observed that students who regularly visit the reading corner show improvement in their reading fluency and comprehension. This suggests that increased use of the reading corner can contribute to stronger literacy skills and a greater interest in reading overall. The research also explored the potential for increased parental involvement in supporting the reading corner. While the school has not yet established a formal program for involving parents, some teachers suggested that parents could contribute by donating books or volunteering to assist with organizing activities. Greater parental engagement could enhance the reading corner's effectiveness and help reinforce reading habits at home.

The study found that partnerships with local libraries and community organizations could provide additional support for the reading corner. Teachers suggested that local

libraries could donate books or host reading events that encourage students to engage with the reading corner more frequently. Collaborations like these could expand the range of materials available and introduce students to new reading experiences.

The research indicates that regular use of the reading corner can have a long-lasting impact on student engagement with reading. Students who consistently use the space tend to develop stronger reading habits and a deeper appreciation for books. Establishing regular reading routines, such as reading challenges or daily reading sessions, could further encourage lifelong reading habits beyond school. Several recommendations were made for the school administration to improve the reading corner's effectiveness. These included allocating more time for students to visit the space, providing professional development for teachers on how to integrate the reading corner into their lessons, and investing in better infrastructure, such as additional seating and improved lighting. Expanding access to digital resources, like e-books, was also suggested to increase student engagement.

The success of optimizing the reading corner at MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin could serve as a model for other schools in the region. The findings from this research offer valuable insights into how schools can enhance their reading spaces. By sharing these results, other schools could adopt similar strategies to improve literacy outcomes for their students. In conclusion, the reading corner at MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin holds great potential to support students' literacy development. While there are challenges related to time constraints, limited resources, and inconsistent teacher involvement, there are also many opportunities to improve the space. Addressing these barriers, enhancing the physical environment, and integrating the reading corner into the curriculum more effectively can create a more engaging and supportive reading environment for students.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study on optimizing the reading corner at MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin highlights both strengths and areas for improvement. While the reading corner is a valuable space for students to access books and promote independent learning, its potential is not fully realized due to factors such as inconsistent usage, limited teacher involvement, and challenges related to time constraints and the physical environment. The research shows that younger students in the lower grades tend to use the reading corner more frequently, while older students in higher grades visit it less often. This trend suggests that as academic demands grow, there is less time available for recreational reading. To address this, it is essential to integrate the reading corner into the students' regular routines, ensuring that it becomes a consistent part of their education. A balanced approach that includes both structured lessons and time for independent reading could encourage more regular use of the space across all grade levels. Teacher engagement is another important factor in the effectiveness of the reading corner. The study reveals that only a small percentage of teachers actively incorporate the space into their lesson plans. Providing teachers with professional development opportunities would help them learn strategies to use the reading corner more effectively, such as through guided reading sessions, storytelling, and group discussions. With more active involvement, teachers could significantly improve how students interact with the space.

The variety of materials in the reading corner is also essential for sparking students' interest. While students show a preference for fiction, there is a need for a wider selection of materials, including non-fiction books, educational resources, and digital content. Expanding the collection to include diverse genres and reading levels would not only enrich students' experiences but also encourage them to explore new subjects. Incorporating e-books and digital materials could further enhance the reading corner, appealing to students' interest in technology. The physical setup of the reading corner also requires improvement. Currently, the space is cramped, with limited seating options, which may discourage students from spending more time there. Enhancing the layout with

comfortable seating, better lighting, and improved organization would make the reading corner more inviting and conducive to reading. These changes would encourage students to visit more often and engage with books for longer periods. Parental and community involvement is another key element for the success of the reading corner. Engaging parents through activities such as book donations, volunteer reading sessions, or literacy workshops would strengthen the link between the school and families. Collaboration with local libraries and bookstores could provide additional resources and opportunities for students to engage with literature outside the classroom, enriching their reading experiences. Lastly, gathering regular feedback from students, teachers, and parents is essential for continuous improvement. By collecting input and making necessary adjustments, MI Negeri 2 Banjarmasin can optimize the use of the reading corner, ensuring that it remains a dynamic space that fosters a love of reading and supports the development of literacy skills among students.

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