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Development of Big Book Media to Enhance Literacy among Third-Grade Students at SDN 3 Monano, North Gorontalo Regency

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ABSTRACT

Early literacy development plays a crucial role in shaping students' academic success, yet many primary school learners struggle with reading due to a lack of engaging instructional materials. This study investigates the effectiveness of Big Book media in enhancing literacy skills among third-grade students at SDN 3 Monano, North Gorontalo Regency. The research aims to address low reading motivation and comprehension by integrating visually stimulating and interactive reading materials into classroom instruction. The study employs a Research and Development approach, utilizing the ADDIE model to systematically design, develop, implement, and evaluate the Big Book media. Data were collected through classroom observations, student literacy assessments, and teacher feedback. Quantitative analysis assessed improvements in reading fluency and comprehension, while qualitative data provided insights into student engagement and teacher perceptions. Findings indicate that the Big Book media significantly improved students' word recognition, reading fluency, and comprehension. Statistical analysis showed substantial literacy gains, with teachers reporting increased student participation and enthusiasm for reading activities. The study contributes to literacy education by demonstrating the applicability of Big Book media in resource-limited schools. Future research should explore digital adaptations and assess long-term literacy outcomes to maximize instructional impact.

Keywords: *Literacy development, Big Book media, primary education, reading comprehension, instructional innovation*.

INTRODUCTION

Literacy is a fundamental skill that plays a crucial role in students' cognitive and academic development. It encompasses the ability to read, write, and process information, enabling individuals to engage effectively in various aspects of life. According to UNESCO (2018), literacy is a core component of education that fosters critical thinking, problem-solving, and lifelong learning. Despite its importance, literacy rates remain a concern in many developing regions, including Indonesia, where early-grade students often exhibit low reading proficiency. This issue is highlighted in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018 report, which ranked Indonesia among the lowest-performing countries in reading literacy (OECD, 2019). The low reading comprehension levels among Indonesian students underscore the need for innovative and engaging learning strategies that can enhance students' literacy skills from an early age.

The importance of early literacy development has been extensively studied in the field of education. Scholars such as Snow (2020) and Shanahan & Lonigan (2019) emphasize that early exposure to reading materials and interactive literacy activities significantly influence a child's future academic success. Educational strategies that incorporate engaging learning media have been shown to improve literacy outcomes, particularly in primary education settings. However, many conventional teaching methods rely heavily on textbooks, which often fail to capture young learners' interest and engagement (Duke & Cartwright, 2021). This gap in effective teaching resources calls for the exploration of alternative instructional media, such as visually appealing and interactive materials, to support literacy acquisition in young students.

One of the primary challenges in literacy education at SDN 3 Monano, North Gorontalo Regency, is the students' low reading motivation and comprehension levels. Observations and interviews with educators indicate that traditional instructional methods, which primarily utilize standard textbooks, do not adequately engage students. The lack of stimulating reading materials and interactive learning environments exacerbates students' disinterest in reading, ultimately hindering their literacy development. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has further disrupted conventional learning processes, limiting students' exposure to structured reading activities (World Bank, 2021). Addressing these challenges necessitates the adoption of innovative literacy-enhancing media that can motivate students and facilitate a more engaging learning experience.

An effective solution to address these literacy challenges involves the implementation of Big Book media as an instructional tool. Big Books are large-format storybooks designed with oversized text and vivid illustrations to capture young learners' attention. According to research by USAID (2019), Big Books have been found to enhance early literacy by providing a visually engaging and interactive reading experience. The large print and colorful images help students recognize words more easily and promote shared reading activities with teachers and peers. Additionally, studies by Morrow & Gambrell (2020) indicate that using Big Books in classroom instruction increases student participation, comprehension, and overall enthusiasm for reading.

Several studies have explored the effectiveness of Big Book media in literacy education. Nishfi Syelviana and Sri Hariani (2020) conducted research on the development of Big Book media and its impact on early reading instruction, concluding that this approach significantly improves students' word recognition and reading fluency. Similarly, Gunanti Setianingsih and Amir Syamsudin (2021) found that the integration of Big Books into primary education curricula enhances students' reading comprehension and engagement. Furthermore, Rahmawati (2020) demonstrated that Big Books not only support literacy development but also encourage creativity and cognitive growth in young learners. These findings highlight the potential of Big Book media as an effective pedagogical tool to improve literacy outcomes in primary school students.

Despite the promising benefits of Big Book media, existing research has primarily focused on its application in urban and well-resourced schools. There remains a significant research gap regarding its effectiveness in rural and underprivileged educational settings, such as SDN 3 Monano. While previous studies have demonstrated the general efficacy of Big Books in literacy education, there is limited empirical evidence on how these materials impact literacy development in schools with minimal access to supplementary learning resources. Additionally, little attention has been given to how Big Books can be tailored to the specific linguistic and cultural contexts of students in remote areas. Addressing this gap is crucial in ensuring that literacy interventions are inclusive and adaptable to diverse learning environments.

This study aims to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of Big Book media in enhancing literacy among third-grade students at SDN 3 Monano. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on a rural primary school setting, where traditional literacy interventions have been less accessible. By designing and implementing culturally relevant Big Books, this study seeks to bridge the literacy gap by providing engaging and contextually appropriate reading materials. The scope of this research encompasses the development of Big Book media, assessment of its impact on students' reading skills, and evaluation of teacher and student responses to its implementation. Through this study, we aim to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on literacy interventions in primary education, offering practical insights for educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers.

METHODOLOG

This study employs a Research and Development (R&D) approach, specifically utilizing the ADDIE (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation) model to systematically develop and evaluate the effectiveness of Big Book media in enhancing literacy among third-grade students at SDN 3 Monano. The ADDIE model was chosen due to its structured methodology, which allows for the iterative refinement of instructional materials to ensure optimal learning outcomes (Branch, 2009).

Phase 1: Analysis

The analysis phase involved an in-depth investigation of the existing literacy challenges at SDN 3 Monano. Data collection was conducted through classroom observations, interviews with teachers, and student assessments. Findings indicated that students exhibited low reading motivation and comprehension skills due to the limited use of engaging learning materials. Teachers also reported constraints in instructional resources, highlighting the necessity for alternative literacy-enhancing media. These findings align with prior research indicating that limited exposure to diverse reading materials negatively impacts students' literacy development (OECD, 2019; Snow, 2020)

Phase 2: Design

Based on the analysis findings, the design phase focused on developing the Big Book prototype tailored to the needs of third-grade students. The design process included:

- Identifying core literacy competencies in alignment with the national curriculum.

- Selecting appropriate story content that fosters comprehension and engagement.

- Structuring the Big Book with large fonts, colorful illustrations, and simple sentence structures to facilitate early reading skills.

- Ensuring that the story narratives incorporated culturally relevant themes to enhance student relatability and interest.Phase 3: Development

In this phase, the initial prototype of the Big Book media was developed and subjected to expert validation. The validation process included:

- Media Experts: Evaluated visual design, readability, and attractiveness.

- Language Experts: Assessed linguistic clarity, grammatical accuracy, and age-appropriateness.

- Content Experts: Reviewed the alignment of stories with literacy objectives and pedagogical relevance.

Revisions were made based on feedback from experts to refine the final version of the Big Book before classroom implementation.

Phase 4: Implementation

The implementation phase involved piloting the Big Book media in a real classroom setting. A total of 16 third-grade students at SDN 3 Monano participated in the study. The intervention was conducted over a six-week period, during which students engaged in guided reading sessions using the Big Book. Teachers facilitated the sessions by incorporating interactive reading strategies, such as shared reading, questioning techniques, and comprehension discussions. Data collection during implementation included Student Engagement Surveys: Measured students' motivation and interest

in reading activities, Teacher Feedback Forms: Assessed instructional usability and effectiveness of the Big Book media, and Reading Performance Assessments: Evaluated improvements in students' word recognition, fluency, and comprehension skills.

Phase 5: Evaluation

The evaluation phase aimed to assess the overall effectiveness of the Big Book media in improving literacy. Data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively:

- Quantitative Analysis: Statistical analysis was conducted to determine literacy improvement by comparing pre-test and post-test scores using descriptive statistics.

- Qualitative Analysis: Thematic analysis of teacher and student feedback provided insights into the pedagogical impact of the Big Book media.

Findings from this evaluation informed final modifications to the Big Book media and provided recommendations for broader classroom implementation.

Several instruments were utilized to collect research data, including:

- Observation Checklists: Used to monitor student engagement and classroom interactions.

- Student Questionnaires: Gathered students' perceptions of their reading experiences with the Big Book.

- Teacher Interviews: Captured educators' perspectives on the usability and effectiveness of the intervention.

- Pre- and Post-Tests: Assessed improvements in literacy skills before and after the implementation.

Data analysis employed a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches:

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed to develop and assess the effectiveness of Big Book media in enhancing literacy among third-grade students at SDN 3 Monano. The findings are presented according to the research questions, covering the initial conditions of literacy instruction, the design and implementation of the Big Book media, and its overall effectiveness in improving students' reading skills.

Prior to the intervention, observations and teacher interviews revealed significant challenges in literacy instruction at SDN 3 Monano. Teachers primarily relied on conventional textbooks, which lacked engaging visual and interactive elements. Consequently, students displayed low motivation and limited comprehension skills, as they struggled with word recognition and textual understanding. These findings align with prior research indicating that limited access to engaging reading materials negatively affects literacy development (OECD, 2019; Snow, 2020). Furthermore, pre-test results confirmed that students had difficulties with fundamental literacy skills, including phonemic awareness, sentence comprehension, and reading fluency.

The Big Book media was designed based on the analysis of students' literacy needs. The development process followed a systematic approach, incorporating:

- **Content Selection:** Stories were carefully chosen to align with national literacy objectives while incorporating culturally relevant themes to enhance student engagement.

- **Visual Presentation:** Large text formats and colorful illustrations were used to facilitate word recognition and maintain student interest.

- **Interactive Elements:** Repetitive sentence structures and question prompts were embedded to encourage active student participation and reading comprehension.

Expert validation was conducted to ensure the media's quality. Language experts reviewed the textual clarity and readability, media experts assessed the visual design and engagement potential, while content experts evaluated alignment with pedagogical objectives. Adjustments were made based on their feedback, resulting in an improved version of the Big Book that was ready for classroom implementation.

The implementation phase involved using the Big Book media in guided reading sessions over six weeks. Teachers facilitated interactive reading activities, integrating questioning techniques, shared reading, and comprehension exercises. Student engagement was measured using observation checklists and surveys. Results indicated a notable increase in students' enthusiasm for reading activities. Many students actively participated in class discussions and demonstrated increased confidence in decoding words and understanding text meaning. This aligns with research by Morrow & Gambrell (2020), which emphasizes the effectiveness of visually appealing reading materials in fostering student

The effectiveness of Big Book media was evaluated using a pre-test and post-test design. The results showed significant improvements across various literacy indicators:

- **Word Recognition:** Students demonstrated enhanced ability to identify and pronounce words accurately.

- **Reading Fluency:** There was a marked increase in reading speed and prosody.

- **Comprehension Skills:** Students exhibited improved understanding of story plots and characters, as reflected in their responses to comprehension questions.

Statistical analysis of test scores revealed an average literacy improvement of 27% from pre-test to post-test. The paired t-test confirmed that these gains were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). This supports findings from Syelviana & Hariani (2020) and Setianingsih & Syamsudin (2021), who reported similar improvements in early reading proficiency following the implementation of Big Book media.

Teachers provided qualitative feedback on the usability and effectiveness of the Big Book media. Key observations included:

- **Ease of Use:** Teachers found the material intuitive and easy to integrate into their literacy lessons.

- **Student Engagement:** The visual and interactive features effectively captured students' attention and sustained their interest.

- **Instructional Effectiveness:** Teachers reported that the Big Book facilitated smoother lesson delivery and helped reinforce key literacy concepts.

However, some challenges were noted, including the need for additional training on optimizing the use of Big Book media and the requirement for more diverse story themes to cater to different student interests. These findings suggest the importance of continuous refinement and teacher professional development to maximize instructional effectiveness.

The results of this study are consistent with previous research demonstrating the benefits of using Big Book media for literacy enhancement. Syafira & Damayanti (2020) highlighted the effectiveness of Big Books in improving literacy among second-grade students, while Rahmawati (2020) emphasized their role in fostering cognitive development. Additionally, Tafonao (2018) argued that engaging instructional media significantly enhances student learning experiences. The findings of this study further extend the existing literature by demonstrating the applicability of Big Books in a rural school setting, thereby addressing a research gap concerning literacy interventions in under-resourced areas.

Implications for Literacy Instruction The successful implementation of Big Book media at SDN 3 Monano provides valuable insights for literacy instruction:

- **Increased Student Engagement:** The use of visually appealing and interactive reading materials fosters greater student enthusiasm for reading.

- **Enhanced Comprehension Skills:** The structured design of the Big Book supports reading comprehension by encouraging prediction, inference, and discussion.

- **Scalability of Implementation:** This study demonstrates that Big Book media can be adapted and implemented in similar educational contexts, particularly in resource-limited settings.

While the study yielded positive results, several challenges were identified:

1. **Material Production Costs:** The development of high-quality Big Books requires resources that may be limited in some schools. Future research should explore cost-effective alternatives, such as digital versions of Big Books.

2. **Teacher Training Needs:** Although teachers responded positively to the Big Book media, additional training on interactive reading strategies could further enhance instructional effectiveness.

3. **Expansion of Story Themes:** Future studies should explore a broader range of story genres to cater to diverse student interests and learning needs.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the development and implementation of Big Book media as a literacy intervention for third-grade students at SDN 3 Monano. Findings demonstrated that the Big Book effectively enhanced students' literacy skills, particularly in word recognition, reading fluency, and comprehension. The integration of large text, colorful illustrations, and interactive storytelling significantly increased student engagement and motivation, addressing the challenges associated with conventional literacy instruction. Quantitative analysis indicated a statistically significant improvement in students' reading performance, while qualitative feedback from teachers confirmed the media's usability and pedagogical value.

These results contribute to the existing body of research on literacy interventions by providing empirical evidence supporting the use of Big Book media in rural and resource-limited educational settings. The study highlights the importance of engaging instructional materials in early literacy development and suggests that similar approaches can be adapted for broader educational contexts.

Future research should explore digital adaptations of Big Book media to enhance accessibility and cost efficiency. Additionally, longitudinal studies could assess the sustained impact of such interventions on literacy growth. Policy-level support is recommended to integrate interactive reading materials into national curricula, ensuring that young learners receive quality literacy instruction from an early age.

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