



The Implementation of Curriculum-Integrated Reading Corners to Enhance Reading Interest among Grade 5 Students at MIS Humayroh

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the effectiveness of reading corners integrated with curriculum-based learning materials in increasing elementary school students' interest in reading. Reading interest at the elementary level is a crucial component in building a strong foundation in literacy. One approach to enhancing reading motivation is through engaging and relevant instructional methods, such as the use of reading corners integrated with subject content. This research employed a descriptive method, with data collected through observations, student questionnaires, and teacher interviews. The results showed that 86.7% of students reported increased enthusiasm for reading after the implementation of the reading corner. Students also became more active in seeking information related to lesson themes. The inclusion of curriculum-relevant texts in the reading corner supported more contextualized and meaningful learning experiences. Therefore, integrating reading corners with instructional materials proved effective in fostering students' reading interest. It is recommended that schools enhance the variety and relevance of reading materials to maximize the impact of reading corners in supporting elementary education.

1. Introduction

Instructional media play a crucial role in the educational process, particularly at the elementary school level or its equivalent. At this stage, children are undergoing rapid cognitive development (Qiftiyah, 2020). Students' ability to process and understand new information greatly depends on how the material is presented. Instructional media such as images, videos, and other teaching aids can help students grasp abstract concepts in a simpler and more accessible manner. For instance, pictures can be used to explain objects around them, while videos can introduce complex scientific concepts that are difficult to comprehend through verbal explanation alone (Ginting et al., 2025). This aligns with the pedagogical

principle that students learn better when learning materials are presented in multimodal formats that appeal to their senses and cognitive abilities.

Children are generally more attracted to visual and interactive elements; therefore, the use of engaging instructional media—such as digital tools, educational games, or creative teaching aids—can significantly enhance their interest in participating in lessons. This increased engagement contributes to higher levels of motivation, which is a key factor in successful learning (Hiko et al., 2022). In a learning environment that incorporates multimedia elements, students are more likely to stay focused, engage in discussions, and show enthusiasm for the material. Furthermore, these media reduce students' cognitive load by breaking down complex concepts into digestible parts, especially for early-grade students who are still developing logical and analytical thinking skills.

At the elementary school stage, the psychological and emotional aspects of learning are just as important as the cognitive aspects. When students feel interested and emotionally connected to the material, their willingness to learn increases. Interactive instructional media not only serve as a bridge between abstract concepts and real-life experiences but also foster a sense of joy and discovery in learning. This is particularly relevant in Indonesia, where the government continues to encourage the development of literacy and digital competencies from an early age. In this context, the integration of engaging media in the classroom becomes more than just a teaching strategy—it becomes a necessity to meet national educational standards and global demands.

Each child possesses a different learning style (Juliansyah, F., & Rukmana, D 2022). Some students absorb information more effectively through auditory input, others through visual stimuli, and some benefit most from physical activities or tactile experiences, commonly referred to as kinesthetic learning. In a diverse classroom setting, these individual learning preferences must be considered to ensure equal access to learning materials. By incorporating a variety of instructional media, teachers can better accommodate students' different learning needs. This personalized approach not only enhances learning effectiveness but also promotes inclusivity by providing all students the opportunity to thrive according to their strengths (Efendi & Khusnaini, 2023).

Learning personalization is also an important principle in the implementation of the differentiated curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka), which is currently being applied in many elementary schools in Indonesia. One of the key focuses of this curriculum is the encouragement of active, independent, and meaningful learning. Instructional media that are diverse and thematically integrated can serve as concrete tools to achieve this goal. With the right media, students not only receive information but also explore, question, and construct their own understanding of the subject matter.

Quality education is determined not only by the classroom instruction but also by how students access and deepen their understanding of information outside formal teaching. In modern education, reading interest is recognized as one of the primary factors shaping students' character and intellectual development (Rofi'uddin &

Hermintoyo, 2017). The development of reading interest is closely related to the availability of accessible and engaging reading materials that align with students' interests and developmental stages. Various educational methods and innovations continue to be developed to promote reading interest, one of which is the implementation of reading corners integrated with instructional content. This approach not only provides students with interesting reading resources but also links the content directly to the curriculum being taught (Halimatussakdiah et al., 2023)

A reading corner refers to a designated area in the classroom or school intended for reading activities, typically equipped with books, magazines, or other relevant sources (Wihaya Kusumah et al., 2023). The integration of instructional content into reading corners means that they not only offer general books but also thematic resources directly related to the topics discussed in class (Arum et al., 2023). For instance, if students are learning about ecosystems in science class, the reading corner may include a curated collection of books, articles, or journals relevant to the topic. This thematic integration supports learning continuity and enables students to explore the material independently beyond the classroom (Fauzan et al., 2021).

Moreover, reading corners that are carefully curated and integrated with media elements such as posters, charts, or interactive visuals further stimulate students' curiosity and motivation. These corners can serve as both an academic resource and a creative space for exploration. When students associate reading with enjoyment and relevance to their lessons, they are more likely to develop positive reading habits. This reading behavior, in turn, contributes to improvements in vocabulary, comprehension, and critical thinking—skills that are essential not only in school but also in life beyond the classroom.

Previous studies have explored the effectiveness of instructional media (Ginting & Mertika, 2025; Hiko et al., 2022) and the role of reading corners in improving students' reading interest (Rofi'uddin & Hermintoyo, 2017; Wihaya Kusumah et al., 2023). However, research that examines the integration of instructional media within thematic reading corners remains limited. In fact, the combination of these two strategies has the potential to enhance not only students' interest in reading but also their conceptual understanding. By offering a more comprehensive learning experience—integrating cognitive and affective domains—this approach may strengthen the role of media and reading environments in fostering meaningful learning.

In addition, while numerous programs have focused separately on improving reading literacy or enhancing media usage in the classroom, few have holistically combined these approaches into a single instructional strategy. The lack of empirical studies in this area leaves a significant gap, especially when considering the growing emphasis on literacy, character building, and technology integration in the elementary curriculum. Addressing this gap through research may provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the effectiveness of integrating instructional media into thematic reading corners as a strategy to enhance elementary school students' reading interest and conceptual understanding. This research seeks to contribute to the development of innovative teaching practices that are active, personalized, and responsive to students' learning needs.

2. Methodology

This study employs a descriptive research method to provide an in-depth overview of the phenomena observed in the field, particularly regarding the implementation of reading corners integrated with instructional materials and their impact on students' reading interest (Anugrah et al., 2022). The descriptive method enables the researcher to gather detailed information about the processes, conditions, and outcomes observed during the implementation of the reading corner in Grade 5 at MIS Humayroh (Aziz et al., 2024). This method is considered suitable for studies that aim to explore educational practices as they occur naturally without manipulation or experimental intervention.

The aim of using a descriptive approach is to systematically, factually, and accurately describe the conditions or characteristics of the subjects or objects under study. This research does not attempt to test hypotheses or establish causal relationships but instead focuses on understanding and portraying the actual conditions at the time the research is conducted. It seeks to construct a narrative that reflects the daily realities of the classroom setting, with specific attention to how thematic reading corners are integrated with instructional media and how this integration influences student engagement and motivation in reading activities.

The subjects of this study consisted of 28 fifth-grade students and two classroom teachers at MIS Humayroh. The selection of subjects was carried out using a purposive sampling technique, where the research subjects were selected based on specific criteria: (1) the classroom actively implemented a reading corner program; (2) the reading materials in the corner were integrated with current instructional content; and (3) teachers were willing to collaborate in the data collection process. The setting of this study—an Islamic elementary school—also adds contextual insight into how instructional strategies are applied in religious-based educational institutions.

Data collection was carried out systematically using multiple methods to ensure data richness and credibility. These included structured questionnaires to measure students' perceptions and motivation toward reading, in-depth interviews with classroom teachers to understand instructional strategies, direct classroom observations to capture real-time student behavior, and document analysis involving lesson plans, student reading logs, and media used in the reading corner (Priza Marta Febriana et al., 2023). Particular emphasis was placed on direct observation of the subjects to obtain accurate, unbiased, and situationally relevant data. Observation checklists were developed to document student interaction with

the reading materials, engagement levels, and frequency of voluntary reading during class breaks and independent learning sessions.

In order to enhance the credibility of the findings, data triangulation was applied. This involved comparing and validating the results obtained from different data sources and instruments. For instance, observational data were cross-checked with questionnaire responses and teacher interviews to identify consistent patterns or discrepancies. This methodological triangulation helps ensure that the findings reflect the actual field conditions, rather than being based on isolated or subjective impressions (Putri Pradana, 2020). The analysis of data was conducted using descriptive qualitative techniques. Questionnaire responses were tabulated to obtain frequency and percentage values, while interview transcripts and observation notes were analyzed thematically. Key themes such as “reading motivation,” “media relevance,” and “student autonomy” were identified and interpreted within the context of the research objectives. The use of thematic coding helped uncover deeper meanings and patterns related to the effectiveness of the reading corner as a medium for enhancing reading interest and conceptual learning.

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Ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process. Prior to data collection, the researcher obtained permission from the school principal and informed consent from teachers and students. Respondent anonymity and confidentiality were maintained, and participation in the study was voluntary. Participants were informed that the data would be used strictly for academic purposes and that no personal identifiers would be disclosed in the research report.

In summary, the descriptive research method adopted in this study provided a comprehensive understanding of how instructional media integration in thematic reading corners can support student learning. By employing various data collection techniques and ensuring methodological rigor, this research presents findings that reflect the authentic experiences and practices within the classroom environment of MIS Humayroh.

3. Results and Discussion

Based on the results of observations, questionnaires, and interviews conducted with fifth-grade students at MIS Humayroh, the implementation of reading corners integrated with instructional content showed a positive impact on students’ reading interest while also supporting the learning process. Data were collected from 30

students and 5 subject teachers who were directly involved in teaching activities using the reading corner approach.

To obtain a comprehensive understanding of students' perceptions of the reading corner, the researcher employed a questionnaire consisting of five closed-ended statements using a five-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree). This instrument was designed to measure students' reading motivation, frequency of reading corner usage, relevance of the reading materials, and the impact of those materials on students' comprehension of subject matter. The details of the questionnaire instrument are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Student Reading Interest Questionnaire on Thematic Reading Corners

Questionnaire Statement	Likert Scale
I feel more motivated to read after the implementation of the reading corner in the classroom.	Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree
I often read books in the reading corner during my free time at school.	Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree
The books in the reading corner are relevant to the lessons I am currently learning.	Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree
The reading corner helps me better understand the lessons.	Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree
I read books in the reading corner at least three times a week.	Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree

After the questionnaire was completed by the students, the analysis revealed that the majority of them showed high enthusiasm for the presence of the reading corner. Approximately 86.7% of students reported increased reading motivation since the reading corner was introduced, and 83.3% stated that their interest in reading during leisure time had increased. In addition, 80% of students found the available reading materials to be relevant to the subjects they were studying, and 76.7% stated that these materials helped them better understand the lesson content. Further findings revealed that more than 70% of students admitted to reading in the reading corner at least three times a week. The detailed results of students' responses to the reading corner are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Questionnaire Results on Students' Responses to the Reading Corner

Statement	Percentage of Students Who Agree
Reading corners enhance reading motivation.	86,70%
Reading interest increases during leisure time.	83,30%
Reading materials are aligned with the lessons.	80%
Helps in understanding the learning material.	76,70%
Reading in the reading corner at least three times a week.	70%

This table shows that the majority of students experienced tangible benefits from the presence of the reading corner. A total of 86.7% of students reported increased motivation, and 83.3% developed an interest in reading outside of class hours. In

addition, most students considered the reading materials relevant and helpful in understanding the lesson content, and they were accustomed to using the reading corner more than three times a week. This reflects the active role of the reading corner in directly enhancing students' literacy.

In addition to the students, the researcher also collected data through questionnaires administered to five subject teachers. The aim was to understand the teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the reading corner in supporting the teaching and learning process, as well as the extent to which it is integrated with the lesson materials. The results of the teachers' responses to the reading corner are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Summary of Teachers' Questionnaire Results on the Reading Corner

Statement Indicator	Percentage of Teachers Who Agree
The reading corner supports the student learning process	100%
Students are more active in seeking information through reading activities	80%
The reading corner is easy to integrate with learning activities	80%
The reading corner improves students' understanding of the learning material	60%
The book collection is diverse and relevant to the subjects being taught	40%

Based on the questionnaire results, all teachers stated that the presence of the reading corner provided positive support for the learning process. Most teachers also observed an increase in students' reading activity and found it easy to integrate the reading corner with the lesson materials. However, only 60% of the teachers reported a significant improvement in students' understanding of the subject matter, and only 40% considered the available reading collection to be sufficiently relevant and diverse. These findings indicate the need to enhance both the quality and quantity of reading materials to optimize the role of the reading corner in supporting effective learning.

In addition to the questionnaire, the researcher also conducted direct observation of students' activities in the classroom while the reading corner was in use. The observation results showed that students appeared enthusiastic in selecting, reading, and discussing the content of the books.

The image presented depicts the reading corner environment in Grade V at MIS Humayroh. Three students are observed engaging in reading activities with a calm and focused demeanor. Two students are seated cross-legged on a carpet while reading illustrated books that appear visually engaging. In contrast, another student is seated on a chair in front of the bookshelf, also immersed in reading. The bookshelf, located in the corner of the classroom, contains a collection of children's magazines and thematic books. The walls of the reading corner are decorated with maps and student work, contributing to a literacy-rich environment that fosters interest in reading. A row of colorful bottles at the front appears to serve as either decorative elements or instructional tools. This observation aligns with questionnaire findings, suggesting that the reading corner functions not merely as a

passive facility but as an actively utilized space for independent and exploratory reading. The relaxed yet focused atmosphere reflects the organic integration of the reading corner into students' daily learning routines. Documentation of the observation is presented in the following figure 1.



Figure 1. Students' Activities in Using the Reading Corner

These findings reinforce the theory that providing a supportive literacy environment can enhance students' reading interest and overall learning quality. Recent studies have shown that thematic reading corners positively influence student engagement, reading habits, and comprehension. Ida et al., (2025) found that reading corners in junior high school significantly increased reading interest, particularly when the materials were closely aligned with student interests and the curriculum. Similarly, Rahimah et al., (2023), through a phenomenological study in Aceh, reported that the presence of reading corners stimulated active reading behavior and increased student motivation in early childhood classrooms. In line with this, Sumarni et al., (2024) emphasized that reading corners integrated into classroom learning support the success of the School Literacy Movement by providing relevant and accessible materials.

These results affirm that the effective use of reading corners contributes not only to literacy development but also to the enrichment of the learning environment.. The reading corner serves not only as a place for reading but also as a medium for integrating literacy into the curriculum. The significant increase in students' reading interest underscores the importance of applying contextual and engaging approaches in fostering a reading culture. Furthermore, the active role of teachers in guiding students, as well as the effective utilization of the reading corner, are key factors contributing to the success of this program.

Nevertheless, limitations in the availability and diversity of reading materials remain a major challenge. Therefore, it is essential to expand the reading collection to better align with students' interests and developmental levels, in order to optimize the long-term impact of the reading corner's implementation.

4. Conclusion

The implementation of reading corners integrated with instructional materials at MIS Humayroh has demonstrated significant potential in enhancing students' reading interest and engagement in the learning process. By providing a dedicated space for reading that is closely aligned with the lesson content, the program succeeded in cultivating a supportive literacy environment. Students reported increased enthusiasm for reading activities, and many were observed to make meaningful connections between their reading and subject comprehension. This indicates that the reading corner was not merely a physical addition to the classroom but served as an effective pedagogical tool.

From the perspective of teachers, the reading corner played a vital role in supporting instructional goals. It encouraged students to seek information independently, participate actively in classroom discussions, and apply their reading experiences to academic tasks. However, the study also revealed areas that require further development, particularly the limited diversity and relevance of the reading materials available. Teachers emphasized the importance of regularly updating the collection to suit students' evolving interests and learning needs.

In conclusion, this study has met its research objectives by showing that the integration of reading corners with learning materials can foster a more literate and engaged student population. Future efforts should focus on expanding reading resources and maintaining teacher involvement to ensure the sustainability and growth of the program across different educational contexts.

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