The Implementation of the School Literacy Movement to Build Students' Reading Habits

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Abstract

This research is motivated by the phenomenon of low literacy culture in Indonesian society. The real step to building a reading habit from an early age is a program that can motivate students to read. As a formal learning environment, Madrasah context in Indonesia plays an important role in creating a community of readers. This study aims to determine how the School Literacy Movement (SLM) is implemented at a private primary school called MI Darul Ulum, Wates, Semarang, Indonesia and to determine the students' perceptions of implementing the SLM to build students' reading habits. The study included the school principal, three teachers, and 109 students. The study used a descriptive qualitative design with a case study design. Data was collected using observation, interviews, documentation, and questionnaires. The data analysis method used the stages such as data reduction, data display, and conclusion. The results show that the character of students' reading habits was still low due to being constrained by COVID-19 pandemic for two years. The literacy program was halted so the existing pre-designed literacy activities could not be fully implemented. Moreover, the facilities and infrastructure of the literacy program were damaged because they lacked maintenance. Only SMS (Sabtu Membaca Senyap) or silent reading program and regular school library visits could be executed among the scheduled activities. Based on the results of this study, literacy programs need to be held intensively. There is also a need for innovation or renewal in literacy programs and infrastructure to support the running of the literacy program and improve students' reading habits.

Keywords: Literacy, reading habit, school literacy movement, students' perception

INTRODUCTION

Literacy is an important indicator that Indonesian education is working. It is essential to teach kids how to read and write, especially in the 21st century, which is centered on knowledge and technology (Kalida & Mursyid, 2014). Reading makes people literate and helps them think critically, creatively, and with an open mind, which is necessary to do well in today's world (Donald et al., 2017). However, reality reflects a worrying state of affairs. The 2011 PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) results put Indonesia in 45th place out of 48 countries, scoring 428, much lower than the international average of 500 (IEA, 2012). The PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) data indicate the same level of consistency: In 2009, Indonesia was 57th with a score of 396, and in 2012, it was 64th with a score of 396. Both scores were below the OECD average of about 495 (OECD, 2013). Low literacy has a significant effect on the quality of education. The Political and Economic Risk Consultants (PERC) survey

put Indonesia last (12th) out of 12 Asian countries, even behind Vietnam. This situation leads to poor human resources and limited progress in reducing poverty (Hanani, 2013). The 2012 Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) survey, which looked at 4,323 third-grade students in seven provinces, found that half could read but only half understood what they read (USAID PRIORITAS, 2015).

In response to these conditions, the government created the School Literacy Movement based on the Nawa Cita agenda, including points 5, 6, 8, and 9 concerning education. GLS is the capacity to read, write, watch, listen, communicate, and access and understand different literacy activities. Permendikbud No. 23 of 2015 says that students must read non-lesson literature for 15 minutes every day before class starts. GLS wants to turn schools into learning organizations where everyone is literate for life through public participation (MoEC, 2015). This program is still being worked on, and new ideas are being added, like digital platforms that give reading materials for various levels of schooling.

Madrasahs play an important role in shaping students' character. As an official school, a madrasah teaches people things and helps them change their values to fit in with the standards of their community (Wiyani, 2013). A madrasah culture that is planned and organized in a way that fits with the vision and mission can help promote literacy and character. MI Darul Ulum Wates in Ngaliyan, Semarang, has started several literacy activities, including SMS (Saturday Silent Reading), reading ambassadors, library visits, book bazaars, guided reading, reading corners, mobile libraries, and working with the Education Office.

Prior studies (Suryawati, 2018; Berliana, 2019; Retno, 2020; Mayuni et al., 2020) demonstrated that GLS effectively cultivated students' interest in reading through excitement, using reading materials, and the impact of the social environment. The strengths of GLS are that it helps students get used to reading, has great teachers, and has reading corners. Its disadvantages are that it does not have enough books, parents are not motivated, and students do not respond to reading in different ways.

The present period complicated has challenges for the implementation of literacy in Indonesia. UNESCO says that Indonesia has one of the lowest reading interests in the world. The country's low literacy culture can make it hard for education and national development to advance. The delivery of 15 million reading books to schools has not improved student literacy skills, and teachers need to be trained and mentored to get students more interested in reading. Some of the primary reasons people in Indonesia do not read much are that libraries are not evenly spread out, so not all areas have libraries that are easy to get to and use, and books are still relatively expensive in Indonesia. This situation worsens because reading is not a big part of family and community life, where it is not a top priority.

Another big problem is that Indonesian children are at risk of low literacy because they do not read much. The diminishing literacy rates among Indonesia's Generation Z significantly threaten the nation's future. Many things make it hard for people to read these days. For example, families do not support reading, books are not available that match students' interests, teachers are not very good at running literacy programs, and schools, families, and communities do not work together very well to support the

literacy movement (Andriani, 2023; Sari & Purnomo, 2024; Wahyuni et al., 2024).

This study investigates the application of GLS in shaping students' reading habits, specifically targeting elementary school students, in contrast to prior research that predominantly focused on junior high school and college students. The research employed descriptive qualitative methodology. utilizing Smith's (1991) Adult Survey of Reading Attitude (ASRA) and the 2015 GLS guidelines from the Ministry of Education and Culture. Although sharing similar objectives with prior studies, this research distinctive offers a perspective implementing GLS the madrasah at ibtidaiyah level, particularly regarding the challenges of digitalization and the disparity in access to technology, which have emerged as significant issues in Indonesian education.

METHODOLOGY

This study used an intrinsic qualitative case investigate study design to implementation of the School Literacy Movement in improving students' reading habits at MI Darul Ulum Wates, Ngaliyan, Semarang. This approach was selected to comprehensively examine a particular phenomenon within a constrained real-world context (Creswell, 2015). The study was placed at MI Darul Ulum in Wates, Ngaliyan, Semarang City, Indonesia during the 2022/2023 academic year, selected for its status as a reputable private institution with national recognition and its persistent implementation of the School Literacy Movement.

The research participants were the principal, three fifth-grade teachers, the librarian, and 109 students from three classes: 5 Abdur (36 students), 5 Salman (36 students), and 5 Zubair (37 students). The study instruments comprised observation, interview, and

documentation procedures formulated per the SD School Literacy Movement Guidelines (MoEC, 2016), emphasizing the three phases of implementation: habituation, development, and learning. This study also utilized a reading attitude questionnaire modified from the Adult Survey of Reading Attitude (ASRA) created by Smith (1991). This tool was initially intended for adults, but it was changed to make it easier for fifth graders to comprehend using simpler language and context. This is because students aged 10 to 11 have the reading skills to answer basic about their attitudes toward questions reading.

Data collection was carried out through four methodologies: structured observation conducted every Saturday during the SMS program (09:30-09:45 WIB) to assess the implementation of the three stages of the School Literacy Movement; semi-structured interviews with the principal, grade 5 librarian concerning teacher. and management, curriculum, infrastructure, and learning environment: documentation comprising archival materials such as madrasah decrees, activity schedules, and school data, alongside visual documentation in the form of pictures of literacy activities and infrastructure; and questionnaires aimed at investigating students' perceptions and attitudes towards reading activities.

The analysis of data followed a thematic approach with the stages outlined below. First, we reduced the data by categorizing and filtering raw data from interviews, observations, and documents based on their relevance to the research goals. Second, coding is finding and giving codes to units of meaning related to the School Literacy Movement and how students read. Third, developing themes by putting the codes into primary themes that show how the literacy program was implemented. Fourth, data

should be presented in a way that is organized and easy to understand, such as through narrative descriptions. Fifth, checking and forming conclusions by comparing data from different sources to ensure reliable results.

The research's credibility was confirmed via triangulation involving source informants, including principals, teachers, librarians, and students; method triangulation through the integration of observation, interviews. documentation. questionnaires; member checking by validating findings with key participants; and peer debriefing through the discourse of findings with fellow researchers. From an ethical standpoint, the research has secured official authorization from the school. The principal, teachers, and librarian all gave their informed approval. For students, the school got agreement from their parents or guardians. It was up to each participant to decide whether or not to take part, and their identities were kept secret.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings were divided into two parts: the first part presents observations, interviews, and documents the results of implementing the school literacy movement to build students' reading habits, and the second part presents students' perceptions of implementing the school literacy movement to build students' reading habits. Furthermore, the discussion will be delivered in the next section.

The Implementation of The School Literacy Movement to Build Students' Reading Habits

The present study focuses on implementing the school literacy movement and students' perception of implementing the school literacy movement to build students' reading habits. To begin the presentation of the

findings, this section presents the results of the observations. The observation results are supported by document review and interviews.

Management of the MI Darul Ulum Literacy Program

An overview of the management literacy program that has been held at MI Darul Ulum, Wates, Semarang, for more than seven years now is as follows:

1. Planning

According to Hamalik (2010), planning is a series of actions in the future. Planning aims to achieve a consistent and coordinated set of operations to obtain the desired results. The literacy program planning is carried out at the beginning of each school year by compiling a schedule of reading activities for each class according to the students' learning schedule. Reading activities here are planned at the beginning of each year by making a headcount, management structure, and schedule of reading activities for each class.

a. Book preparation

The books used in the literacy program are very diverse, ranging from picture story books, story books, history books, fables, novels, and many more. These books are placed in each class's reading corners and walls, making it easier for students to select and retrieve them. Apart from storybooks, there are also big and tiered reading books used by lower-grade teachers for group reading, guided reading, and guided reading activities. MI Darul Ulum also prepares student notebooks to use as media for students to write resumes about the books they have read.

b. Preparation of Literacy Facilities

The central literacy facility is the "Madinatul Ilmu" library, a center for literacy activities for madrasah residents. The library's function is as a learning center in an

elementary school. The development and arrangement of the library are an important part of implementing the elementary literacy program and reading-based knowledge management. The library has complete audiovisual facilities. Besides having a library as a literacy center, MI Darul Ulum has also prepared a reading corner in class to support literacy programs at its madrasah. A reading wall of plastic pipes filled with books can also be seen outside the classroom.

From the explanation above, the study can conclude that the school principal and program administrators have planned their literacy program at the beginning of each academic year by setting goals, setting program activities, preparing books, and preparing literacy facilities.

2. Organizing

Organizing attempts to complement the plans made with the executors' organizational structure. The management structure of the literacy program is based on the library's organizational structure as a madrasah literacy centre. The composition of the library management is in charge of managing the literacy program, which includes compiling a schedule of reading activities for each class, managing books in the library, managing books in the reading corners and reading walls of the class, providing lending services at the library, and conducting recap visits at the library to select reading ambassadors each semester.

Library administrators are responsible for managing literacy programs in a madrasah, while those in charge of program management specifically are in the hands of class teachers. Class teachers play a role in managing their respective classes when the reading activity schedule takes place. Class teachers accompany students in library visits and independent reading activities and facilitate guided and group reading activities.

The division of tasks in the literacy program is quite effective because each teacher is responsible for their class.

From the explanation above, it can be seen that MI Darul Ulum, in managing the literacy program, has carried out an organizing function by forming an organizational structure of administrators with their respective duties, starting from librarians and class teachers, to parents of students, and allocating special funds for program development.

3. Actuating

Actuating is the implementation of planning and organizing. The literacy program is carried out according to the schedule that has been prepared in the plan. Implementation of activities in the literacy program at *MI Darul Ulum* is as follows:

a) Library visit

The visit to the library program went well according to the schedule that had been prepared. Students also often visit the library during recess and free hours, not only during mandatory visits. Most visitors are from the lower class, namely classes I to III.

b) Reading together and guided reading Reading together and guided at MI Darul Ulum is only for the early grades, namely grades I, II, and III. In reading together, the teacher uses the big book as the medium. The teacher conditioned the class by having the teacher sit in a chair and students sit on the classroom floor so that all students could see the writing in the big book. In guided reading, the teacher divides the class into several groups, then reads the book's contents to the students, and the students listen. The book used is a tiered reading book. The tiered books were gifts from USAID for levels A to F and were used according to the students' reading abilities. When the teacher finishes

reading, the teacher explains the reading in the book, and asks the students questions.

c) SMS (Sabtu Membaca Senyap)

The SMS program is held every Saturday from 09.30 to 09.45 WIB. The work procedures for the SMS program at MI Darul Ulum are as follows:

- a. Instruction I: At 09.30 WIB, the head of the madrasah, via the office microphone, announces that the reading activity has started and calls on him to leave all activities. Then each student takes turns reading books and journals in the classroom reading corner.
- b. Instruction II: The teacher invites students to read a reading book for 10 minutes, that is, until 09.40 WIB. Students read the reading book for 10 minutes and then write a summary of the reading for 5 minutes.
- c. Instruction III: At 09.45 WIB, the teacher orders students to return their reading books to their original place and submit their reading reports to the teacher.

All classes and their respective class teachers carry out the SMS program using the independent or silent reading method. The books used are also very diverse, ranging from picture story books, story books, history books, fables, and many more. Even though there are various types of books in the classroom reading corner, some teachers, especially upper-class teachers, prefer to read textbooks. The SMS program also applies a reward and punishment system. Prizes were awards, given as such as reading ambassadors, and they received gifts. As for punishment, one violation will be reminded, twice will be reprimanded. If it has been three times, the school principal gives authority to the class coordinator to make punishment rules suitable for their class.

d) MI Darul Ulum Lens Bulletin

The Lens MIDU Bulletin was first published in December 2017, and until now, there have been five issues of the bulletin, namely the last one in December 2019. There was much reading in the bulletin, ranging from articles, short tales, madrasa news, and poetry to comics with a different theme every year. The editorial team for the magazine coordinated writing from instructors. education workers, and students. Following publication, the magazine was distributed to all madrasah residents, and outsiders could purchase it from the madrasah. This literacy program could not be implemented in the odd semester of 2022/2023 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Based on the explanation above, it can be seen that the literacy program still needs to be fully implemented. However, the obstacles can be minimized due to good cooperation between the head of the madrasah and various parties involved in the literacy program.

e) Mobile Library Visit

MI Darul Ulum's program to bring in mobile library cars has also been running until now, but not regularly, even though the head of the madrasah has already negotiated with the library. This situation is due to the status of madrasahs, which are not state madrasahs, so they receive different treatment from the government.

From the explanation above, the researcher can conclude that the implementation of the literacy program at MI Darul Ulum, Wates, Kota Semarang is based on the planning that has been made and the organization that has been prepared. Under his leadership, the school principal, madrasah, has created an environment of literacy with various scheduled and special activities. However, the researchers assessed that the literacy program implementation received less government support, which was indicated by

the government's mobile library, which was unable to schedule regular visits, in contrast to state madrasahs.

4. Controlling

Controlling is an activity that seeks to control so that implementation can be according to plan and achieve organizational goals. The control of the literacy program at MI Darul Ulum, Wates, Semarang includes monitoring and evaluation activities. The head of the madrasah carries out monitoring. Monitoring the school principal's achievement of the goals of the literacy program is carried out through the implementation of activities in the program and is monitored at the end of each semester. At the end of each semester, the principal of the madrasah holds a meeting to discuss reports from the person in charge of activities. Librarians report visits to the library, and during teacher council meetings, all teachers share their activities. From this monitoring, it can be seen how the implementation of each activity is running as planned.

Apart from monitoring, the control of the literacy program is also evaluated to see to what extent the program objectives have been achieved. The evaluation activities for the literacy program at MI Darul Ulum, based on the evaluation subject, are as follows:

1. Head of Madrasah

The head of the Madrasah tries to control the literacy program in his Madrasah by evaluating the constraints of the program. Among the obstacles that exist in the literacy program at MI Darul Ulum are as follows:

a) Student Problems

Even though students' enthusiasm during reading time was quite good, they were still reluctant to read. When reading time started, there were still students who were playing.

When the principal of the madrasah announced that the texting activity had started, many students were still playing, and some were reading books quietly. To overcome this problem, madrasah principals often monitor classes to ensure reading activities run smoothly.

b) Teacher Problems

Students and teachers also need to improve the literacy program. Even though teachers have been competently trained thanks to the training they attended, in practice, some have become literate role models for students, while others have only supervised and assisted. To overcome this, the principal of the madrasah motivates teachers to be role models for students.

c) Book Issues

A crucial problem in literacy programs is the need for more reading materials. This also happened when the books in the library, reading corners, and walls needed to meet the student ratio. There are more copies than kinds. To overcome this problem, the head of the madrasah held a book-endowment movement for parents, guests, and researchers.

d) Facilities Problem

Literacy facilities at MI Darul Ulum are included in the complete category because there is a library with audio-visual, reading corners, and reading walls. However, reading corners are only evenly distributed in some classes. This can hinder achieving program goals because facilities are essential as a physical literacy environment. The head of the madrasah tries to overcome this by equalizing one of the facilities for each class, both the reading corner and the reading wall. As the person in charge of the class, the teacher has a way of evaluating reading activities in their class. On average, teachers assess students through student reading

journals. Some teachers conduct a thorough evaluation by marking students' resumes and books and coordinating with librarians regarding the number of visiting students. Some teachers evaluate plus an oral evaluation, namely by retelling stories in notebooks according to students' language abilities, after which students are asked to come forward to tell the results of their resumes.

1. Literacy Program Manager

The evaluation carried out by the management of the literacy program, in this case also a librarian, is an evaluation of the intensity of student visits to the library to determine reading ambassadors for the following semester. Officers select two reading ambassadors each semester, judging from the recap of visiting books at the library.

2. Class teacher

As the person in charge of the class, the teacher has a way of evaluating reading activities in their class. On average, teachers assess students through student reading journals. Some teachers conduct a thorough evaluation by marking students' resumes and books and coordinating with librarians regarding the number of visiting students. Some teachers evaluate plus an oral evaluation, namely by retelling stories in notebooks according to students' language abilities, after which students are asked to come forward to tell the results of their resumes.

From the evaluation, the researcher assessed that the literacy program at MI Darul Ulum had increased students' interest in reading. Various programs have been implemented according to plan. Even though there are obstacles in its implementation, the obstacles that arise can be minimized so that the literacy program, which aims to increase students' interest in reading, is marked by increased visits to the library, which is

increasing every year. In addition to increased visits to the library, the program results are student reading journals containing resumes and the publication of bulletins containing the work of teachers and students.

Students' Perception of Implementing the School Literacy Movement to Build Students' Reading Habits

Based on the questionnaire results, the students' ability to comprehend texts shows that more than half of the students can understand the text they have read. It can be proven by the results of the questionnaire research on statement 1, "I can read, but I do not understand what I have read," showing 56% strongly disagree and 35% disagree. Especially if pictures, diagrams, and charts support the student's reading text. Students really feel it helps them understand the text reading. In addition, pictures, charts, and diagrams can increase students' interest in reading. The 7th statement, "It is easier for me to understand what I am reading if pictures, charts, and diagrams are included," shows that 58% of students strongly agree and 30% agree.

The text's support of pictures, diagrams, and charts also influences students' interest in reading. Students who only read text full of writing without pictures, diagrams, and charts usually feel tired and sleepy easily. This is shown in the 8th statement, "When I read, I usually get tired and sleepy," which shows that 31% of students strongly agree and 44% agree.

Understanding the text read will be effortless if students take advantage of social elements, such as discussing the books they have read with friends. Besides being able to help students understand the contents of the text, discussions with friends can also influence students' reading interest and curiosity about

a reading or text. However, students' interests and curiosity are still relatively low due to the lack of social interaction or discussion with friends. In this questionnaire, the 6th statement, "My friends and I often discuss the books we have read," shows that 51% of students strongly disagree with this statement.

Statement 2, "I am a good reader," shows that more than half of the students already have literal understanding competence, namely, recall competency at the summarizing stage. Summarizing is the ability to summarize the reading using direct statements paraphrases from the contents. Students summarized while implementing an SMS literacy program (Silent Reading Saturday). The study's results using a questionnaire showed that 60% of students strongly agreed and 27% agreed. It can be concluded that more than half of the students can read and recall when summarizing.

Based on the questionnaire distributed to students, students' reading habits at MI Darul Ulum are still relatively low. This is evidenced by the results of the questionnaire in the 3rd statement "When I am at home, I read a lot" showing 32% of students disagree with the statement, and in the 10th statement "I spend a lot of my spare time reading" which shows the results of 40% of students also disagree. Likewise, in the 11th statement, "I only read when the teacher told me to read," 63% strongly agree with the statement. This shows that students' awareness of the importance of reading without being asked by others cannot achieve satisfactory results.

Academic anxiety often occurs during education, where it affects efficiency, talent, and identity. An example of student anxiety is that students experience anxiety when asked to read, such as being hesitant and shy.

In addition, some students experience reading difficulties, such as feeling nervous, anxious, afraid, clumsy, and shy when asked to read in front of the class. This is related to the study's results, which were obtained through a questionnaire on statement 21, "I need much help in reading" (27% strongly agree and 31% agree). Statement 23 "I often feel anxious when I have much reading to do" shows (32% strongly agree). Statements 25, 26, and 28 also ask about students' anxiety in reading. The research results from a questionnaire in statements 25, 26, and 28 show that students have relatively high anxiety.

Anxiety develops as a result of learning difficulties. Learning difficulties generally refer to difficulties in reading, writing, and mathematics. In this study, the focus is on reading difficulties. Examples of reading difficulties experienced by students include difficulties in recognizing the right words, missing letters, not being fluent, and not being able to understand the contents of the reading. Statement 24, "Encountering unfamiliar words is the hardest part of reading," shows that 39% of students agree with this statement. Statement 27, "I have trouble understanding what I read," shows 44% of students strongly agree. In addition to statement 5, "I try very hard, but I just cannot read very well," 27% of students strongly agree. It can be concluded that the difficulty in reading activities for students is less than half.

In this section, the researcher discusses the research findings described before. The discussion is focused on the implementation of the school literacy movement to build students' reading habits and students' perception of implementing the school literacy movement to build students' reading habits in classes V Zaid, V Zubair, V Salman at MI Darul Ulum, Wates, Kota Semarang.

The results show that the character of students' reading habits was still low due to being constrained by the COVID-19 pandemic for two years. The literacy program was halted so that pre-designed literacy activities could not be fully implemented. Moreover, the facilities and infrastructure of the literacy program were damaged because they lacked maintenance. Only SMS (Sabtu Membaca Senyap) and regular school library visits could be executed among scheduled activities.

This is supported by research done by Mumpuni et al. (2021), which states that the implementation of the school literacy movement during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings from this study indicate that the pattern of the literacy movement during the COVID-19 pandemic is adjusted to the age level of student development and the situation and conditions, as well as the stages of the online literacy movement. The previous study is in line with this research, because of COVID-19, the School Literacy Movement program cannot be implemented in schools for two years. The learning activities for students are carried out online only for school subjects. The school literacy program cannot be carried out online because there are several obstacles, both in terms of limited time, facilities, and the different backgrounds of students. In addition, students at the elementary level still need extra supervision and guidance in learning activities from teachers and parents at home. Nevertheless, it is constrained by limited time and human resources from educators and parents who cannot accompany them 24 hours a day because they have to work and others.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the School Literacy Movement at MI Darul Ulum, Wates, Semarang, demonstrates that a methodical strategy via a planned program can foster a supportive literacy environment. The study uncovered a significant paradox regarding the attainment of literacy program objectives. Despite 91% of students comprehending the texts and having a sufficient literacy infrastructure, students' reading autonomy remained deficient, with 91% reading only at the instruction of their teachers. This finding illustrates Indonesia's overarching modern literacy dilemma, wherein the provision of facilities and programs has failed to convert scheduled reading practices into independent reading habits.

The reading anxieties and challenges reported by 67% of students show the necessity for a more personalized and flexible approach in implementing literacy programs. The SMS (Saturday Silent Reading) program and planned trips to the library have helped children get into reading. However, they did not make them want to read independently. 88% of students could understand the reading better when they had images and diagrams to help them. This shows the importance of using different teaching methods based on how each student learns.

This study significantly enhances the development of literacy programs in primary schools, particularly in private institutions with restricted access to governmental resources. The results indicate that the efficacy of literacy programs relies not only on the presence of infrastructure but predominantly on the capacity to convert reading activities into ingrained habits. Nonetheless, this study is limited by its emphasis on one school and reliance on a self-report instrument based on students' impressions.

The research findings indicate that it is important to formulate techniques

emphasizing intrinsic motivation by adapting reading materials to students' interests and providing specific assistance for reducing reading anxiety. For educators, combining literacy programs with regular learning activities can make reading more relevant. standpoint, promoting From a policy universal access to literacy resources and enhancing collaboration across schools, families, and communities to establish a sustainable literacy environment is crucial. More studies need to be done to determine how literacy programs affect people over time and to develop better ways to put them into practice in different school settings.

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