

A NEEDS ANALYSIS OF BIG BOOK INTEGRATING GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING AS READING MEDIA FOR SHARED READING ACTIVITIES IN FACILITATING PRESCHOOL STUDENTS' READING ENGAGEMENT

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ABSTRAK

Perkembangan literasi awal memegang peranan yang sangat penting dalam membentuk kesiapan akademik anak serta keberhasilan belajar jangka panjang. Namun, keterbatasan ketersediaan bahan bacaan yang mudah diakses secara visual dan bermakna secara kontekstual dapat mengurangi keterlibatan membaca siswa prasekolah selama kegiatan membaca bersama (*shared reading*). Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kebutuhan guru dan siswa prasekolah terkait penggunaan *Big Book* yang mengintegrasikan SDG 3 (*Good Health and Well-Being*) untuk mendukung keterlibatan membaca. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain deskriptif kualitatif yang dilaksanakan di salah satu taman kanak-kanak di Singaraja, dengan melibatkan observasi kelas dan wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan guru. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan tiga kebutuhan utama, yaitu buku berukuran besar dengan tampilan visual yang jelas, integrasi tema kesehatan berbasis naratif, serta fitur interaktif untuk mempertahankan keterlibatan siswa. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa pengembangan *Big Book* yang terintegrasi dengan SDG 3 secara pedagogis diperlukan untuk meningkatkan praktik *shared reading* dan menumbuhkan keterlibatan membaca siswa prasekolah.

Kata Kunci: *Big Book, Membaca Bersama, Keterlibatan Membaca, SDG 3*

ABSTRACT


Early literacy development plays a crucial role in shaping children's academic readiness and long-term learning success. However, limited availability of visually accessible and contextually meaningful reading materials may reduce preschool students' reading engagement during shared reading activities. This study aimed to analyze the needs of teachers and preschool students regarding the use of Big Books integrating SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being) to support reading engagement. A qualitative descriptive design was employed at one of the Kindergarten in Singaraja, involving classroom observation and a semi-structured interview with the teacher. The findings revealed three primary needs: large-format and visually clear books, narrative-based integration of health themes, and interactive features to sustain students' engagement. The study concludes that developing SDG 3-integrated Big Books is pedagogically necessary to enhance shared reading practices and foster preschool students' reading engagement.

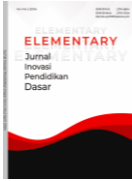
Keywords: *Big Book, Shared Reading, Reading Engagement, SDG 3*

INTRODUCTION

Early literacy development functions as the primary cornerstone for a child's subsequent academic success and holistic personal growth (Maureen et al., 2022; Oktaviani & Oktaria, 2021). Within this critical developmental phase, the act of reading holds a pivotal role because it necessitates more than the mere decoding of phonetic symbols; it requires the active construction of meaning from varied texts. Scholarly investigations consistently demonstrate

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that children who are immersed in positive early literacy environments tend to exhibit greater self-confidence, persistent motivation, and superior academic performance throughout their schooling years. Consequently, the strategic enhancement of reading engagement within early childhood educational settings has become an essential priority for educators and policymakers alike (Yanti et al., 2026). By prioritizing these foundational skills, schools can ensure that young learners possess the necessary tools to navigate increasingly complex informational landscapes. This ideal state suggests that early exposure to diverse literary forms is not merely beneficial but is actually mandatory for creating a society consisting of lifelong learners who are capable.

Reading engagement is comprehensively defined as a child's multifaceted involvement in literary processes, spanning behavioral, cognitive, and motivational. Evidence from empirical studies underscores that readers who are deeply engaged are far more likely to achieve robust literacy outcomes and maintain long-term academic excellence (Lee et al., 2021; Zhu et al., 2023). Conversely, a lack of active participation in reading-related activities significantly diminishes a child's interaction with printed materials, thereby escalating the inherent risk of developing severe reading difficulties (Seventilofa, 2024; Wijayanti, 2020). Such developmental setbacks do not merely affect academic grades but also detrimentally impact a child's emotional well-being, often manifesting as deep-seated feelings of social anxiety or inferiority when confronted with literacy-based tasks (Kargiotidis & Manolitsis, 2024). These critical findings highlight the immediate urgency of architecting classroom environments that proactively cultivate and sustain reading engagement from the very earliest stages of education to prevent lasting negative consequences for every young student struggling within modern primary educational systems found globally today within our expanding world.

Shared reading has gained widespread recognition as a highly effective instructional practice in preschool environments, primarily because it facilitates an interactive dialogue between instructors and young learners. However, the ultimate success of these shared reading sessions is heavily contingent upon the specific characteristics of the media being utilized in the classroom. Big Books, distinguished by their significantly enlarged text and vibrant illustrations, are uniquely suited for these shared contexts as they provide collective visual access and support interactive storytelling (Haniya & Hasibuan, 2024; Mahayanti et al., 2017). Numerous previous studies have validated the substantial contribution of Big Books to the advancement of early reading skills and general literacy development (Jayendra et al., 2018; Maharani et al., 2023; Oktaviana et al., 2021). Despite these benefits, it is becoming increasingly clear that the actual effectiveness of Big Books is not determined by their physical format alone; rather, it depends on the cultural relevance and the contextual meaningfulness of the contents displayed to children in these settings.

Educational materials designed for early childhood should offer more than simple entertainment; they must also provide contextual knowledge and value-oriented insights that resonate with global needs. Recently, the Sustainable Development Goals have become a vital international framework for fostering sustainable awareness and nurturing a sense of responsible global citizenship among children (Putri et al., 2024). Within this framework, SDG 3, which focuses on Good Health and Well-Being, highlights the necessity of ensuring healthy lifestyles and promoting well-being for all individuals (World Health Organization, 2023). Integrating health-related awareness into children's reading materials can significantly enhance their cognitive growth and value-based development, aligning local curricula with pressing international educational priorities (UNICEF, 2018). By embedding these global themes into early reading experiences, educators can help children develop a sense of agency and social responsibility from a very young age. This approach ensures that literacy serves as a vehicle for



understanding world issues, thereby preparing the next generation of students to handle future global health challenges with empathy and deep scientific knowledge and skills.

Despite the increasing global emphasis on sustainability education, previous research regarding Big Books has largely focused on enhancing basic literacy skills, often neglecting the integration of global themes such as health (Kusna & Puspitasari, 2023; Kusumawati et al., 2022; Mahayanti & Asrina, 2017; Mahayanti & Suantari, 2017). Preliminary observations at a kindergarten in Singaraja revealed a troubling lack of Big Books suitable for shared reading and a total absence of contextual themes regarding health and well-being. This situation highlights a stark gap between the untapped potential of Big Books as interactive media and the actual integration of meaningful content that fosters engagement. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the specific needs of teachers and preschool students regarding the utilization of SDG 3 integrated Big Books to support reading engagement. By identifying these requirements, the research seeks to provide a solid empirical foundation for the innovation of instructional media design in preschools. This innovative focus ensures that literacy development is coupled with global awareness, creating a more comprehensive experience for every young learner.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to examine teachers' and preschool students' needs regarding the use of Big Books integrating SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being) to support reading engagement in shared reading activities. A qualitative descriptive approach was selected as it enables the researcher to explore classroom realities and participants' perspectives in a natural educational setting without manipulating instructional practices. This design is appropriate for identifying contextual needs that can inform the development of relevant and meaningful reading materials. The study was conducted at one of the Kindergarten in Singaraja, Bali. The setting was chosen because English has been introduced as part of the learning activities, and shared reading practices are regularly implemented in the classroom. The supportive collaboration from the school management and teachers also allowed for in-depth exploration of classroom conditions related to reading engagement.

The participants consisted of preschool students aged 4–5 years and one classroom teacher. The teacher was selected purposively due to her direct involvement in facilitating reading activities and selecting instructional media. The students were observed collectively during shared reading sessions to examine their behavioral indicators of reading engagement, including attention, participation, responsiveness, and interaction with reading materials. Data were collected through classroom observation and a semi-structured interview. Classroom observations were conducted to identify students' engagement during shared reading activities and to examine the suitability of existing reading materials used in the classroom. The observation focused on students' attention span, level of participation, interaction with illustrations and text, and responsiveness to teacher guidance. Field notes were used to document observable behaviors related to reading engagement.

In addition, a semi-structured interview was conducted with the teacher to gain deeper insights into the challenges faced in maintaining students' engagement and the perceived needs for effective reading media. The interview explored the teacher's experiences in conducting shared reading activities, limitations of currently available materials, and expectations for Big Books that integrate SDG 3 themes in a developmentally appropriate manner. The flexible format of the interview allowed for comprehensive explanations while maintaining alignment with the research focus. The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the

procedures proposed by (Clarke & Braun, 2017). The analysis began with familiarization with the data through repeated reading of observation notes and interview transcripts. Initial codes were generated to identify meaningful units related to reading engagement and instructional needs. These codes were subsequently categorized into broader themes representing patterns across the data. The themes were reviewed and refined to ensure coherence and alignment with the research objective. Data from observations and interviews were analyzed concurrently to provide a comprehensive understanding of the needs for SDG 3–integrated Big Books in supporting preschool students’ reading engagement.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The Needs of Preschool Students

The observation findings indicate that preschool students require reading media that can effectively support their engagement during shared reading activities. Several key aspects were identified, including the limited use of books as the main medium, the inadequacy of book design, the lack of meaningful content integration, and students’ fluctuating engagement during reading. Although reading activities were conducted in the classroom, books were not consistently positioned as the central medium for interaction. Instead, teachers more frequently relied on alternative visual media such as picture cards, posters, and puppets, which reduced opportunities for students to engage directly with reading materials.

In terms of physical characteristics, the books available in the classroom were generally small in size and not suitable for shared reading contexts. This condition made it difficult for all students, especially those sitting at the back, to clearly see the text and illustrations presented in the book. As a result, some students experienced difficulty in following the storyline and maintaining their attention during the activity.

This limitation is reflected in the observation note:

“The size of the text or illustrations in the reading media is difficult for some students to see.” These findings highlight the importance of large-format books that can support collective visibility and facilitate better interaction during shared reading activities.

The visual and textual quality of the books also played a significant role in influencing students’ engagement. Some of the available books contained relatively dense text and less appealing illustrations, which made them less suitable for preschool learners. In contrast, students showed stronger interest when the reading materials included colorful, clear, and visually attractive illustrations.

This is evident in the following observation note:

“Students show higher interest in reading media with colorful illustrations and clear visuals.” This indicates that visually engaging elements are essential in capturing students’ attention and supporting their sustained involvement during reading activities.

Another important finding relates to the content of the reading materials used in the classroom. Students were observed to respond more positively to stories that were closely related to their daily experiences, as such stories were easier to understand and follow. However, reading materials integrating meaningful themes, particularly those related to health and well-being (SDG 3), were not available in the form of storybooks. Although these themes were introduced through songs, posters, and oral explanations, they were not presented in structured narrative forms that could support reading activities. This suggests the need for story-based reading materials that integrate SDG 3 content to enhance both literacy learning and students’ awareness of healthy living.

In addition, students' behavioral engagement during shared reading activities was found to be inconsistent. At the beginning of the activity, most students appeared attentive and interested in the reading process. However, as the activity progressed, some students began to lose focus, became distracted, or engaged in off-task behaviors such as talking to peers or playing.

This condition is reflected in the observation note:

"Students show reading engagement, such as lack of attention or being easily distracted during reading activities." These findings indicate that the existing reading materials have not been able to sustain students' engagement throughout the reading process.

Overall, the findings suggest that preschool students need reading media that are visually accessible, engaging, and contextually relevant to their daily experiences. The reading materials should also be designed to support active participation and sustained attention during shared reading activities. Big Books, with their large size, attractive illustrations, simple language, and meaningful content, are considered suitable to meet these needs. Therefore, the development of Big Books integrating SDG 3 is highly relevant to support preschool students' reading engagement.

The Needs of the Teacher

The interview findings reveal that the teacher also requires more effective reading media to support shared reading activities in the classroom. The teacher highlighted several issues related to the availability of books, their physical and visual quality, the suitability of content, and students' engagement during reading. Although storybooks were used in the classroom, their use was not consistent due to the limited number of available books. This limitation affected the implementation of shared reading activities, as books could not always be used as the main instructional medium.

This issue is reflected in the following interview excerpt:

"The media usually used during reading are storybooks and puppets as supporting media, but the number of books available in the classroom is still limited, so they cannot always be used in every reading activity." The teacher's statement indicates that the availability of reading materials remains a challenge in supporting regular and effective shared reading practices. As a result, there is a need for more accessible and sufficient reading materials that can be consistently used in the classroom. This also shows that improving the quantity of books is as important as improving their quality.

In relation to book quality, the teacher emphasized that size and visual clarity are essential factors in supporting shared reading activities. According to the teacher, large-sized books, such as A3, are more appropriate for classroom use because they can be seen clearly by all students. The teacher also highlighted the importance of clear and unambiguous illustrations, as well as simple and meaningful language that can be easily understood by preschool learners. This is reflected in the following statement:

"We need reading books with the criteria mentioned earlier, namely large-sized books around A3 size, supported by clear and unambiguous illustrations, as well as simple but meaningful word choices." These characteristics are considered important to facilitate comprehension and interaction during shared reading activities.

The teacher also pointed out that the content of existing reading materials has not yet fully met the needs of students. Although health-related topics have been introduced in daily learning, they are not yet presented in the form of structured storybooks that can support reading activities. The teacher emphasized that stories integrating themes of health and well-being would be more meaningful if they were connected to students' daily experiences. This approach

is expected to help students better understand the content and apply it in their everyday lives. Therefore, integrating SDG 3 content into story-based reading materials is considered an important need in the classroom.

In addition, the teacher highlighted that students' engagement during reading activities is still inconsistent. Some students are able to pay attention, respond to questions, and participate actively, while others are easily distracted and less involved. The teacher identified that one of the main causes of this issue is the inadequacy of the reading media used in the classroom.

This is reflected in the following statement:

"The books available cannot yet support students' behavioral engagement, because the number of students is large and the books we read are relatively small." This finding indicates that appropriate reading media play a crucial role in supporting students' behavioral engagement during shared reading activities.

In summary, the teacher needs reading media that are large in size, visually attractive, easy to understand, and relevant to students' daily lives. The integration of SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being) is also considered important to provide meaningful learning experiences. These characteristics are expected to support the implementation of shared reading activities more effectively and enhance students' engagement. Therefore, the development of Big Books integrating SDG 3 is highly necessary to meet both teachers' and students' needs.

Discussion

The current implementation of *shared reading* in Singaraja reveals a significant discrepancy between pedagogical goals and instructional reality. Observations indicate that teachers struggle due to the limited availability of appropriate media. Existing books fail to provide a platform where all students can simultaneously interact with the text. This lack of resource availability hampers the core objective of interactive literacy. By providing a *Big Book*, teachers can facilitate a more collective experience. This preliminary analysis highlights that without suitable media, the interaction between teacher and pupil remains stagnant. Consequently, there is an urgent demand for a medium that can accommodate the group dynamic of preschool learning. This initial stage of the research confirms that the lack of meaningful, contextual content, such as health and well-being themes, further alienates students from the reading process. Therefore, the necessity to innovate reading media is not merely an aesthetic choice but a fundamental requirement for achieving literacy standards in early childhood education today for every single child in the classroom. Needs are quite evident now (Astuti & Nurhayati, 2022; Iswara et al., 2023; Marin et al., 2022; Thanavanitchayakul & Srichok, 2024).

The physical quality of current reading books at the school presents a major barrier to effective pedagogy. Most available materials are small in scale, featuring unclear illustrations and text that is virtually invisible to students situated in a group circle. This visual inadequacy leads to a rapid decline in focus. In contrast, the development of *Big Books* offers a pragmatic solution to these visual constraints. Such media provide oversized text and high-contrast illustrations that ensure accessibility for every child in the classroom. Improving the textual and visual layout is vital for fostering an inclusive environment where collective engagement can thrive. By utilizing a larger format, teachers can point to specific words and images, thereby modeling the reading process more effectively. This enhancement in media quality serves as a prerequisite for successful literacy instruction. Visual accessibility in early childhood is not just about seeing but about comprehending through shared attention. Therefore, the transition to a *Big Book* format addresses the critical limitations found during the fieldwork stage effectively

for all participants (Firmansah & Kalifah, 2024; Galyon et al., 2023; Idris et al., 2022; Tuerah, 2021).

A critical deficit identified in this study involves the absence of contextualized content relating to health and well-being. While topics concerning healthy living are introduced through posters and songs, they lack the narrative structure provided by books. Structured reading materials have a unique potential to instill deep-seated values from an early age. Early childhood education is a pivotal period for developing an understanding of *Good Health and Well-Being*, which directly supports the global objectives of Sustainable Development Goal 3 (UNESCO, 2024; UNICEF, 2018). Integrating these themes into story-driven formats allows students to see health concepts as relatable life experiences rather than abstract rules. By using a *Big Book* as a vehicle for SDG 3, educators can create a more meaningful dialogue about hygiene, nutrition, and mental wellness. This integration ensures that reading activities are not just about decoding letters but about building holistic awareness. Narrative-based learning helps children internalize important health behaviors more effectively. Thus, the proposed development aims to bridge the gap between academic literacy and real-world health awareness.

Student behavioral engagement during *shared reading* sessions is currently insufficient, characterized by frequent distractions and minimal participation. Behavioral engagement is defined as the observable actions of a learner, such as sustained attention and active involvement in tasks (Fredricks et al., 2004). The findings suggest that the inadequacy of current reading materials is a primary cause for this disengagement. When books lack visual appeal or interactive potential, preschool learners naturally lose interest. This study identifies that engagement is not an isolated trait but a response to the quality of instructional stimuli. If the media used are not aligned with the cognitive and social characteristics of young children, their participation will inevitably diminish. High-quality media must act as a magnet for attention to prevent children from becoming easily distracted. Enhancing the interactive features of reading books is therefore essential to improve the behavioral responses of students during circle time. Addressing this behavioral gap through better media design is a core implication of this research. Consequently, fostering a participatory reading culture depends greatly.

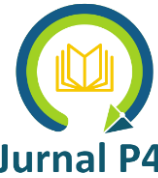
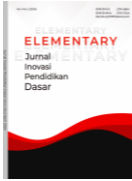
The necessity of developing a *Big Book* is further validated by its strategic role in enhancing literacy outcomes for preschool learners. Previous investigations have consistently demonstrated that visually captivating and contextually relevant media significantly bolster student participation (Prawiyogi et al., 2021; Zainudin et al., 2023). Features such as simple language, vibrant colors, and large-scale illustrations are particularly suited to the developmental needs of early learners. These elements not only capture initial interest but also sustain it through interactive storytelling techniques. Developing this specific medium addresses the dual limitations of availability and quality while introducing essential life values through the SDG 3 framework. The *Big Book* serves as a bridge between current pedagogical gaps and the ideal standard for *shared reading* practices. This study establishes a robust foundation for the next stage of the development cycle, focusing on a more inclusive and health-conscious literacy program. By prioritizing student needs and environmental contexts, this research moves toward creating a more effective educational tool. Ultimately, developing this media is a vital step now.

CONCLUSION

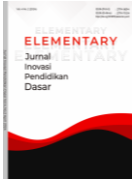
In conclusion, this study identified the needs of teachers and preschool students regarding the use of SDG 3–integrated Big Books in shared reading activities to support preschool students’ reading engagement, particularly their behavioral engagement. The findings revealed several important issues, including the limited availability of appropriate reading media, the inadequate quality of books currently used in shared reading activities, the absence of meaningful and contextual reading content related to Good Health and Well-Being (SDG 3), and the still low level of students’ behavioral engagement during reading sessions. These findings indicate a clear gap between the current classroom practices and the ideal implementation of shared reading, highlighting the urgent need for more suitable reading media. Therefore, the development of a Big Book that combines large visual accessibility, clear and attractive illustrations, simple and meaningful language, and contextual health-related narratives is considered highly necessary. Such a Big Book is expected to function not only as an effective literacy tool to support shared reading activities and enhance students’ engagement, but also as a meaningful medium for introducing healthy living awareness from an early age in line with SDG 3. Future research is recommended to further examine the effectiveness of the developed Big Book in improving preschool students’ reading engagement through implementation-based, experimental, or developmental studies.

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