

## KUCERIA: A Media to Increase Students' Reading Interest and Nutrition Knowledge

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**Abstract :** The preferred habit nowadays is to watch television or listen to the radio rather than reading a newspaper or magazine. The low interest in reading is the reason to the Indonesian government passed a regulation to foster interest in reading early in schoolchildren through literacy programs. Literacy programs are held for the first 10 - 15 minutes before classes begin and children are asked to read books other than textbooks such as storybooks or magazines. In addition, elementary school children have a tendency to buy less healthy snacks around the school and do not know the nutrition fact from the food purchased. Whereas snacks contribute greatly in the fulfillment of energy and nutrients of children every day. The purpose of this study was to increase reading interest as well as knowledge of nutrition and health for elementary school students. This study used quantitative method with experimental study design for four months with twice intervention per week and deepened by qualitative method in the form of interview. The participants were 130 students consisting of 3rd and 4th graders in selected elementary school in Depok City. The Interventions given using KUCERIA (Child Storybook) which were storybooks with pictures consisting of 12 series about nutrition and health given at school literacy hours. There were five questions given by using the crossword method to find out the students' understanding of the story content in each series. To maximize the understanding and absorption of information, two students were asked to retell the story in front of the class and one student to fill the crossword on the board for each series. In addition, interviews were conducted by asking questions about students' interest in reading books. Intervention involved not only students but also teachers and parents in order to optimize students' reading habits. Analysis showed > 80% of student could answer 3 of 5 questions correctly in each series, which showed they had an interest in what they read. Research data on nutrition and health knowledge were analyzed using Wilcoxon and Chi-Square Test to see the relationship. However, only 46% of students completed 12 series and the rest lost to follow up due to school schedule incompatibility with the program. The results showed that there was a significant increase of knowledge ( $p = 0.000$ ) between before intervention with 66,53 score and after intervention with 81,47 score. Retention of knowledge was conducted one month after the last intervention was administered and the analysis result showed no significant decrease of knowledge ( $p = 0,000$ ) from 79,17 score to 75,48 score. There is also no relationship between sex and class with knowledge. Hence, an increased interest in reading of elementary school students and nutritional knowledge interventions using KUCERIA was proved successful. These interventions may be replicated in other schools or learning communities.

**Keywords :** literacy, reading interest, nutrition knowledge, school children

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