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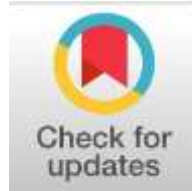
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**The "Digital Literacy Journal & Monthly Clinical Consultation"
Innovation to Enhance Teacher-Parent Synergy in Literacy Development
for Children with Special Needs.**

*Inovasi "Digital Literacy Journal & Monthly Clinical Consultation" untuk
Meningkatkan Sinergi Guru-Orang Tua dalam Pengembangan Literasi Anak
Berkebutuhan Khusus.*

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Abstract

General Background Foundational reading and writing skills constitute a critical competence for educational success, requiring comprehensive stakeholder support within inclusive educational settings. **Specific Background** Children with intellectual disabilities require repeated practice and consistent instructional reinforcement across environments, yet poor institutional communication frequently obstructs their academic progression. **Knowledge Gap** Collaborative communication frameworks designed to synchronize home and classroom support for upper elementary learners remain relatively unexplored in mainstream inclusive contexts. **Aims** This study examines the application of a digital reporting and monthly clinical consultation strategy to align intervention partnerships for a fifth-grade learner. **Results** While initial incidental interactions created support gaps, the integration of structured digital documentation and face-to-face clinical consultations successfully established a shared assessment forum. This strategic alignment fostered positive academic progress in reading comprehension, reading fluency, narrative writing coherence, and independent learning motivation. **Novelty** This intervention uniquely combines real-time digital progress tracking with reciprocal evaluation meetings to synchronize microsystem educational interventions in a rural inclusive setting. **Implications** Deploying structured, evidence-based communication protocols provides inclusive educational institutions with a sustainable model to maximize learning continuity and academic achievement.

Highlights

- ♦ Digital journals and clinical consultations transformed incidental interactions into systematic instructional partnerships.
- ♦ Synchronized pedagogical interventions across educational environments significantly advanced reading comprehension and fluency.
- ♦ Consistent communication frameworks successfully fostered narrative writing coherence and learning independence.

Keywords

Inclusive Education; Digital Journals; Clinical Consultation; Academic Achievement; Instructional Alignment

INTRODUCTION

Literacy is a basic competence that ensures the success of students in education and participation in social life. For Children with Special Needs (CSNs), literacy is not just the ability to read and write. It is a tool for developing communication, independence, problem-solving skills and access to a range of learning experiences. In the context of inclusive education, the development of literacy is a significant indicator of the quality of the educational services being provided as it plays a critical role in students' academic achievement and social adaptation. Thus, developing literacy in children with special needs requires a more comprehensive approach than that provided for typically developing students, and needs consistent support from both school and home. The implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia gives equal educational opportunities for all learners including children with special needs in accordance with the characteristics and needs of individuals. This policy requires schools to not only ensure access to education but also to provide adaptive learning through the collaboration of multiple stakeholders. The participation of parents in the educational processes of children is one of the most significant factors contributing to the success of inclusive education. According to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (2024), active family participation is an integral part of the planning and implementation of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) so that learning continues outside school hours and is reinforced in the family environment. This perspective demonstrates that the literacy development of children with special needs is a collaborative effort of schools and families, not solely the teachers' responsibility.

Research has repeatedly demonstrated that parental involvement is an important factor in the development of children's literacy. When teachers and families work together effectively, they can provide continuity in the stimulation of learning, increase the motivation of children, reinforce learning through repetition and facilitate the transfer of acquired skills from school to everyday life. Poor communication between schools and families, however, often results in the absence of reinforcement at home of instructional strategies introduced by teachers, which impedes the development of literacy. This challenge is even more prominent for children with special needs who usually need repeated practice, multisensory instructional approaches, and consistent implementation of learning strategies across different environments.

The importance of collaboration between teachers and parents can be explained theoretically using Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, which considers children's development as a result of the interaction of nested environments, especially the family and school environments. Similarly, Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) implies that optimal development takes place in children with help from a more knowledgeable other, such as teachers as well as parents. Therefore, successful literacy development relies on the quality of instruction in school plus the continuity of support and guidance at home. This collaboration between the two learning settings ensures that children receive coherent educational support and the literacy skills acquired at school can be generalized to everyday life.

Although teacher-parent collaboration is identified as an important aspect, the practice of teacher-parent collaboration in inclusive schools still has many challenges. Most prior studies have been predominantly concerned with the effectiveness of instructional interventions, reading improvement strategies or parental involvement in general. Research on teacher-parent collaboration in developing literacy skills of children with special needs in inclusive elementary schools, particularly in the upper grades, is still limited. Moreover, many of the existing studies have been conducted in special schools rather than inclusive mainstream schools, leaving the field of collaboration in inclusive elementary education relatively unexplored. The situation points to a significant research gap regarding the establishment of communication patterns, role distribution, implementation challenges, and collaborative strategies to enhance literacy development among children with special needs in inclusive educational settings. The challenges are the same as those experienced by SD Negeri 005 Muara Bengkal, one of the inclusive elementary schools in Indonesia. Early observations indicated that the school struggled to improve the literacy skills of a fifth-grade student with mild intellectual disability. The student continued to have difficulty with phoneme recognition, reading simple words, understanding short passages and retaining literacy skills when he went home. Teachers employed various adaptive instructional strategies like simplifying learning materials, using visual media and providing more concrete instructions. However, literacy development was less than optimal because of inconsistent reinforcement of learning at home. At the same time, the student's parents were motivated to help their child learn, but did not have adequate knowledge about effective literacy support strategies for the child's specific needs. This created a divide between the literacy teaching received at school and the learning support provided at home.

These conditions show that the success of literacy development of children with special needs depends not only on the competence of teachers in developing adaptive instruction but also on the quality of the partnership formed with parents. Creating a supportive learning environment that promotes the full development of children requires intensive communication, shared learning goals and continued reinforcement of literacy in the home. Thus, a comprehensive study is required to explore in detail the forms of teacher-parent cooperation, the factors that promote and impede its implementation, and the collaborative strategies developed to enhance the literacy development of children with special needs in inclusive schools.

The novelty of this study is the focus on teacher-parent collaboration in the support of literacy development of children with special needs at the upper elementary level in an inclusive school environment, an area that has been little studied in the literature. This study extends previous studies by not only describing the communication practices between schools and families, but also analyzing collaborative strategies, identifying barriers faced by both parties, and exploring solutions to ensure continuous literacy support between school and home. Based on these considerations, this study aims to describe the forms of teacher-parent collaboration in improving the literacy development of children with special needs at SD Negeri 005 Muara Bengkal, identify supporting and inhibiting factors that influence teacher-parent collaboration, and analyze the collaborative strategies used to improve literacy development in children with special needs. The findings are expected to

offer empirical evidence that will help in the advancement of inclusive education practices, especially by strengthening the partnerships between schools and families as a basis for enhancing literacy development among children with special needs.

METHOD

A qualitative approach with a case study design was used in this study to obtain a deep understanding of teacher-parent collaboration in fostering literacy development for children with special needs in an inclusive elementary school. A qualitative case study was considered suitable as it allows researchers to investigate social phenomena within their natural setting, and to develop a holistic understanding of participants' experiences, perceptions, and interactions. This research was carried out in one case, namely SD Negeri 005 Muara Bengkal, East Kutai Regency, Indonesia, in which teacher and parent collaboration has been implemented to support literacy development in children with special needs. The participants were selected by purposive sampling, based on their direct involvement in the literacy development process. The main participants were the special education teacher, the parent of the child with special needs and the school principal as a supporting informant. School records provided secondary data sources, including the Individualized Education Program (IEP), student literacy progress reports, teacher and parent communication logs, and other data relevant to supporting and corroborating the primary findings.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, passive participant observation and document analysis. Participants' experiences, communication patterns, collaborative practices and perceived challenges in supporting literacy development were explored using semi-structured interviews. Observations of teacher-parent interaction were done during school activities and informal communication. Document analysis was used to review literacy-related records, communication books, and other supporting documents that reflected collaborative practices. The researcher was the main research instrument for the study, assisted by interview guidelines, observation protocols, field notes, audio recordings and documentation. To establish the trustworthiness of the findings, source triangulation and method triangulation were employed by comparing the information received from different participants and multiple data collection techniques. Data were analyzed using the Interactive Model of Data Analysis proposed by Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014). The analysis was done in four iterative stages: data collection, data condensation, data display and conclusion drawing/verification. These processes were repeated iteratively throughout the study so that the emerging themes were refined and verified until a rich understanding of teacher-parent collaboration in support of literacy development in special needs children was gained.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The study was carried out at SD Negeri 005 Muara Bengkal, Muara Bengkal Ilir Village, Muara Bengkal District, East Kutai Regency, East Kalimantan Province, Indonesia. The school is one of the inclusive schools under the East Kutai Regency Department of Education, serving students with special educational needs (SEN) and students with normal development in the same class. The research was conducted in a fifth grade class with a student with an intellectual disability who had difficulty in developing literacy skills, especially reading comprehension, and in extracting key information from texts and in writing simple narratives. The school was chosen because of the school's strong commitment to inclusive education with collaboration between the principal, classroom teachers, the Special Education Teacher (SET) and parents in supporting students' development. Also, the school provided sufficient access for the researcher to conduct classroom observations, interviews and document analysis. The characteristics of SD Negeri 005 Muara Bengkal provided a suitable setting for an in-depth investigation of teacher-parent collaboration in promoting the literacy development of a student with special educational needs, including the communication challenges that they encountered and the collaborative strategies that they implemented to ensure continuity of literacy learning between school and home.

Current Communication Intensity Between Teachers and Parents in Monitoring Literacy Challenges of Children with Special Needs

The researcher did passive participatory observation of the communication activities between the classroom teacher, Special Education Teacher (SET), and the parent of the student during classroom instruction, student pick-up time, and through WhatsApp communication. The researcher was not involved in the communication process, but systematically recorded all the interactions related to monitoring the literacy development of the child with special needs.

No.	Observed Aspect	Observation Findings
1	Communication during student pick-up	The teacher informed the parent about the student's learning progress for approximately 5–10 minutes after the school day ended.
2	Communication via WhatsApp	The teacher regularly shared information regarding assignments, learning progress, and school activities through the class WhatsApp group and private messages.
3	Reporting learning difficulties	The teacher immediately informed the parent whenever the student experienced difficulties in reading or writing during classroom instruction.
4	Parents' responses	Most parents responded to the teacher's information, although responses were not always provided on the same day.
5	Documentation of literacy progress	No specific documentation system had been established to continuously record the student's literacy development; therefore, most progress reports were communicated verbally.

Table 1. Observation Results on the Frequency and Communication Media Between Teachers and Parents

The observation findings showed that communication between teachers and parents was regular both in face-to-face and in digital communication. The most direct communication was the parents dropping off or picking up children from school. In these brief meetings, teachers reported to the team on the student's reading performance, classroom participation, assignments completed, and learning behaviors that occurred during that day at school. Meeting in person enabled teachers

to discuss developing literacy problems as they happened and for parents to inquire about their child's learning progress.

Besides direct messaging, WhatsApp was the main digital platform for sustaining continuous interactions between school and home. Teachers shared learning assignments, school activity reminders, photographs of classroom learning and short reports on the student's literacy performance through the app. If the student had difficulty in identifying letters, reading words or doing writing activities, the teachers immediately contacted the parent on WhatsApp and gave suggestions on practicing more at home. The use of digital communication reduced delays in the exchange of information and allowed parents to reinforce literacy instruction immediately following feedback from teachers. The observations also showed some limitations, despite the relatively frequent communication. Most communication was informal and based on day-to-day circumstances rather than on a systematic communication schedule. Information on literacy development was also mainly conveyed through verbal conversations or WhatsApp messages with no systematic documentation. There was no cumulative record of literacy so often teachers had to re-explain things in later discussions and it was difficult to see how a student had developed over time. The results indicate that the intensity of communication between the teachers and parents was relatively high, but the effectiveness of communication could be improved further by a more systematic documentation system to continuously record students' literacy progress.

The Special Education Teacher explained:

"Every child with special needs has unique characteristics, so we need to communicate frequently with parents. Information from parents helps us understand how the child develops while at home."

The teacher further stated:

"Sometimes the child begins to read several words at school, but if those skills are not reinforced at home, progress becomes much slower. That is why communication with parents is extremely important."

The interview results indicate that communication is not merely a one-way flow of information from teachers to parents, but rather a mutual exchange of information about the student's literacy development in two different learning environments. The teacher emphasized that parents' feedback was a useful source of information about the children's learning behaviors outside of school, which would help adjust instructional strategies in accordance with the student's actual needs. Ongoing communication also helps to provide continuity between literacy activities undertaken at school and those undertaken at home, thereby lessening the possibility of discontinuity of learning.

The parent reported:

"Whenever my child has learning difficulties, the teacher usually contacts me directly through WhatsApp. I also ask the teacher whenever my child struggles while studying at home. We continuously exchange information."

The parent further explained:

"What helps me the most is when the teacher sends examples of teaching methods or explains the practice activities that should be carried out at home. That way, I know exactly how to assist my child."

Responses suggest teacher-parent communication has been an important source of guidance for parents in supporting literacy learning at home. Teachers' practical instructional suggestions increased parents' confidence to help their children and reduced uncertainty regarding appropriate literacy activities. Communication thus went beyond reporting learning outcomes and became an important mechanism to strengthen parents' capacity to support literacy development. The observations were consistent with the interview data from both the special education teacher and the parent. All sources confirmed that communication was regular, in the form of face-to-face conversations during the pick-up of the students and WhatsApp messages. These channels of communication were used to discuss students' literacy progress, to identify the difficulties in learning experienced during the classroom instruction and to offer recommendations for literacy activities to be done at home. The triangulation also showed a common concern expressed by all the participants on the lack of a well-structured system to document communication. Communication was frequent, but progress on literacy was usually reported verbally or via short WhatsApp messages, making it difficult to track students' progress longitudinally. The absence of systematic documentation reduced the opportunities for teachers and parents to comprehensively assess learning progress and to develop evidence-based follow-up interventions. The findings suggest that to strengthen teacher-parent collaboration it is necessary not only to maintain frequent communication, but also to build a structured literacy monitoring system, which documents student's progress on a continuous basis and acts as a shared reference point for both school and family.

The results show that communication between teachers and parents at SD Negeri 005 Muara Bengkal has grown into a continuous partnership through direct interaction during the process of picking up students and digital communication via WhatsApp. Through these communication channels, teachers and parents can exchange information on students' reading, writing, and learning behaviors, allowing teachers to observe students' literacy development in school and parents to share feedback about their children's learning experiences at home. This pattern of collaboration is consistent with Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, particularly the interaction between the microsystem (family and school) and the mesosystem, where positive relationships between the two environments affect children's learning and development. Regular communication therefore continues the literacy support outside of the classroom ensuring that interventions are carried on in the home environment. These findings align with Stanley and Kuo (2022), who claim that strong family-school partnerships are an important aspect of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of supporting student academic growth. In addition, Corres-Medrano et al. (2022) also highlight that inclusive education does not depend on the frequency of communication but on the quality of communication, which must be constant, reciprocal and based on trust with well-

established mechanisms for sharing information.

However, despite the relatively intensive communication observed in this study, there are several challenges. Students' literacy development information is still shared mainly through verbal discussions and WhatsApp conversations, thus there is no structured documentation system to track progress over time. As a result, teachers often have to repeat the explanation in the next communication and parents find it challenging to get a comprehensive picture of their children's literacy development. Other barriers are the unstable mobile network connectivity and the difference in the level of parental digital literacy especially in the rural context of Muara Bengkal. To address these challenges, the school is adopting adaptive communication practices by adopting scheduled face-to-face meetings with simplified digital communication through voice messages and visual instructions, in addition to providing guidance for parents on effective use of communication platforms. This adaptive approach allows for teacher–parent collaboration in the face of infrastructural constraints and is an expression of institutional resilience in maintaining effective mesosystem interactions. These results are in line with the findings of Saputra (2024), who found that successful partnerships between schools and families in rural inclusive settings depend on the capacity of educational institutions to provide flexible, multichannel communication systems that can accommodate parents' diverse technological capacities while ensuring continuity of educational interventions.

Digital Literacy Journal and Monthly Clinical Consultation" Strategy Designed and Implemented to Bridge Communication Between the School and Parents

The results of this study indicate that the two main strategies developed by SD Negeri 005 Muara Bengkal in strengthening the collaboration between teachers and parents to support the literacy development of children with special needs are Digital Literacy Journal and Monthly Clinical Consultation. These complementary strategies were designed to transform teacher–parent communication from informal, incidental interactions to a more systematic, collaborative partnership. Instead of just sharing information about students' learning progress, the two strategies were tools for collaborative decision making in which teachers and parents jointly assessed students' literacy development, identified barriers to learning, and determined appropriate intervention strategies to be implemented consistently in school and home environments. The researcher studied how teachers used digital media to document and share students' literacy development. The focus of observations was on the procedures for recording literacy progress, the communication platform used, the kind of information shared and parents' responses to the reports.

No.	Observed Aspect	Observation Findings
1	Progress recording media	Teachers documented students' reading and writing progress before sending reports to parents via WhatsApp.
2	Report contents	Reports included reading ability, reading comprehension, writing practice, learning behavior, and recommended home-based follow-up activities.
3	Reporting frequency	Literacy updates were provided after literacy instruction or whenever significant progress or learning difficulties were identified.
4	Information accessibility	Parents could access literacy reports through their mobile phones, allowing timely receipt of information.
5	Follow-up recommendations	Teachers provided reading and writing exercises for parents to implement at home.

Table 2. *Observation Results on the Design of the Digital Literacy Journal*

Observations revealed that teachers developed a more structured way of documenting students' literacy progress in digital communication over time. All improvements or difficulties in reading and writing were recorded before being reported to parents. Crucially, the reports not only detailed students' academic performance but also provided practical recommendations on literacy activities that parents could undertake at home. Therefore, parents were provided with specific instructional guidance as well as information about their child's progress to enable them to provide appropriate learning support. The use of digital communication made the access to information for teachers and parents significantly better. Instead of waiting for report cards or scheduled parent meetings, parents received regular updates on their children's literacy progress via WhatsApp. Such communication allowed parents to respond quickly to learning difficulties as they occurred and to reinforce literacy instruction as soon as they received teachers' recommendations. This made literacy support more consistent and more attuned to students' changing needs.

The Special Education Teacher explained:

"Through this journal, we can determine whether the instructional strategies implemented at school are also being applied at home. If they are not, we can immediately provide additional guidance to the parents."

This utterance implies that the Digital Literacy Journal functions not only as a communication tool but also as a monitoring tool to assess the coherence of literacy instruction across different learning environments on the part of the teacher. The journal also gives teachers a look at any differences between what is being taught in school and what is being practiced at home and allows for timely adjustments in intervention strategies.

The parent stated:

"Having written notes like this makes it much easier for me to understand what should be practiced at home. Instead of simply being told that my child still cannot read well, I also receive guidance on how I should help."

The parent's response indicates that the Digital Literacy Journal assisted parents in gaining a better understanding of their child's literacy needs. Parents received specific instructional recommendations instead of general information about learning difficulties, which improved their confidence and competence in supporting literacy development at home.

Observational data were consistent with the interview data obtained from the Special Education Teacher and parent. All participants agreed that the Digital Literacy Journal greatly improved the clarity and quality of communication about the literacy development of students. The strategy fostered greater understanding between teachers and parents about students' strengths, learning difficulties and intervention priorities. This consistency meant that home literacy support was more closely aligned with the instructional practices used at school, providing a greater continuity in students' learning experiences.

The findings reveal that the Digital Literacy Journal and Monthly Clinical Consultation changed the teacher-parent communication from a customary information-sharing activity to a collaborative partnership that supported literacy development for the fifth-grade student with special needs. However, these strategies went beyond simply increasing the frequency of communication and established a system in which teachers documented students' progress in reading comprehension and narrative writing and parents reported the literacy activities and learning experiences they were using at home. Such mutual exchange allowed both parties to jointly assess the student's progress and plan coordinated follow-up interventions, thus ensuring continuity of literacy instruction between school and home. Communication thus became a cooperative process with shared responsibility, reflective dialogue, and evidence-based decision making. This finding is in line with Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, particularly the mesosystem, which posits that children's development is optimized when there are significant interactions between their primary environments, the family and the school (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The Digital Literacy Journal and Monthly Clinical Consultation served as an effective reinforcement of this mesosystem by providing ongoing reciprocal communication that linked learning experiences across both settings. Stanley and Kuo (2022) reported similar findings. They argued that ecological partnerships between schools and families are better foundations for students' academic development because they allow sustained collaboration and shared educational responsibility.

In the context of inclusive education, the use of these two strategies demonstrates that family involvement should be seen as a necessary part of the educational services, not as an extra activity. The Digital Literacy Journal was a systematized recording tool that allowed continuous monitoring of students' literacy progress. The Monthly Clinical Consultation was a forum for collaborative reflection, problem-solving, and instructional planning based on evidence from both school and home. These complementary strategies positioned parents as active partners who directly contributed to planning, implementing, and evaluating the literacy interventions rather than just receiving information about their children's academic progress. This collaborative model is congruent with the findings of Banks et al. (2025) who underscored the importance of intensive family engagement, built on trust, transparency, and shared decision-making, to maximize educational outcomes for students with special educational needs. Thus, the main contribution of this study is not only the introduction of the two communication tools but also the proposal of an integrated collaborative model that combines systematic documentation with regular professional consultation, improving teacher-parent partnerships and the quality and continuity of the literacy support provided for students with special needs.

Implementation of the Monthly Clinical Consultation Strategy

In addition to the Digital Literacy Journal, SD Negeri 005 Muara Bengkal also implemented Monthly Clinical Consultation as a structured communication forum involving the Special Education Teacher, classroom teacher, school principal, and parents of children with special needs. The consultation was held regularly to assess the students' literacy development, discuss instructional challenges encountered in the past month, and to develop intervention strategies to be employed in the month ahead. The Monthly Clinical Consultation was not the same as the everyday chats on WhatsApp or quick exchanges during student pick-up. It allowed for time to talk in-depth about students' literacy progress. During these meetings teachers presented the observations in the classroom and results of assessments. Parents described the children's learning experiences, challenges and changes in behavior at home. The participants were able to develop a fuller understanding of the literacy development of each student prior to identifying appropriate intervention strategies by integrating information from the two learning environments.

The researcher observed the procedures of the Monthly Clinical Consultation, the level of involvement by participants, the subjects discussed, the processes of collaborative decision-making, and the follow up actions agreed upon.

No.	Observed Aspect	Observation Findings
1	Consultation implementation	Meetings were conducted in the teachers' office and involved the principal, classroom teacher, Special Education Teacher, and the student's parent.
2	Discussion of literacy development	Teachers presented students' reading ability, reading comprehension, and narrative writing progress based on one month of classroom observations.
3	Parents' contribution	Parents explained their children's learning experiences, challenges, and behavioral changes observed during home study.
4	Development of follow-up plans	Teachers and parents collaboratively designed literacy activities to be implemented during the following month.
5	Decision-making process	Instructional strategies were jointly agreed upon and subsequently implemented consistently at both school and home.

Table 3. Observation Results on the Implementation of the Monthly Clinical Consultation

Observations indicated that the Monthly Clinical Consultation was held in an open and collaborative atmosphere. Teachers used classroom observations to report on students' literacy progress. Parents were invited to share their experiences in supporting literacy learning at home. Information from both settings was compared to find consistencies and discrepancies in students' learning development. This collaborative discussion enables teachers and parents to develop intervention plans from a wide evidence base, rather than from isolated observations made in a single learning environment.

Besides reviewing the students' progress, the consultation meetings also led to practical instructional decisions. Teachers showed parents how to teach reading in an effective way, how to reinforce vocabulary, how to use visual learning strategies and how to do guided writing exercises that they could then practice at home. Hence, the Monthly Clinical Consultation served not only as an evaluative platform but also as a professional learning opportunity that enhanced the instructional competence of parents and guaranteed the consistency of school-based and home-based literacy instruction.

The Special Education Teacher explained:

"Every child develops differently. Through these consultations, we evaluate whether the instructional methods used during the previous month have been effective or whether they need to be modified. Parents also have the opportunity to discuss the challenges they experience while assisting their children at home."

The teacher further stated:

"We usually demonstrate directly how parents can guide their children while reading, how positive reinforcement should be provided, and when assistance should gradually be reduced so that children become more independent."

These interview findings indicate that the Monthly Clinical Consultation serves not only as an evaluation meeting but also as a parent education program. Teachers explicitly introduced appropriate instructional techniques and gradually transferred responsibility for literacy support to parents, reflecting the principles of instructional scaffolding.

The parent stated:

"When communication only happens through WhatsApp, I am sometimes still unsure about what I should do. However, during the consultation meetings, the teacher explains everything while showing my child's work, so I understand much better how I should assist my child at home."

The parent further commented:

"After attending the consultation, I started creating a home study schedule based on the teacher's recommendations. My child also became more motivated because the activities at home were similar to those practiced at school."

This points to the Monthly Clinical Consultation playing a role in improving parents' understanding of how to support literacy effectively. The consistency of the instructional approaches used at school with those employed at home created continuity in children's learning experiences and this in turn strengthened literacy development. The Monthly Clinical Consultation was triangulated through observational and interview data and confirmed as a structured forum to assess literacy development and to collaboratively plan future instructional interventions. Teachers, parents and school administrators reported that the consultation encouraged the sharing of comprehensive information, the collaborative solving of problems and the joint making of decisions about students' literacy support. So, the strategy not only enhanced the frequency of teacher–parent communication but also substantially improved the quality of collaboration, making parents active educational partners. Shared planning, reflection and coordinated implementation of literacy interventions in the home environment through consistent reinforcement of school-initiated learning activities could support more sustainable literacy development among children with special needs.

Collaborative Strategy Considered Effective in Synchronizing Literacy Interventions Between School and Home for a Fifth-Grade Student

The findings of this study indicate that the collaborative strategy was successful, not only because there was more frequent communication between teachers and parents, but also because the teachers and parents shared a common understanding of the learning goals, the instructional approaches, and the assessment of the student's literacy development. The implementation of the Digital Literacy Journal and Monthly Clinical Consultation contributed to the creation of common expectations between teachers and parents on the literacy skills to be acquired, the teaching strategies to be implemented and the follow-up support needed to address the student's learning difficulties. This understanding allowed for the literacy instruction started at school to be consistently reinforced at home, resulting in a seamless and cohesive learning experience for the fifth-grade student with special needs.

The researcher saw how literacy activities implemented by teachers at school were carried on by parents at home. Particular emphasis was placed on the uniformity of instructional materials, teaching techniques, learning objectives, evaluation procedures and their impact on the student's literacy development.

No.	Observed Aspect	Observation Findings
1	Reading materials	Reading materials introduced at school were practiced again at home following the guidance provided in the Digital Literacy Journal.
2	Instructional techniques	Teachers and parents employed similar instructional approaches, including shared reading, repeated word practice, and positive reinforcement.
3	Learning objectives	Teachers and parents established identical literacy targets during each instructional period.
4	Progress evaluation	The student's literacy development was jointly evaluated during the Monthly Clinical Consultation.
5	Student improvement	The student demonstrated greater confidence while reading as a result of receiving consistent instruction at both school and home.

Table 4. *Observation Results on the Synchronization of Literacy Interventions*

The findings from the observations indicated that the collaborative strategy was effective in establishing continuity between

school-based and home-based literacy instruction. The reading and writing activities introduced in the classroom learning did not stop at the end of the school day but were continuously reinforced by parents at home using instructional methods discussed during the Monthly Clinical Consultation. Thus the differences that had formerly existed between the learning experiences of school and those of home were greatly diminished. Instead of receiving different instructional approaches in each environment, the student received consistent literacy support across learning settings.

As with both teachers and parents, the researcher also observed that the student made great progress on vocabulary recall, comprehension of reading passages, and simple writing activities when instructional reinforcement was similar. The consistency of teaching methods minimized confusion when moving between school and home environments. Furthermore, doing the same literacy activities over and over again helped the children remember what they had learned and made it easier for them to use their new literacy skills in their everyday learning situations. These findings suggest that school-home intervention synchronization benefited more effective literacy acquisition by providing continuous and coherent learning experiences.

The Special Education Teacher explained:

"Children with special needs require continuous repetition. If practice only takes place at school, progress is much slower. When parents reinforce the same activities at home, the child's reading development improves much faster than before."

The teacher further stated:

"Through the Digital Literacy Journal and the monthly consultations, we can also monitor whether the instructional strategies introduced at school are actually being implemented at home."

These interview findings indicate that synchronized literacy interventions provided students with repeated learning opportunities across two different educational environments. The teacher emphasized that consistent repetition using identical instructional methods strengthened literacy acquisition while simultaneously allowing teachers to monitor the fidelity of home-based implementation. Such continuity reduced learning interruptions and ensured that literacy instruction remained consistent throughout the student's daily routine.

The parent stated:

"Now I am no longer confused about how to teach my child to read because everything has been clearly explained by the teacher. The activities I use at home are the same as those practiced at school, so my child understands much more quickly."

The parent further explained:

"My child has become much more confident while reading because the learning activities at home are exactly the same as those taught by the teacher."

These responses suggest that the collaborative approach greatly improved the instructional competency of the parents. Having clear guidance on literacy activities helped parents feel more confident in helping their children and the consistency of instructional methods meant that the student was able to experience familiar learning routines in both educational settings. This consistency seemed to reduce anxiety and improve motivation and strengthen the student's confidence in reading activities.

Triangulating the observations and interview data suggested that home-based literacy activities were well aligned to instructional practices in the school. The Special Education Teacher and parent agreed that the Digital Literacy Journal and Monthly Clinical Consultation helped establish shared learning goals, coordinate teaching approaches, and synchronize assessment processes to track literacy progress. These collaborative strategies were not simply communication tools, but rather mechanisms for synchronizing educational interventions in the school and family contexts.

The combined use of these strategies allowed teachers to receive continuous information about students' literacy development in the home and for parents to receive systematic guidance about appropriate instructional practices to facilitate literacy learning outside of the classroom. This meant that literacy instruction was more consistent, continuous and responsive to the individual needs of the student. The findings suggest that the collaborative approach was seen as effective because it integrated literacy interventions in both the school and home settings, which helped maintain consistency in the instructional practices, provided opportunities for repeated learning, and supported the development of sustained literacy skills for the fifth-grade student with special needs.

The results show that the effect of Digital Literacy Journal and Monthly Clinical Consultation is not only to increase the frequency of communication between teachers and parents. More importantly, these strategies fostered alignment between literacy interventions in the two major learning environments of the fifth-grade student with special needs, school and home. Teachers and parents worked together to define common learning goals, to use the same instructional strategies, and to monitor the student's literacy development through systematic documentation and ongoing collaborative consultation. This meant that literacy instruction was continuous rather than fragmented and the student experienced coherent learning opportunities across both settings. This type of instructional consistency is particularly important in inclusive education where students with special educational needs require structured routines, repeated practice and stable learning experiences to consolidate the acquisition of literacy. The findings align with the concept of instructional alignment whereby learning objectives, instructional practices, and assessment procedures are consistently implemented across different educational contexts to maximize learning outcomes.

Before these collaborative approaches were put in place, the literacy activities at home often did not mirror those in the classroom, because parents had not been given enough guidance on instructional techniques and learning goals. This inconsistency often caused confusion, slower skill development and students having to re-learn literacy skills already taught at school. The Digital Literacy Journal and Monthly Clinical Consultation provided explicit instructions to the parents on what to read, how to teach, what to learn and what to do to follow-up so that they could reinforce what was being taught in the classroom at home. This instructional alignment decreased variation in learning environments and provided repeated practice of the same literacy strategies, resulting in increased reading comprehension and development of narrative writing. The results are consistent with Hsu and Chen (2023) who found that digital communication platforms help to enhance school-family partnerships by providing parents with explicit instructional guidance and continuous feedback, which lead to a higher degree of consistency for home-based learning. Banks et al. (2025) similarly argued that for inclusive education to be effective, it is not enough for teachers to be professionally competent, schools must also be able to establish equitable partnerships with families, allowing parents to play an active role in planning, implementation and evaluation of learning interventions. Therefore, the collaborative strategy identified in this study is effective in its ability to pool literacy interventions across school and home, through shared goals, consistent instructional methods, collaborative evaluation, and ongoing communication, thus providing the student with a coherent and sustainable literacy learning experience.

Strengthening Teacher–Parent Collaboration Through the Implementation of the Digital Literacy Journal and Monthly Clinical Consultation

Implementation of the Digital Literacy Journal and Monthly Clinical Consultation was successful in increasing the collaboration between teachers and parents in assisting the literacy development of the fifth-grade special needs student at SD Negeri 005 Muara Bengkal. These communication strategies went beyond a method of increasing the quantity of communication, to encompass the development of a collaborative partnership with shared learning goals, consistent instructional approaches, reciprocal information exchange and joint evaluation of the student's literacy progress. In this way the parent's role changed from a passive recipient of information to an active partner in the planning, implementation and monitoring of literacy interventions. This working relationship meant that literacy teaching received in school was also reinforced at home, which provided a constant learning environment that was more suitable to the students learning needs

Aspect	Before Implementation	After Implementation
Communication intensity	Communication occurred only when specific learning problems emerged.	Communication became regular through the Digital Literacy Journal and Monthly Clinical Consultation.
Parental involvement	Parents mainly received information from teachers.	Parents actively reported the student's literacy practice and progress at home.
Instructional consistency	Home literacy activities were often different from classroom instruction.	Teachers and parents implemented the same literacy strategies, including shared reading, repeated practice, and positive reinforcement.
Progress evaluation	Literacy progress was evaluated primarily by teachers.	Teachers and parents jointly reviewed literacy progress and determined follow-up interventions.
Decision-making	Teachers independently determined instructional interventions.	Teachers and parents collaboratively planned subsequent literacy activities.
Reading comprehension	The student experienced difficulty identifying main ideas and answering comprehension questions.	The student became able to identify main ideas and answer most simple comprehension questions correctly.
Reading fluency	Reading was hesitant and lacked confidence.	Reading fluency improved, and the student demonstrated greater confidence during oral reading activities.
Narrative writing	Writing consisted of short, poorly organized sentences requiring extensive teacher assistance.	The student was able to compose simple narratives with more logical sequencing, although occasional guidance on spelling remained necessary.
Learning motivation	The student showed limited confidence and participation during literacy instruction.	The student became more motivated and actively participated in reading and writing activities.
Learning independence	The student depended heavily on teacher guidance.	The student gradually initiated reading and writing activities independently.

Table 5. *Improvement in Teacher–Parent Collaboration and Student Literacy Development Following the Implementation of the Communication Strategies*

The observational findings indicate that the communication strategies led to a significant change in the collaborative relationship between teachers and parents. Pre-implementation communication was mostly reactive, occurring only as learning problems developed or when academic reports were handed out. The introduction of the Digital Literacy Journal and Monthly Clinical Consultation made communication systematic, ongoing and focused on supporting literacy development. Parents were actively engaging in conversations about their child's learning experiences at home and teachers were using this information to modify the classroom instruction to the student's current needs. This exchange was a real educational partnership with shared responsibility and collaborative decision making.

These observations were further confirmed by the interview data obtained from the Special Education Teacher. According to the teacher, the shared strategies helped teachers and parents track whether the literacy activities begun at school were being performed at home. Information about instructional goals and student progress was exchanged to inform educational decisions and assist in ensuring that literacy interventions were aligned across the two learning contexts. The teacher thought the repetitive literacy practice in both settings helped to accelerate the student's reading development and also made instructional planning more responsive to the student's individual learning needs.

The parent also reported substantial benefits from the communication strategies. Regular teacher-parent conferences and detailed literacy reports increased parents' confidence for home-based literacy instruction. Instead of making individual

assumptions, the parent followed instructional suggestions from the Digital Literacy Journal and reinforced the same reading and writing activities used at school. This consistency reduced the uncertainty about appropriate teaching methods and allowed the parent to take a more active role in supporting the student's literacy development.

Enhanced teacher–parent collaboration had effects on the student's literacy outcomes. Continuous reinforcement in school and home environments helped in the improvement of reading comprehension, reading fluency, and narrative writing. The student was able to identify main ideas in simple texts, answer comprehension questions, read aloud with increased confidence, and produce more coherent narrative writing. Besides academic progress, the student also demonstrated increased motivation for learning, stronger self-confidence, and greater independence in literacy activities. Such behavioral changes suggest that a consistent instructional support across the two educational settings created a stable learning environment that promoted sustainable literacy development.

The findings are consistently supported by triangulation of observation and interview data. Both teachers and parents agreed that the Digital Literacy Journal and Monthly Clinical Consultation improved communication, increased parental involvement, aligned instructional strategies, and allowed for collaborative assessment of literacy progress. The communication strategies, therefore, enhanced teacher–parent collaboration and contributed to the development of an integrated literacy support system, where school and family represent mutually supportive learning environments. This collaborative approach helped in the delivery of literacy interventions more consistently, systematically and effectively, thus supporting the literacy development of the fifth grade student with special needs.

The results showed that the use of the Digital Literacy Journal and Monthly Clinical Consultation improved the collaborative relationship between teachers and parents and helped to improve the literacy development of the fifth-grade student with special needs. The effects of these communication strategies were manifested in the increased frequency of interaction and the establishment of genuine collaborative practices, such as shared goals for student learning, sharing of information, joint evaluation of student progress and collective decision-making of literacy interventions. Parents became active participants in planning and monitoring literacy instruction instead of passive recipients of academic reports. Thus, there was more coherence in literacy support between school and home and instructional practices were implemented consistently in both learning environments. This transformation agrees with the principles of Family–School Partnership Theory advanced by Joyce L. Epstein, especially the dimensions of communicating and decision making where effective partnerships are built through ongoing communication and meaningful parental participation in educational decision making. When families are actively involved in planning and evaluating learning activities, they feel a greater sense of ownership and responsibility for the learning and are better able to support children's academic development (Epstein, 2018).

Implementation of these communication strategies not only improved teacher-parent collaboration, but also had positive effects on the literacy development of the student, especially in the areas of reading comprehension and narrative writing. The student improved significantly in identifying the main idea in texts, answering comprehension questions, reading with more fluency, and writing simple stories with improved logical organization. Although some guidance was still needed from time to time to ensure spelling accuracy and to develop written ideas, the overall progress indicates that consistent literacy instruction at school and home was successful in reinforcing literacy acquisition. The findings can be explained by Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory which states that meaningful social interactions with more knowledgeable individuals within the learner's environment facilitate cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978). In this work, teachers and parents served as complementary learning partners and provided consistent scaffolding across two interconnected learning contexts. By providing repeated literacy activities in both environments, the student was able to internalize reading and writing skills more effectively, while gradually becoming more independent. Furthermore, the communication strategies were effective in promoting the student's affective development, as indicated by the increased confidence in oral reading, greater involvement in literacy activities, higher learning motivation, and increased independent engagement in reading and writing tasks. These findings align with those of Compton-Lilly et al. (2023), who reported that sustained family participation in literacy practices improves children's reading and writing achievement as well as their motivation, self-confidence, and long-term participation in literacy learning. In sum, findings point to the Digital Literacy Journal and Monthly Clinical Consultation as an effective collaborative model for inclusive education through strengthening teacher-parent partnerships and creating on-going literacy support that enhances the academic and socio-emotional development of students with special needs.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study on Collaborative Communication Strategies Between Teachers and Parents in Improving the Literacy Skills of Children with Special Needs at SD Negeri 005 Muara Bengkal, the following four major conclusions can be drawn. First, communication between teachers and parents has been done regularly through face-to-face communication during student pick-up and digital communication via WhatsApp. However, although communication was relatively frequent, the exchange of information was largely informal, and there was no systematic mechanism for documenting and tracking students' literacy development over time. Secondly, the Digital Literacy Journal and Monthly Clinical Consultation led to the successful development of a systematic communication model that enabled the ongoing documentation of students' literacy progress, collaborative assessment, and joint planning of literacy interventions in school and at home. Third, these collaborative strategies created an effective continuity of literacy instruction by aligning learning goals, instructional approaches, home-based literacy activities, and progress monitoring across the two main learning environments of the student. Lastly, the use of these strategies promoted teacher-parent partnerships and had a positive effect on the student's literacy development as shown by improvements in reading comprehension, reading fluency, narrative writing abilities, learning motivation, self-confidence, and learning independence. Overall, the study suggests that organized and collaborative communication between schools and families is an effective way to support literacy development of students with special needs in inclusive education. Some practical and academic recommendations follow from the results

of this study. Teachers should be encouraged to interact with parents by providing systematic feedback, setting clear literacy goals, and conducting frequent cooperative assessments, while modifying instructional support to meet the particular learning characteristics of students, especially Special Education Teachers (SETs). Parents are encouraged to maintain their active role in home literacy activities by regularly using the teaching strategies they have agreed upon with the teachers and by maintaining open communication about their children's progress and learning difficulties. In addition, it is suggested that future researchers investigate the feasibility of Digital Literacy Journal and Monthly Clinical Consultation at different educational levels, types of disability, and inclusive school contexts. Future research could also use mixed-methods or quantitative research designs with larger sample sizes to provide stronger empirical evidence on the efficacy of collaborative communication strategies in improving literacy outcomes for students with special educational needs.

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