INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL OF RESEARCH FOR INNOVATION, SUSTAINABILITY AND EXCELLENCE
Published by: RISEJOURNALS.ORG | Online ISSN: 3028-032X | Print ISSN: 3028-0370
VOLUME 4, ISSUE NO. 9

Stakeholder-Reported Implementation Conditions, Perceived Benefits, and Improvement Priorities of a School-Based Sustained Silent Reading Program: A Secondary Mixed-Methods Evaluation

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.21758189

Rodjhun B. Navarro, LPT, PhD
Vice-President for Research, Innovations, and Linkages, La Consolacion College Bacolod
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7889-5770 | rnavarro@lccbonline.edu.ph

Rejay Y. Alvarado, LPT, MPM
Head, Research and Creative Works Office, La Consolacion College Bacolod
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2662-5749 | rejayalvarado@lccbonline.edu.ph

Mikhail Ivan A. Muchuelas
Research, Innovations, and Linkages Staff, La Consolacion College Bacolod
https://orcid.org/0009-0006-2959-4414 | mikhail.ivan.muchuelas@lccbonline.edu.ph

Kevin Jon B. Ciano, LPT
Subject Area Chairperson, Communication Arts English, IBED La Consolacion College Bacolod
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8854-4103 | kevinjonciano@lccbonline.edu.ph

Roseny G. Valiao, LPT, MAED
Integrated School Faculty, IBED La Consolacion College Bacolod

Abstract

This study evaluated the Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR) Program of the Integrated Basic Education Department of La Consolacion College Bacolod through a secondary convergent mixed-methods analysis of institutional evaluation data. The dataset comprised 234 respondents, including 199 students from Grades 7–10 and 35 educators. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alpha, Kruskal–Wallis tests, Holm-adjusted pairwise comparisons, Mann–Whitney U tests, and Spearman's rank-order correlations. Open-ended responses were examined through thematic analysis and integrated with the quantitative findings. Students and educators generally rated the program's implementation conditions favorably. Students reported positive reading-related experiences and evaluated the program as effective and satisfactory, while educators expressed favorable perceptions of implementation, institutional alignment, and support. Grade-level differences were found in students' reading-related experiences, perceived effectiveness, and satisfaction, with Grade 8 students reporting more favorable evaluations than Grade 10 students; however, the effects were small. Among students, implementation conditions were strongly associated with reading-related experiences, perceived effectiveness, and satisfaction. Adequate reading time showed the strongest relationship with reading-related experiences, while choice of reading materials was most strongly associated with perceived effectiveness. Qualitative findings highlighted protected reading time, enjoyment, concentration, and book discovery as perceived benefits. Participants also identified limited access to varied and age-appropriate materials, inconsistent implementation, scheduling concerns, and tensions surrounding reading logs and other accountability requirements. The findings support the continuation of the USSR Program while emphasizing the need for improved resource access, stronger implementation consistency, grade-responsive scheduling, and balanced monitoring practices. Because the study relied on cross-sectional perception data, the results do not establish causal improvements in reading achievement.

Keywords: sustained silent reading, reading engagement, program evaluation, implementation conditions, secondary data analysis, mixed-methods research, institutional research

Introduction

Reading literacy is foundational to learning because it enables students to locate information, construct meaning, evaluate claims, and participate productively across subject areas. In contemporary education, reading competence

involves more than decoding printed words; it includes interpreting complex texts, integrating information from multiple sources, and distinguishing evidence from opinion in increasingly digital information environments. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2021) therefore describes twenty-first-century reading as the capacity to understand, use, evaluate, reflect on, and engage with texts to achieve one's goals and participate in society. This broader conception makes reading both an academic competency and a condition for continued learning, informed citizenship, and responsible engagement with digital information.

The urgency of strengthening reading literacy is particularly evident in the Philippine basic education context. In the 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment, only 24% of participating Filipino 15-year-olds reached at least Level 2 in reading, compared with an OECD average of 74%. Level 2 represents the baseline at which students can identify the main idea of a moderately long text, locate information using explicit criteria, and reflect on a text's purpose or form when directed. Almost no Filipino participants reached the highest levels of reading proficiency, where readers are expected to comprehend lengthy texts, evaluate abstract ideas, and distinguish fact from opinion using implicit cues. Moreover, the country's reading results did not significantly improve between the 2018 and 2022 assessment cycles, indicating that reading difficulty remains a persistent rather than temporary concern (OECD, 2023).

These national results have intensified calls for schools to establish sustained, context-responsive literacy interventions. Republic Act No. 12028, or the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning Program Act, institutionalized a national intervention framework for learners who have difficulty meeting expected competencies, particularly in reading, mathematics, and science. For Grades 1 to 10, the law explicitly identifies reading as one of the priority learning areas for recovery support (Republic Act No. 12028, 2024). The Department of Education has likewise promoted programs that provide learners with additional opportunities to read, including independent reading activities under broader learning-recovery initiatives. These developments demonstrate growing policy recognition that literacy improvement requires more than curricular coverage; it also requires protected time, suitable materials, responsive instruction, and sustained institutional commitment.

One school-based approach intended to increase reading exposure is sustained silent reading, also referred to in the literature as independent silent reading. In its basic form, sustained silent reading involves regularly allocating a protected period during which students silently read books or other texts, commonly selected according to their interests and reading levels. The practice is designed to increase reading volume while reducing the pressure associated with recitation, testing, and closely controlled reading assignments. In the institution examined in this study, the approach is implemented as the Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading Program, or USSR Program. Although the institutional label differs from the more commonly used SSR and independent silent reading terminology, the program shares their defining features: scheduled reading time, sustained engagement with text, learner choice, and minimal interruption.

The educational rationale for sustained reading rests partly on the relationship among reading volume, motivation, engagement, and literacy development. Students who are interested in what they read are generally more willing to begin reading, persist through difficulty, and read beyond minimum classroom requirements. A recent meta-analysis of 39 school-based intervention studies found that theoretically informed reading-motivation interventions produced positive effects on affirming forms of motivation and modest positive effects on reading comprehension. Interventions designed to stimulate students' interest were especially promising, while longer interventions tended to produce stronger motivational outcomes (van der Sande et al., 2023). These findings suggest that school programs should not treat reading motivation as a desirable but incidental attitude. Rather, motivation is one of the conditions through which students develop sustained reading behaviors.

Learner autonomy is another potential strength of sustained silent reading. Programs that permit students to select texts can provide a sense of ownership and allow them to connect reading with personal interests, curiosity, identity, and prior knowledge. From a self-determination perspective, autonomy-supportive conditions can strengthen intrinsic motivation when learners also experience competence and meaningful engagement (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Choice, however, should not be interpreted as the complete absence of educational support. Students differ in their reading proficiency, access to books, knowledge of available genres, and ability to select texts that are both engaging and appropriately challenging. Consequently, an apparently open and equitable reading period may produce uneven

experiences when some students have extensive reading resources and well-developed reading habits while others struggle to find accessible or relevant materials.

The evidence supporting independent silent reading is therefore promising but not unequivocal. Merke et al. (2024) noted that merely allocating time for silent reading does not guarantee that students read attentively, select appropriate texts, or develop stronger motivation and proficiency. Their meta-analysis of 51 studies found a small positive short-term effect of enhanced independent silent reading interventions on reading proficiency, with stronger effects among students at risk of reading failure. At the same time, some additions to the reading period may be counterproductive. Excessive teacher intervention, obligatory tasks, or intrusive accountability activities can interrupt immersion and transform voluntary reading into another closely monitored academic exercise. This creates a central tension in program design: schools must provide sufficient structure and support without undermining the autonomy, enjoyment, and uninterrupted engagement that make sustained reading distinctive.

This tension is particularly important when schools use reading logs, worksheets, comprehension questions, oral reports, or post-reading outputs to verify participation. Such practices may help teachers determine whether students are reading and understanding their selected texts, but they may also shift attention from reading itself to compliance with an assigned product. Conversely, completely unstructured silent reading can disadvantage emerging or reluctant readers who need assistance choosing texts, sustaining attention, or developing strategies for comprehension. The question is therefore not simply whether accountability should be present or absent. The more relevant institutional question is which forms of guidance, modeling, reflection, and monitoring preserve authentic reading engagement while ensuring that students receive appropriate support.

Teacher facilitation is similarly complex. During sustained silent reading, teachers may model reading by visibly engaging with texts, help students locate suitable materials, protect the designated reading period, and establish a calm classroom environment. However, facilitation must be distinguished from continuous direct instruction. A teacher who repeatedly interrupts students to explain vocabulary, check comprehension, or demand immediate outputs may weaken the uninterrupted character of the activity. Research on reading interventions also shows that implementation fidelity is multidimensional. It may include adherence to program procedures, dosage or frequency, quality of delivery, participant responsiveness, and appropriate adaptation. A systematic review by van Dijk et al. (2023) found considerable variation in how reading-intervention studies defined and measured fidelity, indicating that implementation cannot be represented adequately by a single question about whether a program was conducted.

Implementation conditions are especially consequential in institutional programs delivered across multiple grade levels, teachers, schedules, and learning environments. A reading initiative may be clearly established in policy yet implemented inconsistently across classrooms. Time may be shortened because of competing instructional demands; teachers may differ in how they introduce or supervise the activity; students may have unequal access to age-appropriate texts; and classroom environments may vary in their suitability for quiet reading. These differences can affect participant experiences even when the program carries the same name throughout the institution. An evaluation must therefore examine not only whether stakeholders approve of the program but also whether its core components are experienced consistently and whether particular implementation conditions are associated with stronger reading engagement.

Another difficulty in evaluating sustained silent reading concerns the meaning of effectiveness. Effectiveness may refer to objective changes in reading comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, achievement, reading frequency, motivation, or satisfaction. These outcomes are related but not interchangeable. A student may enjoy the program without demonstrating an immediate increase in standardized reading performance, while another may develop more regular reading habits that produce academic benefits only over a longer period. Likewise, teachers may observe improved focus or willingness to read, but such observations do not independently establish measurable gains in literacy proficiency. Studies based on perception surveys should therefore distinguish carefully between perceived benefits and demonstrated learning effects. Without baseline measures, comparison groups, standardized assessments, or longitudinal achievement data, perceptions cannot support causal claims that the program improved reading ability.

Nevertheless, stakeholder perceptions remain valuable in institutional research. Students are positioned to describe whether reading periods feel engaging, sufficiently long, appropriately supported, and relevant to their interests.

Teachers and instructional leaders can assess whether schedules, routines, materials, and administrative support allow the program to operate as intended. Examining both perspectives can reveal areas of convergence, such as shared recognition of a calm reading environment, as well as areas of divergence, such as differences in perceptions of material availability, consistency, teacher modeling, or program effectiveness. Such differences are not necessarily evidence that one stakeholder group is correct and another is mistaken. Instead, they may indicate that participants experience different dimensions of the same institutional practice.

Institutional evaluation becomes more useful when it moves beyond reporting overall mean scores and identifies the conditions associated with favorable or unfavorable experiences. For example, student satisfaction may be related to the regularity of implementation, freedom to select reading materials, suitability of available texts, teacher modeling, sufficient reading time, or the conduciveness of the classroom environment. Open-ended responses may further explain why particular components receive lower ratings and may identify practical barriers that fixed-response items fail to capture. Combining quantitative patterns with qualitative comments can consequently produce a more actionable account of how a reading program functions, for whom it works well, and where refinement is needed.

The present study uses secondary data generated through an internal evaluation of the USSR Program initiated in November 2025 and continued during the 2025–2026 academic year within the Integrated Basic Education Department of La Consolacion College Bacolod. Secondary analysis refers to the systematic examination of data originally gathered for a purpose other than the specific research questions of a subsequent study. In this case, the survey was undertaken for institutional evaluation and improvement rather than as an experimental test of reading achievement. The available data therefore permit examination of implementation conditions, self-reported reading-related experiences, stakeholder satisfaction, and improvement priorities without representing the evaluation as a controlled effectiveness trial. The strength of the dataset lies in documenting participant experiences and institutional implementation rather than establishing causal effects.

Although sustained silent reading has been studied internationally, there remains a need for context-specific evidence on how such programs operate within Philippine basic education institutions. National assessment results and learning-recovery policies establish the importance of reading interventions, but they do not explain how individual school programs are enacted in everyday practice. Moreover, many school evaluations remain internal documents centered on descriptive averages and are not developed into systematic analyses of implementation, stakeholder convergence, and institutional decision-making. The resulting gap is both empirical and practical: schools invest time and resources in literacy programs, yet they may have limited evidence about which program components are consistently implemented, how different stakeholders experience them, and what changes are most likely to strengthen their sustainability.

Against this background, the study evaluates the USSR Program as a school-based literacy practice through a secondary mixed-methods analysis of internal evaluation data. It examines the extent to which essential implementation conditions are evident, the reading-related benefits perceived by students and educators, the degree of stakeholder satisfaction, and the institutional challenges reflected in their responses. It also considers how implementation conditions relate to perceived engagement and program value, while recognizing that these associations do not establish causation or direct improvement in reading proficiency. By integrating quantitative ratings with qualitative feedback, the study seeks to generate evidence that is both analytically defensible and useful for program refinement.

Ultimately, the study responds to a central institutional research question: Under what conditions does a sustained silent reading program become a meaningful, equitable, and sustainable literacy practice rather than merely a scheduled school activity? Addressing this question requires attention to the program's intended design, its actual implementation, the experiences of those who participate in it, and the limits of perception-based evaluation. The findings may inform decisions concerning scheduling, teacher preparation, reading-resource provision, learner support, monitoring, and future assessment. More broadly, the study contributes a localized account of how a Philippine basic education institution evaluates and improves an established reading initiative amid continuing national concern about literacy development.

Research Questions

This study evaluated the USSR Program as a school-based literacy practice through a secondary mixed-methods analysis of institutional evaluation data. It addressed the following questions:

1. To what extent did students and educators report that the core implementation conditions of the USSR Program were present, particularly regular scheduling, a conducive reading environment, teacher modeling, reader choice, sufficient reading time, and access to appropriate materials?
2. How did students describe their reading interest, reading frequency, perceived comprehension, discovery of books and authors, confidence in discussing texts, program effectiveness, and satisfaction?
3. How did educators evaluate program implementation, program objectives, guidance and support, alignment with institutional literacy goals, observed student engagement, effectiveness, and satisfaction?
4. Did student evaluations differ according to grade level, and did educator evaluations differ according to grade-level assignment or institutional role?
5. What relationships existed between students' reported implementation conditions and their reading-related experiences, perceived effectiveness, and satisfaction?
6. What benefits, implementation challenges, and institutional improvement priorities emerged from the integrated quantitative and qualitative findings?

Methodology

Research Design and Locale

The study used a secondary convergent mixed-methods program-evaluation design to examine the implementation, perceived benefits, stakeholder experiences, and improvement priorities of the Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR) Program. The data were originally collected as part of an internal institutional evaluation initiated in November 2025 rather than specifically for the present journal article. Secondary analysis was appropriate because the existing dataset contained quantitative ratings and qualitative comments relevant to the study's research questions. The convergent mixed-methods design allowed the quantitative and qualitative data to be analyzed separately and then integrated to develop a more comprehensive interpretation of the program (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The study evaluated stakeholder perceptions and implementation conditions; it did not treat the survey responses as direct evidence that the program caused measurable improvements in students' reading achievement.

The study was situated in the Integrated Basic Education Department of La Consolacion College Bacolod, a private Catholic educational institution in Bacolod City, Negros Occidental, Philippines. The department implemented the USSR Program as a school-based literacy initiative that provided learners with designated time for uninterrupted independent reading. The program encouraged students to read self-selected materials in a quiet environment, while teachers and facilitators supported the routine through scheduling, supervision, modeling, and access to reading resources. The institution served as a bounded setting in which the program operated under common institutional policies but was implemented across different grade levels, classrooms, and stakeholder groups.

Data Source, Participants, and Sampling Technique

The secondary dataset consisted of responses recorded through the *USSR Program Evaluation Survey–Integrated Basic Education Department*. The institutional evaluation began with the educator survey in November 2025 and subsequently included student responses. Educator responses were recorded from November 7 to December 5, 2025, while student responses were recorded from December 16, 2025 to March 30, 2026. The data were stored in a spreadsheet containing respondent characteristics, numerical ratings, and answers to open-ended questions.

The analytic sample comprised 234 respondents, including 199 students and 35 educators. The student group consisted of 36 Grade 7 students, 56 Grade 8 students, 41 Grade 9 students, and 66 Grade 10 students. The educator group comprised 30 classroom teachers and five administrators or instructional leaders. Based on their original teaching or supervisory assignments, nine educators represented Grades 1–3, seven represented Grades 4–6, 16 represented Grades 7–10, and three represented Grades 11–12.

The secondary analysis used complete enumeration of the usable evaluation records contained in the institutional dataset. No probability sample was drawn and no additional participants were recruited. Records were included when the respondent was identified as a student, teacher, or administrator and had answered the substantive evaluation items applicable to the respondent's role. Blank spreadsheet rows, summary rows, and formula-generated entries were excluded. Records were also screened using timestamps and institutional email addresses to identify possible duplicate submissions. Because the dataset represented respondents who completed the original institutional survey, the findings described the experiences of the participating stakeholders and were not interpreted as statistically representative of students or educators beyond the institution.

Research Instrument

The institution-developed questionnaire contained respondent-profile items, closed-ended evaluation statements, single-item assessments of effectiveness and satisfaction, and three open-ended questions. Respondents indicated their grade level and institutional role before completing the evaluation items.

The first six statements examined the implementation conditions of the USSR Program. These addressed the regularity of scheduled sessions, conduciveness of the reading environment, teacher or facilitator modeling, student choice of reading materials, sufficiency of the allotted reading time, and accessibility and appropriateness of reading resources. The next five statements measured perceived reading engagement and reading-related benefits, including interest in reading, frequency of reading, perceived comprehension, discovery of books and authors, and confidence in discussing texts.

Four additional statements intended primarily for educators assessed the clarity of the program's objectives, guidance and support provided to teachers, alignment with institutional literacy goals, and visible student engagement. These questions were not administered as substantive items to the student respondents and were therefore analyzed only for the educator group. The implementation, engagement, and institutional-support statements used five-point response scales, with higher values representing more favorable evaluations.

The questionnaire also included a four-point item asking respondents to evaluate the program's effectiveness in promoting a love for reading and a five-point item measuring overall program satisfaction. Higher numerical values indicated more favorable responses. These indicators were analyzed separately because they used different response scales and represented distinct evaluative judgments. The qualitative portion asked respondents to identify the most beneficial aspects of the USSR Program, recommend improvements for subsequent implementation, and provide additional comments or insights. The instrument measured stakeholder perceptions and experiences rather than objectively tested reading comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, or academic achievement.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The questionnaire was developed for the institution's internal evaluation of the USSR Program. The original evaluation documentation indicated that the instrument was reviewed by three specialists in reading education and educational evaluation and was pilot-tested among teachers from a comparable educational setting. However, the available secondary dataset did not contain the validators' item-level ratings, a computed content validity index, or the pilot-test results. These procedures were therefore reported as part of the instrument's documented development history and were not treated as independently verified psychometric evidence in the present study.

For the secondary analysis, the survey items were organized into three conceptually related domains: implementation conditions, self-reported reading-related experiences, and educator-specific program indicators. Internal consistency was recalculated using the analytic dataset. Among students, the six-item implementation scale obtained Cronbach's $\alpha = .92$, while the five-item reading-related scale obtained $\alpha = .93$. Among educators, the implementation scale obtained $\alpha = .88$, the reading-related scale obtained $\alpha = .96$, and the four-item educator-specific scale obtained $\alpha = .93$ based on 32 complete responses. The subscales were retained as separate domains; no overall 11-item reliability coefficient was used to imply a single underlying construct. Reliability was interpreted as a property of the observed scores rather than as proof of construct validity (DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021).

Data-Gathering and Data-Preparation Procedures

The original evaluation was administered through an online survey distributed to students, teachers, and administrators who had experienced or participated in the USSR Program. Respondents completed the applicable rating-scale items and were given opportunities to describe program benefits, implementation concerns, and recommendations in their own words. Responses were automatically recorded in the institutional spreadsheet together with their timestamps and stakeholder classifications.

For the secondary analysis, the relevant response sheets were consolidated into separate student and educator datasets. Names and email addresses were removed from the analytic files and replaced with non-identifying record codes. Grade-level and role labels were standardized to permit subgroup analysis. Numerical responses were checked to ensure that values fell within the ranges of their respective rating scales. Formula rows, institutional summaries, and non-response rows were excluded.

The four educator-specific items were treated as structurally inapplicable to students rather than as ordinary missing data. Missing educator responses were not replaced through mean substitution or other imputation procedures. The valid number of responses was therefore reported for each analysis. Open-ended responses were transferred to a de-identified qualitative file. Entries consisting only of "none," "not applicable," punctuation, or similar statements without substantive evaluative content were excluded from thematic interpretation but retained during the initial data-screening process.

Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis

Frequencies and percentages were used to describe the respondents according to stakeholder role and grade level. Means and standard deviations summarized the general direction and dispersion of the scale and composite scores. Medians, interquartile ranges, and response distributions were also examined because the questionnaire used ordinal rating scales. Composite scores were calculated only for groups of items that were conceptually coherent and demonstrated acceptable internal consistency.

Student perceptions across Grades 7, 8, 9, and 10 were compared using the Kruskal–Wallis test. When an omnibus test was statistically significant, Holm-adjusted pairwise comparisons were used to identify the grade levels contributing to the result. Educator evaluations were compared across four original grade-level assignments—Grades 1–3, Grades 4–6, Grades 7–10, and Grades 11–12—using the Kruskal–Wallis test. Differences between classroom teachers and administrators were examined using the Mann–Whitney U test, with Holm adjustment across the five role-based comparisons. Because the administrator and senior high school subgroups were small, educator subgroup analyses were treated as exploratory and interpreted together with descriptive patterns and effect-size estimates.

Spearman's rank-order correlation was used to examine associations between reported implementation conditions and reading-related experiences, program effectiveness, and satisfaction. Statistical significance was evaluated at the .05 level, and effect sizes were interpreted alongside probability values. The analyses were cross-sectional and based on common-source perception data; consequently, the coefficients were interpreted as associations rather than evidence that the USSR Program caused changes in reading behavior or proficiency.

The open-ended responses were examined through qualitative content analysis at the semantic level. Responses were read repeatedly, assigned concise descriptive codes, and grouped into categories representing perceived benefits, implementation challenges, and recommendations. Categories were reviewed against the original responses and consolidated into broader themes, including protected reading time, reading enjoyment, concentration, teacher modeling, implementation consistency, scheduling, access to appropriate materials, accountability requirements, and differentiated support. Brief, non-substantive entries and comments unrelated to the school reading program were excluded from thematic interpretation. Illustrative excerpts were de-identified and selected to clarify the quantitative patterns. This procedure drew on the systematic principles of familiarization, coding, category development, review, and interpretation described by Braun and Clarke (2022), while recognizing that brief survey comments provide less depth than interviews or focus groups.

The quantitative and qualitative results were integrated during interpretation. Corresponding findings from students and educators were compared to identify areas of convergence and divergence. Numerical patterns were examined alongside the open-ended comments to explain why particular program components received favorable or less favorable evaluations. This integration enabled the study to identify institutional priorities that were supported by both the measured ratings and the stakeholders' written accounts.

Ethical Considerations

The study involved secondary analysis of records generated through a routine institutional evaluation. No new data were collected, no experimental intervention was introduced, and respondents were not recontacted. Institutional authorization governed access to and use of the evaluation records. Because the source data included responses from minors and originally contained direct identifiers, the research team applied data-minimization, de-identification, restricted-access, and aggregate-reporting procedures throughout the analysis.

Direct identifiers, including names and email addresses, were removed before analysis. The identifiable source file was maintained separately from the working dataset, and access was limited to the authorized research team. Results were reported in aggregate form, and small educator subgroups were handled carefully to reduce the possibility of deductive identification. Written comments were screened for names, positions, sections, and other identifying details before being quoted or paraphrased.

The analysis respected the original evaluation purpose by limiting its claims to program implementation, stakeholder experiences, and perceived benefits. Perception-based responses were not presented as objective measures of literacy achievement. The researchers also observed the ethical principles of voluntary participation, confidentiality, responsible data management, accurate reporting, and protection of students and institutional personnel consistent with the ethical standards for educational research (American Educational Research Association, 2011).

Results

Respondent Profile and Data Completeness

The secondary dataset contained **234 usable responses**, comprising **199 students** and **35 educators**. The student respondents included 36 Grade 7 students, 56 Grade 8 students, 41 Grade 9 students, and 66 Grade 10 students. The educator group consisted of 30 classroom teachers and five administrators or instructional leaders. Based on their original teaching or supervisory assignments, nine educators represented Grades 1–3, seven represented Grades 4–6, 16 represented Grades 7–10, and three represented Grades 11–12.

Educator responses were recorded from November 7 to December 5, 2025. Student responses were recorded from December 16, 2025 to March 30, 2026, with 120 responses submitted in December 2025, 77 in January 2026, and two in March 2026. Thus, the combined dataset represented a multi-stage institutional evaluation that began in November 2025 and continued into the succeeding months.

All 199 students completed the six implementation items, five reading-related items, effectiveness item, and satisfaction item. All 35 educators completed the 11 items common to the two stakeholder groups. The four educator-specific program indicators had between 32 and 35 valid responses. A complete-case rule was applied to the educator-specific composite, resulting in 32 valid cases. No missing responses were imputed.

The six-item implementation scale demonstrated high internal consistency among students, Cronbach's $\alpha = .92$, and educators, $\alpha = .88$. The five-item reading-related scale also showed high internal consistency among students, $\alpha = .93$, and educators, $\alpha = .96$. The four-item educator-specific scale concerning program objectives, guidance and support, institutional alignment, and observed student engagement obtained $\alpha = .93$ based on 32 complete responses.

INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL OF RESEARCH FOR INNOVATION, SUSTAINABILITY AND EXCELLENCE
Published by: RISEJOURNALS.ORG | Online ISSN: 3028-032X | Print ISSN: 3028-0370
VOLUME 4, ISSUE NO. 9

Because the five reading-related items were written in the first person, student scores represented students' self-reported reading experiences, while educator scores represented educators' own self-reported experiences. The educator responses to these items were not interpreted as assessments of students' reading outcomes.

Overall Evaluation of the USSR Program

Table 1
Overall Evaluation of the USSR Program by Stakeholder Group

Evaluation domain	Stakeholder	Valid n	M	SD	Median
Implementation conditions	Students	199	3.98	0.88	4
	Educators	35	4.23	0.55	4
Self-reported reading-related experiences	Students	199	3.79	1.01	4
	Educators	35	4.29	0.61	4
Educator-specific program indicators	Educators	32	4.31	0.58	4.13
Effectiveness in promoting a love for reading	Students	199	3.26	0.79	3
	Educators	35	3.77	0.43	4
Overall satisfaction	Students	199	4.03	0.99	4
	Educators	35	4.31	0.68	4

Note. Implementation conditions, reading-related experiences, educator-specific indicators, and satisfaction were measured on five-point scales. Effectiveness was measured on a four-point scale. Higher scores indicated more favorable evaluations.

Students generally perceived the core implementation conditions of the USSR Program as evident, *M* = 3.98, *SD* = 0.88. Among the six implementation indicators, the highest mean was obtained for being encouraged to bring and read books of their choice, *M* = 4.14, *SD* = 1.10. This was followed by teacher or facilitator modeling of reading behavior, *M* = 4.07, *SD* = 0.97. Sufficiency of reading time and accessibility of appropriate reading materials both obtained means of 3.98. The comparatively lowest implementation rating concerned the quietness and conduciveness of the reading environment, *M* = 3.79, *SD* = 1.06.

Students' self-reported reading-related experiences were also generally favorable, *M* = 3.79, *SD* = 1.01. The highest-rated item concerned perceived improvement in comprehension, *M* = 3.87, *SD* = 1.07, followed by enjoyment in discovering books and authors, *M* = 3.86, *SD* = 1.16, and increased interest in reading, *M* = 3.83, *SD* = 1.16. The lowest mean was recorded for reading more frequently than before participation in the program, *M* = 3.63, *SD* = 1.19. Confidence in discussing what had been read also received a comparatively lower rating, *M* = 3.77, *SD* = 1.17.

Students rated the program as effective in promoting a love for reading, *M* = 3.26, *SD* = 0.79. Of the 199 students, 89 or 44.7% rated it very effective, 77 or 38.7% rated it effective, 28 or 14.1% rated it slightly effective, and five or 2.5% rated it not effective. Overall satisfaction was favorable, *M* = 4.03, *SD* = 0.99. Seventy-nine students or 39.7% were very satisfied, 66 or 33.2% were satisfied, 37 or 18.6% were neutral, 15 or 7.5% were dissatisfied, and two or 1.0% were very dissatisfied.

Educators evaluated the program's implementation conditions favorably, *M* = 4.23, *SD* = 0.55. The highest implementation ratings concerned regular implementation according to schedule, *M* = 4.31, *SD* = 0.68, and encouragement to bring and read books of one's choice, *M* = 4.31, *SD* = 0.63. The lowest educator means, although still favorable, concerned the quietness and conduciveness of the reading environment, *M* = 4.17, *SD* = 0.71, and sufficiency of the allotted reading time, *M* = 4.17, *SD* = 0.66.

Educators' own self-reported reading-related experiences obtained an overall mean of 4.29, *SD* = 0.61. The highest item mean concerned perceived improvement in their own reading comprehension, *M* = 4.34, *SD* = 0.59. Increased interest in reading, increased reading frequency, and confidence in discussing texts each obtained a mean of 4.29.

The educator-specific program indicators were likewise rated favorably, *M* = 4.31, *SD* = 0.58. Clarity of program objectives received the highest mean, *M* = 4.43, *SD* = 0.65. This was followed by alignment with the school's literacy goals, *M* = 4.33, *SD* = 0.65, and observed student engagement, *M* = 4.31, *SD* = 0.59. Guidance and support provided to educators received the lowest mean in this domain, *M* = 4.24, *SD* = 0.66.

Educators rated the program as very effective in promoting a love for reading, *M* = 3.77, *SD* = 0.43. Twenty-seven educators or 77.1% rated the program very effective, while eight or 22.9% rated it effective. Overall educator satisfaction was also favorable, *M* = 4.31, *SD* = 0.68. Fifteen educators or 42.9% were very satisfied, 16 or 45.7% were satisfied, and four or 11.4% were neutral. No educator selected dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

Differences in Student Evaluations According to Grade Level

Kruskal–Wallis tests were used to examine differences in student evaluations across Grades 7, 8, 9, and 10.

Table 2
Grade-Level Differences in Student Evaluations of the USSR Program

Evaluation domain	Grade 7 Median (IQR)	Grade 8 Median (IQR)	Grade 9 Median (IQR)	Grade 10 Median (IQR)	H(3)	p	ε²
Implementation conditions	4.25 (1.21)	4.42 (1.33)	3.83 (1.00)	3.92 (1.17)	7.46	.059	.023
Reading-related experiences	3.90 (1.50)	4.30 (1.60)	3.60 (1.60)	3.80 (1.40)	9.59	.022	.034
Perceived effectiveness	3.00 (1.00)	4.00 (1.00)	3.00 (1.00)	3.00 (1.00)	14.37	.002	.058
Overall satisfaction	4.00 (1.00)	4.00 (1.00)	5.00 (2.00)	4.00 (1.00)	10.82	.013	.040

There was no statistically significant grade-level difference in perceived implementation conditions, $H(3) = 7.46$, $p = .059$, $\varepsilon^2 = .023$.

A statistically significant difference was found in students' reading-related experiences, $H(3) = 9.59$, $p = .022$, $\varepsilon^2 = .034$. Holm-adjusted pairwise comparisons indicated that Grade 8 students reported more favorable reading-related experiences, *M* = 4.14, than Grade 10 students, *M* = 3.54, adjusted $p = .019$, rank-biserial $r = .31$. No other pairwise comparison remained statistically significant after adjustment.

Perceived effectiveness also differed according to grade level, $H(3) = 14.37$, $p = .002$, $\varepsilon^2 = .058$. Grade 8 students rated the program more favorably, *M* = 3.55, than Grade 10 students, *M* = 3.02, adjusted $p < .001$, rank-biserial $r = .37$. The remaining pairwise comparisons were not statistically significant after adjustment.

INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL OF RESEARCH FOR INNOVATION, SUSTAINABILITY AND EXCELLENCE
Published by: RISEJOURNALS.ORG | Online ISSN: 3028-032X | Print ISSN: 3028-0370
VOLUME 4, ISSUE NO. 9

A statistically significant difference was likewise found in overall satisfaction, $H(3) = 10.82$, $p = .013$, $\varepsilon^2 = .040$. Grade 8 students reported greater satisfaction, $M = 4.23$, than Grade 10 students, $M = 3.71$, adjusted $p = .021$, rank-biserial $r = .29$. The effect sizes for the statistically significant grade-level differences were small.

Differences in Educator Evaluations

Educator evaluations were compared across the four original grade-level assignments: Grades 1–3, Grades 4–6, Grades 7–10, and Grades 11–12. No statistically significant differences were found in implementation conditions, $H(3) = 1.57$, $p = .666$; self-reported reading-related experiences, $H(3) = 1.70$, $p = .638$; educator-specific program indicators, $H(3) = 3.98$, $p = .264$; perceived effectiveness, $H(3) = 1.03$, $p = .794$; or satisfaction, $H(3) = 2.26$, $p = .521$.

Mann–Whitney tests were used to compare classroom teachers and administrators. No statistically significant role-based differences were found in implementation conditions, $U = 82.50$, $p = .735$; self-reported reading-related experiences, $U = 91.00$, $p = .440$; perceived effectiveness, $U = 95.00$, $p = .206$; or satisfaction, $U = 68.50$, $p = .755$.

Administrators descriptively rated the educator-specific program indicators more favorably, $M = 4.85$, than classroom teachers with complete responses, $M = 4.21$. The unadjusted comparison yielded $U = 109.50$, $p = .027$, with a rank-biserial effect size of $r = .62$. However, the difference did not remain statistically significant after Holm adjustment for the five role-based comparisons, adjusted $p = .134$. The finding was therefore treated as exploratory.

Relationships Among Implementation, Reading-Related Experiences, Effectiveness, and Satisfaction

Among students, perceived implementation conditions were strongly and positively associated with self-reported reading-related experiences, Spearman's $\rho = .831$, $p < .001$. Students who gave more favorable assessments of program regularity, reading environment, teacher modeling, student choice, reading time, and availability of materials also tended to report more favorable reading-related experiences.

Implementation conditions were also positively associated with perceived effectiveness, $\rho = .705$, $p < .001$, and satisfaction, $\rho = .744$, $p < .001$. Reading-related experiences were positively associated with effectiveness, $\rho = .781$, $p < .001$, and satisfaction, $\rho = .765$, $p < .001$. Perceived effectiveness and satisfaction were likewise positively related, $\rho = .691$, $p < .001$.

Table 3
Relationships Between Student-Rated Implementation Conditions and Program Outcomes

Implementation condition	Reading-related experiences *ρ*	Effectiveness *ρ*	Satisfaction *ρ*
Regular implementation according to schedule	.706***	.580***	.654***
Quiet and conducive reading environment	.652***	.540***	.584***
Teacher or facilitator modeling	.689***	.589***	.642***
Choice of reading materials	.691***	.669***	.593***
Sufficiency of reading time	.754***	.576***	.635***
Accessible and appropriate materials	.659***	.558***	.631***

***p < .001.

Among the six implementation conditions, sufficiency of reading time showed the strongest relationship with students' reading-related experiences, ρ = .754, $p < .001$. Choice of reading materials had the strongest association with perceived effectiveness, ρ = .669, $p < .001$. Regular implementation according to schedule had the strongest association with satisfaction, ρ = .654, $p < .001$. All six implementation indicators were significantly and positively associated with the three student outcome measures.

Among educators, implementation conditions were positively associated with their self-reported reading-related experiences, ρ = .727, $p < .001$; educator-specific program indicators, ρ = .698, $p < .001$; perceived effectiveness, ρ = .377, $p = .026$; and satisfaction, ρ = .651, $p < .001$. The educator-specific program indicators were strongly associated with educators' self-reported reading-related experiences, ρ = .838, $p < .001$, and were positively associated with effectiveness, ρ = .406, $p = .021$, and satisfaction, ρ = .643, $p < .001$. Educator effectiveness and satisfaction were also positively associated, ρ = .475, $p = .004$. These educator correlations were exploratory and were interpreted cautiously because of the small educator sample.

All correlations represented cross-sectional associations among stakeholder ratings. They did not establish that favorable implementation conditions caused changes in reading behavior, motivation, or proficiency.

Qualitative Findings

Substantive answers concerning program benefits were provided by 173 students and 32 educators. Substantive recommendations for improvement were provided by 96 students and 23 educators. Responses consisting only of "none," "not applicable," punctuation, or remarks clearly unrelated to the school reading program were excluded from thematic coding. At least two student comments interpreted the acronym USSR as referring to the former Soviet Union; these comments were treated as nonresponsive for the qualitative analysis.

Perceived Reading and Learning Benefits

The most prominent theme concerned perceived improvements in vocabulary, comprehension, pronunciation, grammar, knowledge, and general reading ability. Students described encountering unfamiliar words, understanding texts more clearly, improving pronunciation, and acquiring knowledge from books. Educators likewise referred to vocabulary development, comprehension, literacy practice, and exposure to written texts. These responses represented stakeholder perceptions and were not supported by objective literacy-test results. One student summarized the perceived benefit as having time to "read and attain more knowledge from books," while an educator identified "comprehension development" as a central benefit.

A second recurring theme involved the development of interest, enjoyment, and regular reading habits. Students reported that the program encouraged them to read, helped them appreciate books, and provided an opportunity to read despite competing school requirements. Educators similarly observed that reading was being positioned as an enjoyable and worthwhile activity rather than solely as an academic obligation.

Participants also identified protected reading time as an important program benefit. Students valued having a designated period for reading, while educators emphasized the importance of consistently allotting time for learners to engage with books. Some participants associated the program with focus, calm, silence, and discipline, describing the reading period as a peaceful part of the school day that supported concentration. A student described the experience simply as, "We get to read in peace."

Another theme concerned choice and book discovery. Students appreciated being able to select or bring materials aligned with their interests and reported discovering unfamiliar books, genres, and authors. A smaller group referred to reflection, written insights, or sharing activities as useful ways of remembering or discussing what they had read.

Program Resources and Access

The most frequent recommendation from both stakeholder groups concerned the availability, variety, appropriateness, and accessibility of reading materials. Participants suggested acquiring more books, updating the

available collection, developing classroom reading corners, strengthening access to the library, lending books to students who could not bring their own materials, and permitting appropriate digital-reading options. Educators also raised concerns about whether some learner-provided materials were appropriate for students' age and reading level. An educator's recommendation to provide a "wider variety of reading materials" captured this recurring concern.

Consistency, Monitoring, and Teacher Modeling

A second major theme involved the consistency of program implementation. Some students reported that not all participants read during the designated period and suggested more regular supervision. Educators similarly emphasized the need for teachers and advisers to follow the agreed schedule, protect the reading period, and model reading behavior. These comments indicated that favorable overall implementation ratings coexisted with variations in how the program was enacted across individual classrooms.

Scheduling, Duration, and Frequency

Responses concerning the schedule and duration of USSR reflected differing preferences. Some students requested longer or more frequent reading sessions, while others preferred fewer sessions or schedules that did not conflict with academic projects, student-leader responsibilities, or other school activities. These responses suggested that the adequacy of reading time depended partly on the learner's grade level, workload, and competing obligations.

Reading Logs and Post-Reading Activities

Reading logs, reflections, and post-reading activities produced contrasting responses. Some students considered these activities useful for recording insights, monitoring progress, or sharing what they had read. Others viewed the written requirements as additional academic tasks that reduced the enjoyment or uninterrupted character of reading. The responses therefore reflected a tension between maintaining accountability and preserving reading as a low-pressure, self-directed activity. One educator recommended, "Let students read only, no more logging of what they have read," whereas other respondents favored short activities or reflections.

Support for Learners with Different Reading Needs

Educators also identified the need for differentiated support for younger learners, emerging readers, and students experiencing reading difficulty. Suggested strategies included guided reading, individualized assistance, periodic reading assessment, and closer progress monitoring. These recommendations indicated that uninterrupted independent reading may not be equally accessible to all learners without complementary instructional support.

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

The quantitative and qualitative findings converged in showing generally favorable stakeholder evaluations of the USSR Program. Both students and educators identified regular reading opportunities, student choice, teacher modeling, and access to reading materials as important program conditions. These same implementation components were positively associated with students' reading-related experiences, perceived effectiveness, and satisfaction.

Table 4
Integrated Display of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Program dimension	Quantitative pattern	Qualitative evidence	Integrated implication
Reading time	Strongest item-level association with reading-related experiences (ρ = .754).	Students valued protected time but differed on preferred duration and frequency.	Protect reading time while allowing grade-responsive scheduling.

Program dimension	Quantitative pattern	Qualitative evidence	Integrated implication
Reader choice	Strongest association with perceived effectiveness (ρ = .669).	Students valued selecting books, but access and age appropriateness varied.	Preserve autonomy while expanding guided access to suitable texts.
Teacher modeling and consistency	Positively associated with reading-related experiences, effectiveness, and satisfaction.	Students and educators reported uneven supervision and implementation.	Clarify expectations for teacher modeling and routine implementation.
Reading resources	Generally favorable ratings, but repeated requests for more varied materials.	Participants recommended updated books, reading corners, library access, and digital options.	Treat access as an equity and program-quality priority.
Accountability activities	Not measured as a separate quantitative construct.	Reading logs were viewed as useful by some and burdensome by others.	Use brief, flexible, and non-routine accountability practices.

The qualitative responses also qualified the favorable quantitative averages. Although reading materials received generally positive numerical ratings, participants repeatedly requested a greater variety of updated, accessible, and age-appropriate texts. Similarly, favorable implementation ratings coexisted with reports of inconsistent classroom implementation, uneven supervision, and scheduling conflicts.

The lower effectiveness and satisfaction ratings among Grade 10 students, compared with Grade 8 students, were consistent with concerns raised in some student comments regarding competing responsibilities, scheduling demands, repetition, and required written outputs. However, the qualitative comments were not treated as causal explanations for the grade-level differences.

Overall, the integrated findings indicated that the USSR Program was positively received but that stakeholder experiences varied according to implementation consistency, availability of resources, scheduling, and the balance between uninterrupted reading and accountability requirements.

Discussion

The findings indicate that the Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading Program was generally perceived as a well-established and positively received literacy practice within the institution. Both students and educators rated the core implementation conditions favorably, particularly the regularity of reading sessions, encouragement of reader choice, teacher modeling, and adequacy of reading time. Students also reported favorable reading-related experiences and high levels of satisfaction, while educators expressed strong approval of the program's objectives, institutional alignment, and overall effectiveness. Taken together, these results suggest that USSR had moved beyond being a merely symbolic school policy and had become a recognizable part of the institution's literacy culture. However, the findings should be understood as evidence of stakeholder experience and perceived value rather than proof of measurable gains in reading proficiency.

The favorable implementation ratings are consistent with the premise that sustained silent reading depends on more than allocating occasional free time for reading. Effective programs require protected schedules, access to suitable materials, student choice, a conducive environment, and visible teacher participation (Krashen, 2004; Pilgreen, 2000). The present findings showed that students who evaluated these implementation conditions more positively also reported stronger reading-related experiences, greater satisfaction, and higher perceived program effectiveness. This pattern supports implementation research showing that the outcomes of educational interventions are closely related to how consistently and competently their core components are delivered (van Dijk et al., 2023). In this study, USSR appeared to be valued not simply because reading time existed, but because the surrounding conditions enabled students to use that time meaningfully.

Among the implementation indicators, sufficient reading time showed the strongest association with students' reading-related experiences. This finding reinforces the basic rationale of sustained silent reading: literacy engagement requires uninterrupted opportunities to remain with a text long enough to develop concentration, comprehension, and reading stamina. Independent reading cannot be expected to produce meaningful engagement when sessions are irregular, frequently interrupted, or too brief for students to become absorbed in their chosen texts. At the same time, the qualitative responses showed that perceptions of time were not uniform. Some students requested longer or more frequent sessions, whereas others preferred fewer sessions because of competing academic and organizational responsibilities. The implication is that protected reading time should remain a central program feature, but its scheduling may need to be responsive to grade-level workloads and school routines.

Student choice of reading materials was most strongly associated with perceived program effectiveness. This finding is consistent with self-determination theory, which emphasizes that autonomy can strengthen intrinsic motivation when learners experience meaningful choice and a sense of competence (Ryan & Deci, 2000). It also corresponds with reading-engagement research showing that interest, relevance, and ownership influence whether students begin reading, persist, and read beyond minimum requirements (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000; van der Sande et al., 2023). The qualitative findings reinforced this result, as students appreciated being able to bring or select books that reflected their interests. Nevertheless, choice alone does not guarantee equitable or developmentally appropriate reading experiences. Some respondents lacked suitable books, while educators raised concerns about the age appropriateness and accessibility of learner-provided materials. The program therefore requires both autonomy and guided access to diverse texts.

The repeated concern regarding reading materials represents one of the clearest areas where the qualitative evidence qualified the positive numerical ratings. Although material accessibility received a generally favorable mean, students and educators frequently recommended expanding, updating, and diversifying the available collection. This apparent difference is not contradictory. Respondents may have considered the available resources adequate for routine implementation while still recognizing that the program could be strengthened through a broader range of genres, reading levels, formats, and culturally relevant materials. Access to books is a central condition of voluntary reading because learners cannot exercise meaningful choice when the range of texts is narrow or when access depends mainly on what families can provide at home (Allington & Gabriel, 2012; Neuman & Celano, 2012). Classroom reading corners, structured library access, book-lending arrangements, and carefully selected digital materials may therefore improve both participation and equity.

The strong relationships between teacher modeling, regular implementation, and favorable student evaluations also underscore the importance of facilitation. Sustained silent reading is often described as independent reading, but independence does not mean that teachers have no role. Teachers establish the routine, protect the time, help learners select appropriate materials, model authentic reading behavior, and create conditions that communicate that reading is valued. The qualitative responses showed that students noticed when teachers modeled reading and when implementation was inconsistent or weakly monitored. This supports social-cognitive explanations of learning in which modeled behavior influences students' beliefs and actions (Bandura, 1997). Institutional expectations should therefore clarify that teacher participation involves purposeful modeling and support rather than using the reading period for unrelated administrative or instructional tasks.

The findings also revealed a tension between maintaining the uninterrupted and low-pressure character of USSR and introducing accountability requirements. Some respondents considered reading logs, reflections, and sharing activities useful because they supported recall, monitoring, and discussion. Others regarded them as additional academic requirements that reduced reading enjoyment. This tension reflects a wider debate in sustained silent reading research. Completely unstructured reading may not adequately support struggling or disengaged readers, yet excessive worksheets, tests, and required outputs can undermine autonomy and transform voluntary reading into another assessed classroom task (Merke et al., 2024). A balanced approach may involve occasional, brief, and flexible opportunities for reflection rather than requiring a written product after every reading session. Any accountability mechanism should support engagement without displacing the reading itself.

The significant grade-level differences warrant attention, although their effect sizes were small. Grade 8 students reported more favorable reading-related experiences, effectiveness, and satisfaction than Grade 10 students. These differences may reflect developmental changes, increasing academic demands, differences in text preferences, or

competing responsibilities among older learners. The qualitative responses from some students referred to scheduling conflicts, student-leader duties, projects, and the burden of required documentation, concerns that may become more salient in the higher grades. However, the available data do not establish why Grade 10 students rated the program less favorably. The finding should therefore be treated as an institutional signal rather than a developmental conclusion. Further evaluation may examine whether older students require different scheduling arrangements, more mature reading options, greater autonomy, or alternative forms of participation.

No statistically detectable differences were found among educators according to grade-level assignment. However, the small educator subgroups—particularly the administrator and Grades 11–12 groups—limit conclusions regarding equivalence across assignments. Administrators descriptively rated the educator-specific indicators more favorably than classroom teachers, but the difference did not remain significant after adjustment for multiple comparisons. The pattern may still have practical relevance because administrators and teachers encounter the program from different positions: administrators may emphasize institutional alignment, whereas classroom teachers experience daily constraints related to supervision, scheduling, learner engagement, and materials.

The educator reading-related scores require particularly careful interpretation. Because the relevant items were written in the first person, they measured educators' own reported reading experiences rather than their observations of student development. The relatively high educator scores may indicate that participating in or facilitating USSR also encouraged adults to read, reflect, or model engagement with texts. Such an effect could be institutionally valuable because teachers who maintain active reading practices may be better positioned to cultivate a credible reading culture. Nevertheless, these responses cannot be used as evidence that educators observed equivalent gains among students. Future evaluation instruments should use separate and clearly worded forms for students and educators so that adult self-experience, observations of student behavior, and assessments of program implementation are not conflated.

The qualitative findings provided support for perceived benefits in vocabulary, comprehension, knowledge, concentration, confidence, and reading enjoyment. These experiences are compatible with research showing that sustained and motivated reading can support literacy development over time (Krashen, 2004; Mol & Bus, 2011). However, the present study did not include standardized reading assessments, baseline data, a comparison group, or longitudinal measures. Statements regarding improved comprehension and vocabulary were therefore perceptions rather than independently demonstrated learning gains. The distinction is important because positive attitudes and satisfaction do not necessarily translate immediately into measurable achievement. The program may create conditions favorable to literacy growth, but determining whether it improves proficiency would require additional evidence.

The results also highlight the need for differentiated support. Some educators noted that younger learners, emerging readers, and students experiencing reading difficulty may not benefit equally from unrestricted independent reading. Students who struggle with decoding, comprehension, attention, or book selection may require guided reading, teacher assistance, or more carefully matched texts before they can participate successfully in sustained silent reading. This limitation has also been recognized in research suggesting that independent silent reading is more productive when it includes supports appropriate to learners' needs rather than assuming that all students are already capable of sustained, self-directed engagement (Merke et al., 2024). USSR should therefore complement, not replace, explicit literacy instruction and targeted intervention.

From an institutional perspective, the study suggests that the program should be sustained but refined. The strongest priorities include protecting the agreed schedule, expanding access to appropriate texts, strengthening teacher modeling, reviewing the use of reading logs, and adapting implementation for different grade levels. Monitoring should focus on whether the core conditions of the program are present rather than merely recording whether a session occurred. Periodic student and teacher feedback may help determine whether implementation remains relevant and equitable. The institution may also consider combining perception data with book-borrowing records, reading-frequency indicators, classroom observations, or validated literacy measures to provide a more comprehensive basis for decision-making.

The findings should be considered in light of several limitations. First, the study relied on secondary data collected for internal evaluation, which limited control over item wording, stakeholder-specific measures, timing, and

respondent selection. Second, the student and educator surveys were completed during different periods, and the student data extended several months beyond the initial November 2025 evaluation. Third, all principal outcomes were self-reported and may have been affected by social desirability, institutional expectations, and common-method variance. Fourth, the educator sample, particularly the administrator and Grades 11–12 subgroups, was small. Fifth, open-ended responses varied considerably in length and relevance, and some students misunderstood the USSR acronym. Finally, the single-institution setting limits the transferability of the results to other schools with different learners, resources, or implementation structures.

Despite these limitations, the study contributes an institutionally grounded account of how students and educators experienced a school-based sustained silent reading program. Its principal contribution lies not in demonstrating causal improvement in reading achievement, but in identifying the implementation conditions associated with favorable stakeholder experiences. The evidence indicates that USSR was most positively evaluated when reading time was protected, students could choose suitable materials, teachers modeled reading, and resources were accessible. At the same time, the findings demonstrate that sustained silent reading is not a self-executing intervention. Its value depends on the quality, consistency, equity, and developmental responsiveness of its implementation.

Overall, the USSR Program appeared to function as a meaningful component of the institution's literacy culture. Stakeholders generally valued the opportunity to read, the autonomy provided by text selection, and the calm and concentration associated with designated reading time. However, the program's continued relevance will depend on addressing material access, implementation variation, scheduling pressures, differentiated learner needs, and the balance between accountability and enjoyment. These findings support the continuation of USSR as an institutional literacy practice while emphasizing that perceived success should be accompanied by ongoing evaluation and, in future studies, direct measures of reading engagement and achievement.

Conclusion

This secondary mixed-methods evaluation found that the USSR Program was generally perceived as a visible and positively received component of the institution's literacy culture. Students and educators reported favorable implementation conditions, while students described positive reading-related experiences and both groups expressed favorable effectiveness and satisfaction. The strongest quantitative patterns centered on protected reading time, reader choice, teacher modeling, and access to appropriate materials.

Students who reported stronger implementation conditions also tended to report more favorable reading-related experiences, effectiveness, and satisfaction. Sufficient reading time was most strongly associated with reading-related experiences, while choice of materials was most strongly associated with perceived effectiveness. Grade 8 students rated several outcomes more favorably than Grade 10 students, although the effects were small and do not establish a developmental explanation.

The qualitative findings identified practical priorities: greater access to varied and age-appropriate texts, more consistent implementation and teacher modeling, grade-responsive scheduling, differentiated support for struggling readers, and a more balanced use of reading logs or post-reading activities. These findings show that sustained silent reading is not self-executing; its value depends on the quality, consistency, equity, and responsiveness of its implementation.

The results do not establish direct improvement in reading comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, or achievement because the study relied on cross-sectional perception data without baseline measures, standardized assessments, a comparison group, or longitudinal evidence. The program nevertheless merits continuation as an institutional literacy practice, accompanied by ongoing evaluation and future use of direct indicators of reading engagement and achievement.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the institution should continue the Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading Program while refining its implementation to ensure that students experience it consistently across grade levels and classrooms. The program should remain a protected literacy activity, with clearly scheduled sessions that are not routinely displaced by competing academic or administrative tasks. Monitoring should focus not only on whether USSR sessions are conducted, but also on whether students are given sufficient uninterrupted time, a conducive reading environment, and meaningful opportunities to engage with texts.

The school should strengthen access to varied, updated, age-appropriate, and interest-responsive reading materials. Classroom reading corners, improved library access, book-lending arrangements, and carefully selected digital reading resources may help reduce disparities among students who do not have suitable materials at home. Text collections should reflect different reading levels, genres, languages, and learner interests so that student choice remains meaningful rather than merely nominal.

Teacher participation should be reinforced through clear implementation guidelines and professional development. Teachers and facilitators should model authentic reading behavior, help students select appropriate materials, and maintain a calm and supportive environment without unnecessarily interrupting the reading period. Orientation sessions may also clarify the distinction between facilitation and direct instruction during USSR, particularly the need to support engagement while preserving the program's uninterrupted and low-pressure character.

The institution should review the use of reading logs, written reflections, and other post-reading requirements. These activities may be retained as optional or periodic strategies rather than compulsory outputs after every session. Flexible approaches, such as brief sharing, voluntary reflections, or occasional reading conferences, may provide evidence of engagement without making reading feel like an additional compliance task.

Grade-level differences should be considered in future implementation. Since Grade 10 students reported comparatively lower effectiveness, satisfaction, and reading-related experiences than Grade 8 students, the school should consult older learners regarding scheduling, preferred materials, session frequency, and accountability requirements. Senior students may benefit from greater autonomy, more mature or specialized reading options, and arrangements that recognize competing academic and co-curricular responsibilities.

Additional support should be provided for emerging, reluctant, and struggling readers. USSR should not replace explicit reading instruction, guided reading, remediation, or targeted literacy intervention. Students who have difficulty sustaining independent reading may require appropriately leveled texts, structured book-selection support, shorter initial reading periods, or teacher-assisted reading before they can participate fully in extended silent reading.

Future program evaluation instruments should use separate and clearly worded forms for students, teachers, and administrators. Educator items should distinguish between their own reading experiences, their observations of student behavior, and their assessment of institutional implementation. The revised instrument should also undergo documented content validation, pilot testing, and reliability analysis before use.

Future evaluations should combine stakeholder perceptions with additional evidence. Possible indicators include classroom observations, library circulation records, reading-frequency logs, book-completion data, validated measures of reading motivation, and direct assessments of comprehension or fluency. A longitudinal or pretest-posttest design would provide stronger evidence about whether participation in the program is associated with measurable literacy growth over time.

Finally, the institution should conduct periodic reviews of the USSR Program and use the findings for continuous improvement. Student and teacher feedback should be collected regularly, particularly regarding materials, scheduling, implementation consistency, and support needs. This will help ensure that the program remains responsive, equitable, and aligned with its intended purpose of cultivating sustained engagement with reading.

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