

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN READING HABITS, INTERESTS, AND READING COMPREHENSION ABILITIES OF ISLAMIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

KORELASI KEBIASAAN DAN MINAT MEMBACA TERHADAP KETERAMPILAN MEMBACA PEMAHAMAN SISWA MI

Zaenol Fajri¹, Ryan Nuraini²

^{1,2} Universitas Nurul Jadid, Probolinggo, Indonesia

E-mail: alfajri002@unuja.ac.id¹, ryannuraini22@gmail.com²

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Abstrak

Kemampuan memahami bacaan merupakan bagian penting dari keterampilan literasi yang perlu dikembangkan sejak pendidikan dasar. Namun, rendahnya minat dan kebiasaan membaca siswa Madrasah Ibtidaiyah menjadi tantangan tersendiri. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui hubungan antara kebiasaan dan minat membaca dengan keterampilan membaca pemahaman siswa secara simultan. Menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode korelasional, penelitian dilakukan pada 30 siswa kelas IV dan V MI Mirqotul Ulum Banyu Anyar Probolinggo melalui teknik purposive sampling. Instrumen berupa angket dan tes pemahaman membaca dianalisis menggunakan SPSS versi 25. Hasil menunjukkan instrumen valid dan reliabel, serta data berdistribusi normal. Uji regresi berganda menunjukkan adanya hubungan yang signifikan antara kebiasaan dan minat membaca dengan keterampilan membaca pemahaman (signifikansi 0,000 dan koefisien korelasi 0,882). Temuan ini memperkuat teori konstruktivisme dan penelitian sebelumnya, serta menegaskan pentingnya program literasi yang menarik dan berkesinambungan. Namun, penelitian ini terbatas pada jumlah dan lokasi sampel, sehingga disarankan untuk penelitian lanjutan mencakup responden lebih luas serta mempertimbangkan faktor eksternal lain seperti peran orang tua dan lingkungan belajar.

Abstract

One of the key literacy abilities that must be acquired starting in elementary school is reading comprehension. However, a problem at Islamic Elementary School is the children's poor reading habits and lack of enthusiasm. The purpose of this study is to ascertain how students' reading comprehension abilities relate to their hobbies and reading habits at the same time. Thirty-fourth and fifth-grade children at MI Mirqotul Ulum Probolinggo participated in the study, which used a quantitative approach with a correlational method and purposive sampling. SPSS version 25 was used to evaluate the instruments, which took the form of reading comprehension exams and surveys. The findings demonstrated that the data were normally distributed and that the instruments were both valid and dependable. Reading habits and interests were significantly correlated with reading comprehension skills, according to multiple regression tests (correlation coefficient 0.882 and significance 0.000). These results underline the importance of an interesting and long-lasting literacy program and support constructivism theory and other studies. It is advised that future research incorporate a larger range of respondents and take into account additional external factors like the involvement of parents and the learning environment, as this study is constrained in terms of sample size and geography.

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INTRODUCTION

[One essential ability that pupils need to acquire starting in elementary school is reading. Reading comprehension involves more than just identifying letters and words; it also consists of comprehending the text's content. Reading is essential to information acquisition in Islamic elementary school (MI) or elementary school (SD) settings. As a result, fostering reading comprehension abilities at a young age is an important issue that needs careful consideration from all stakeholders in the educational process (Liman Kaban & Karadeniz, 2021; Mulatu & Regassa, 2022; Paakkari et al., 2022).

Reading comprehension skills are thought to be directly related to a well-established and regular reading habit (Asipi, Rosalina, & Nopiyadi, 2022; Bana, 2023; Rintayati, Syawaludin, & Kamsiyati, 2020). Students' critical thinking abilities, vocabulary, and cognitive abilities are all improved by this behavior (Bawawa, 2019; B. S. Chin Ee Loh, 2019; Fajri et al., 2021). However, rather than comprehending a text's deeper significance, MI/SD pupils are frequently instructed to read just for memorization or repetition. Research on the relationship between reading habits, reading interest, and reading comprehension skills is extremely pertinent and essential because of this circumstance (Alfatihah & Tyas, 2022; Fajri, 2023; Støle, Mangen, & Schwitter, 2020).

Students who are interested in reading are also more motivated to keep improving their reading abilities (Onel, Arzu, Sule, F, 2021; Owusu-acheaw, 2014). Students who are highly engaged would willingly experiment with different forms of reading, which will enhance their literacy experience (Baba & Affendi, 2020; Bui & Macalister, 2021; Nanda & Azmy, 2020). Low reading interest, on the other hand, leads to little engagement between students and texts, which eventually has a detrimental effect on reading comprehension (Amin, 2019; Cahya & Artini, 2020; Chyl, Gentile, & De, 2023; Locher & Pfof, 2020). This is the point at which a scientific investigation of the connection between reading desire and reading comprehension abilities is essential, especially for pupils in primary school (Iheakanwa, 2021; van Bergen, Vasalampi, & Torppa, 2021).

Prior research has demonstrated that students' reading skills are influenced by both their reading habits and their reading interests (Kovalova & Shalman, 2024; Mary, M K., Jane M., Sitwe, B, M., Harrison, 2021). Still, the majority of research is done in isolation, concentrating on a single factor (Balan, Katenga, & Simon, 2019; Syafitri, 2019; Utami, Apriliaswati, & Sumarni, 2022). In order to investigate the degree to which reading habits and reading interest influence the reading comprehension abilities of MI/SD students, this study takes a novel approach by integrating the examination of two variables simultaneously. This method will likely offer a more thorough image of the variables affecting these abilities (Le et al., 2019; Whitten, Labby, & Sullivan, 2016).

Additionally, the context of the study's subjects—MI students, who differ from other elementary school pupils in some ways—is what makes it novel. Students' reading preferences and interests are significantly influenced by MI's learning environment, which is founded on Christian principles and character development. This research investigates social and cultural nuances in the development of reading comprehension skills in addition to academic features by looking at correlations within the MI/SD setting.

The capacity of students to comprehend both explicit and inferred meanings in basic reading texts was used to gauge their reading comprehension skills in this study (Alieto & Lucas, 2021; Ardhian, Ummah, Anafiah, Tamansiswa, & Rachmadtullah, 2020). This assessed students' evaluative and inferential skills in addition to their literal comprehension (Baba & Affendi, 2020; B. S. and S. M. Chin Ee Loh, 2019; Memiş & Kandemir, 2019). Compared to similar research that often solely tests comprehension at the literal level, this offers a distinct methodological addition. Thus,

the findings of this study would offer more detailed information for creating reading learning plans in elementary and middle schools.

Efforts to raise the standard of national education are inextricably linked to the significance of reading comprehension abilities (Ardhian et al., 2020; Setiyadi, Kuswendi, & Ristiana, 2019; Silinskas, Sénéchal, Torppa, & Lerkkanen, 2020). The reading proficiency of Indonesian pupils continues to lag behind the worldwide average, according to the findings of numerous international literacy surveys. Low student engagement in reading and a weak reading culture are two major causes (Barber & Klauda, 2020; Palani, 2023). Thus, this research will likely make tangible contributions to the development of more successful treatments aimed at promoting reading interests and habits from a young age (Abid, Aslam, Alghamdi, & Kumar, 2023; Arifin, 2020). This study will likely provide useful suggestions for educators, parents, and legislators. For instance, how to incorporate reading activities into everyday instruction, how to create a classroom atmosphere that encourages reading habits (Silinskas et al., 2020; Tavsanlı & Kaldırım, 2017), and how to pique students' interest using methods appropriate for their age and background. Every piece of advice will be based more firmly on empirical data thanks to our correlation-based methodology.

Lastly, this study demonstrates that students' increasing interest in reading and the accumulation of their regular reading habits are what lead to their reading comprehension abilities, rather than a single cause. Therefore, it is essential to comprehend how these three elements relate to one another in order to raise a generation that can comprehend, evaluate, and use texts in their everyday lives, in addition to reading them. With an emphasis on elementary school pupils, this study aims to concretely and sustainably improve the literacy foundations of the country, starting at the elementary school level.

METHOD

This study uses a correlational methodology and is quantitative (Kothari, 2004; Mahsun, 2017). The goal is to ascertain how two independent variables—reading interest and habits—relate to one dependent variable, the reading comprehension abilities of students with MI/SD. This study will be carried out at MI Mirqotul Ulum Banyu Anyar Probolinggo in June-July 2025, during the odd semester of the 2025–2026 school year. All fourth and fifth-graders at MI Mirqotul Ulum Banyu Anyar will make up the study's population. Purposive sampling will be used to determine the sample, and roughly 30 children will be chosen based on their varied reading proficiency levels.

Methods of Gathering Data; 1. Questionnaire: To gauge students' interest and reading habits, 2. Reading Comprehension Documented Data Test Findings: to assess the degree of proficiency in reading comprehension.

The data obtained will be analyzed using the Pearson Product-Moment correlation analysis technique (Sugiyono, 2010; Sukmadinata, 2013). If a significant relationship is found, multiple regression analysis will be conducted to determine the contribution of each variable. The data analysis in this study aims to determine the relationship (correlation) between reading habits and reading interest on the reading comprehension skills of elementary school students. Data obtained from questionnaires and reading comprehension skills tests will be analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 25. Before conducting the main analysis, the Validity and Reliability of the reading habits and reading interest questionnaire instruments were first tested.

1. Validity was tested using the Pearson Product-Moment correlation.
2. Reliability was tested using the Cronbach's Alpha technique.

Before conducting the correlation analysis, the following prerequisite tests were conducted:

1. Data normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov or Shapiro-Wilk test.
2. Linearity test to determine whether there is a linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

A correlation analysis technique was used to determine the relationship between the research variables. The Multiple Correlation Test (Multiple Regression) was used to simultaneously determine the relationship between reading habits and reading interest on reading comprehension skills. The results of the correlation analysis will be interpreted based on the correlation coefficient (r) and significance (p-value). The test criteria are as follows: If the significance value (p) < 0.05, there is a significant relationship between the variables. The correlation coefficient (r) is interpreted as follows:

Table 1. Correlation Coefficient and Data Interpretation

Correlation/ Relationship	Level
0,00–0,199	Very weak
0,20–0,399	Weak
0,40–0,599	Moderate
0,60–0,799	Strong
0,80–1,00	Very Strong, Incredibly powerful

This analysis accurately determines the level of relationship between reading habits and interest in the reading comprehension skills of elementary school students.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The results of data collection on reading habits (variable X.1) using a questionnaire are as follows: Respondents' Sequence Item 1 Item 2 Item 3 Item 4 Item 5 Item 6 Item 7 Item 8 Item 9 Item 10 Total Reading Habits Instrument Validity Test (Variable X.1), which shows the findings of the instrument's validity test (variable X.1), every item in the reading habits instrument is valid. Each item's validity was assessed using a correlation test between the item score and the overall score, comparing the results at a significance level of 0.05 using a significance criterion (Sig. 2-tailed). The item is deemed legitimate if the significance value is less than 0.05. The test findings indicate that each item from item 1 (X.1.1) to item 10 (X.1.10) has a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of less than 0.05. As a result, the instrument can be used as a measurement tool to uncover respondents' reading habits because each item has a strong association with the overall score. The reading habits instrument can be used in its entirety for the following step, which is reliability testing and research data collecting, provided that every item in the instrument is legitimate. According to the recognized construct of reading habits, an instrument with good validity is able to measure what it is intended to measure.

The instrument was deemed reliable by the reliability test for the reading habits variable (variable X.1). The computed dependability coefficient of 0.902 illustrates this. The instrument's strong internal consistency is indicated by this rating, which significantly surpasses the minimum requirement of 0.70. Consequently, there is no reason to mistrust the stability of the measurement results when using this instrument to test respondents' reading habits on a regular basis. The instrument's reliability further reinforces the validity of the data gathered in later studies. The following is an illustration of the reading habits variable's (variable X.1) reliability test results:

The reading interest variable (variable X.2) was tested after the validity test for the reading habits variable (variable X.1) was completed, and all items were found to be valid. The purpose of this validity test is to evaluate how well each question in the reading interest instrument captures the concept being assessed. This step is essential to guarantee that only legitimate materials are utilized in data collecting and that the research findings are highly valid and scientifically accountable. The reading interest instrument's validity test results (variable X.2) show that the majority of its items are legitimate. The association between item scores and the overall score is analyzed for validity using the significance value (Sig. 2-tailed). If the significance value of an item is less than 0.05, it is deemed legitimate.

The validity of the majority of the items in the reading interest instrument (variable X.2) may be inferred from Figure 2, which displays the findings of the validity test. Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10 satisfy the validity requirements. This is demonstrated by each item's significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) being less than 0.05, which satisfies the validity requirements. Nevertheless, item 7 was deemed invalid because its significance value of 0.316 was higher than 0.05. Therefore, item 7 was taken out of the instrument, and its dependability was not further examined. Additionally, the reading interest variable (variable X.2) showed extremely strong dependability according to the reliability test results. The reliability coefficient of 0.898 is higher than or equal to the minimal reliability requirement of 0.70, which is evident. Thus, the evaluated reading interest tool can be deemed trustworthy and appropriate for this research.

The normalcy test is the next step. Reading habits (X.1), reading interest (X.2), and reading comprehension skills (Y) are the three research variables for which this exam yields crucial data on the data distribution. One of the main prerequisites for employing parametric statistical tests is that the data used in the statistical analysis must satisfy the assumption of a normal distribution, which is what the normality test verifies. Each variable's significance value (Sig.) according to the Shapiro-Wilk or Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is shown in the figure. Next, a significance level of 0.05 is applied to compare the significance value. The data is regarded as regularly distributed if the Sig. The value is greater than 0.05. The test's findings form the foundation for assessing whether the data is appropriate for additional analysis, including regression and correlation tests.

Table 2. Summarizes information on reading comprehension abilities (Y), reading habits (X.1), and reading interest (X.2).

No	Reading habits (X.1)	Reading interest (X.2)	Reading comprehension abilities (Y)
1	39	32	77
2	36	44	85
3	40	36	80
4	45	31	78
5	36	40	79
6	36	29	74
7	45	36	84
8	41	26	76
9	35	29	75
10	40	36	80
11	35	39	82
12	35	36	84
13	38	35	80
14	27	33	76
15	28	27	70

No	Reading habits (X.1)	Reading interest (X.2)	Reading comprehension abilities (Y)
16	34	32	74
17	32	31	72
18	39	40	82
19	32	32	75
20	30	27	70
21	44	37	86
22	36	33	76
23	37	33	74
24	30	31	73
25	34	36	74
26	38	36	79
27	31	31	72
28	39	33	77
29	34	36	74
30	36	36	78

Then, using SPSS v.25 (one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test), the data in Table 2 above were examined for normality. The following figure describes the normalcy test results:

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Kebiasaan membaca	Minat Membaca	Keterampilan membaca
N		30	30	30
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	36.07	33.77	77.20
	Std. Deviation	4.578	4.158	4.350
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.106	.138	.109
	Positive	.106	.129	.109
	Negative	-.093	-.138	-.074
Test Statistic		.106	.138	.109
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200 ^{c,d}	.152 ^c	.200 ^{c,d}

a. Test distribution is Normal.
 b. Calculated from data.
 c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.
 d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

Figure 1. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test Results

All variables had a normal distribution, according to the findings of the normality test performed on the study data in Figure 1. The fact that each variable's significance value is higher than 0.05 serves as evidence of this. The significant values for variables X.1 (reading habits), X.2 (reading interest), and Y (reading skills) were 0.200, 0.152, and 0.200, respectively. The data for these three variables are normally distributed because all three values are greater than the 0.05 significance level. The simultaneous multiple correlation test is one of the parametric statistical procedures that may be used to analyze the data further. The picture below provides a description of the outcomes of the Multiple Regression F Test used for simultaneous multiple correlation:

Model Summary									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change
						F Change	df1	df2	
1	.882 ^a	.779	.762	2.121	.779	47.504	2	27	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Minat Membaca, Kebiasaan membaca

Figure 2. F-Test Results for Multiple Regression

At the 0.05 level of significance, the multiple regression F-test findings show a significance value (Sig. F Change) of 0.000. This indicates that reading habits (X1), reading interest (X2), and reading comprehension skills (Y) all have a substantial simultaneous relationship. Because of the significant impact that these two independent variables have on the dependent variable, the regression model is deemed appropriate for further study. The multiple correlation coefficient (R), also known as the degree of association (R), is 0.882, according to the research.

In terms of correlation value interpretation, the value falls between 0.80 and 1.00, which is regarded as a very strong correlation. This indicates that the factors of reading habits, reading interest, and pupils' reading comprehension abilities are highly correlated. Students who read more regularly and with greater enthusiasm also have better reading comprehension abilities, and vice versa. According to this score, the contributions of the two independent variables to the dependent variable in this study are highly significant.

Discussion

Reading habits (X.1) and reading interest (X.2) were found to have a substantial simultaneous association with reading comprehension skills (Y), with a significance value of F of 0.000 (<0.05), according to the results of the multiple correlation test data analysis. This result suggests that both independent variables are important for enhancing reading comprehension abilities. This is consistent with theories in the conceptual framework that claim interest and reading habits are key components in the development of literacy skills, especially reading comprehension. Students' comprehension skills are impacted by reading intensity and emotional engagement, which is supported by constructivism theory, which emphasizes that understanding is developed by active contact with text.

In addition to being statistically significant, the correlation coefficient of 0.882, which is in the "very strong" range, shows that there is a practically strong association between the dependent variable and the two independent variables. These results support those of other studies that have been reviewed in the literature, including those by Ardhian and Kovalova, who both discovered that reading habits and interest have a positive and significant impact on learning outcomes, especially when it comes to reading comprehension (Ardhian et al., 2020; Kovalova & Shalman, 2024). As a result, this study not only validates preexisting ideas but also synthesizes a number of reliable empirical data points about the significance of fostering a literacy culture among students.

The study's findings support earlier ideas of literacy while also offering new information for research in elementary education programs based in madrasahs. This study integrates two important factors—habits and interest—into a single multiple correlation model that shows their simultaneous influence on reading comprehension skills, in contrast to many earlier studies that only looked at one independent variable or employed a single methodology. This offers a fresh viewpoint that merely teaching pupils to read is insufficient to improve their reading abilities; active measures to foster a love of reading must also be taken.

Practically speaking, the findings of this study also represent the real circumstances that exist in schools, especially at the level of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (Islamic primary schools). In actuality, reading comprehension skills are typically higher among children who exhibit a reading habit and a keen interest in reading activities (Bawawa, 2019). Teachers' observations and experiences demonstrate this phenomenon, stating that children who have regular daily reading habits and a strong interest in storybooks or other reading materials learn the topic faster and participate more actively in class discussions. This suggests that the research findings are highly contextually relevant and can serve as a foundation for the creation of school-based literacy learning initiatives.

There are undoubtedly drawbacks to this study. It is important to note that measurements were carried out in a single educational institution with a small sample size; therefore, care must be taken when extrapolating the findings to a larger population. Additionally, there has not been a thorough analysis of other factors that can affect pupils' reading comprehension abilities, like the family environment, the role of the teacher, and the accessibility of reading materials (Bana, 2023). This is a crucial observation for future studies that aim to broaden the scope of variables and enhance the analysis in order to portray more intricate and thorough correlations.

The ramifications of this study are nonetheless strategically valuable in light of the limitations and results. These results highlight how crucial it is to develop reading comprehension skills by boosting kids' enthusiasm for reading and fortifying reading habit programs (Mulatu & Regassa, 2022; Owusu-acheaw, 2014). Teachers and schools must provide literacy exercises that are methodical, interesting, and long-lasting. They must also supply reading resources that are suitable for the developmental stages of their children. To have a more complete picture of the elements influencing primary school children's reading comprehension abilities, future study is advised to include a larger population and more pertinent variables.

This study's methodology, which is uncommon in literacy research at the elementary madrasah (Islamic elementary school) level, used a quantitative approach with multiple regression analysis to examine the influence of two independent variables concurrently. This method offers a deeper and more comprehensive view of the trends in the connections between variables and creates new avenues for developing tactics to raise school literacy. The claim that reading habits and interests working together can be a more reliable predictor of reading comprehension ability than looking at these factors separately is what makes this study's argument unique. This enhances the creation of more data-driven literacy education policies both theoretically and practically.

From a conceptual standpoint, this study advances the state of literacy at the primary school level, especially in madrasah (Islamic school) environments. This research highlights the necessity of students' emotional participation in reading activities as a driving factor for reading comprehension, in addition to confirming the significance of creating a reading culture (Kovalova & Shalman, 2024). Teachers, legislators, and educational researchers who are interested in fostering fundamental literacy skills will find this innovation to be pertinent. This study offers a fresh approach to the problem of poor reading interest among Indonesian students, which is still a widespread problem: literacy interventions need to create meaningful and pleasurable reading habits in addition to offering reading materials. As a result, this study not only advances our understanding of the subject but also directly raises the standard of literacy instruction in classrooms.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The most unexpected discovery of this study was the robust correlation between reading habits and reading interest regarding students' reading comprehension abilities. The correlation value of 0.882 and a significance level of 0.000 indicate that both variables significantly and robustly relate to the reading comprehension skills of MI students. This information was disclosed only after statistical analysis, demonstrating that a combination of reading habits and interests significantly influences pupils' literacy skills. This significant conclusion underscores that literacy programs focusing exclusively on the cognitive dimension, while neglecting the affective aspect of interest, are insufficiently effective.

This study corroborates other findings that underscore the significance of reading habits and interest in text comprehension abilities. Its scientific contribution is seen in its simultaneous correlational approach, wherein both independent variables are examined inside a single multiple regression model, a methodology infrequently utilized in literacy research at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah level. This research not only corroborates constructivism theory and prior findings but also presents a novel perspective: the interplay between behavioral and motivational dimensions of reading may serve as a more precise and holistic predictor of students' reading comprehension abilities.

This study has drawbacks, including its restricted setting (a single Islamic primary school), a limited sample size (30 pupils), and the omission of additional variables such as familial responsibilities, literacy settings, and teacher assistance. Moreover, the study was restricted to a single level (grades IV and V), so the findings cannot be extrapolated to other levels or geographical areas. Consequently, additional research is highly advisable, incorporating a bigger sample size, varied locales, and the inclusion of pertinent external variables. This methodology will yield a more profound and thorough grasp of the elements affecting reading proficiency, which can inform the development of more successful literacy policies in the future.

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