

## English reading habit and comprehension among private middle school students

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### Abstract

The decline in reading habits and comprehension has become a growing concern among educators and researchers in Indonesia. This study aimed to describe and correlate the English reading habit and comprehension levels. The respondents were 94 students-grade students in Minahasa Utara Regency, Indonesia. This study utilized a quantitative approach, using descriptive and correlation statistical analysis of the collected numeric data. The analysis outcomes showed that the respondents indicated a low level of English reading habit and a moderate level of English reading comprehension. Notably, the study revealed that there was no significant correlation between students' reading habit and their English reading comprehension level. These findings suggest that other factors may contribute to their comprehension skills, which may require further studies.

### Keywords

Middle School, reading comprehension, reading habit, reading skills

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## INTRODUCTION

The increasing prevalence of digital technology for entertainment and social interaction has contributed to a noticeable decline in reading habits. As individuals spend more time on social media, streaming platforms, and online gaming, their engagement with books has diminished. This decline is concerning as research highlights the long-term academic benefits of developing a regular reading habit. The National Reading Panel (2000) found that early engagement with English reading correlates with academic success and the development of comprehension skills. Similarly, Chettri and Rout (2013) emphasize the personal and conscious nature of reading habits, while Tantri (2017) and Coneway et al. (2016) reinforce its benefits, citing improved learning outcomes and language acquisition. Additionally, Sujanto (1986) notes that proficient reading not only facilitates efficient information extraction but also serves as a key indicator of comprehension skills. Given these findings, fostering consistent reading habit is essential to counteract the distractions of digital media and support students' academic and language development.

In this context, reading comprehension plays a pivotal role in acquiring new information and participating in various activities (Hamida et al., 2012). A study conducted by Saraswati et al. (2021) examined the reading comprehension challenges faced by eight-grade students at a selected private high middle school. The research found that students struggle with five key aspects of reading comprehension tests. The most challenging aspect was determining the main idea with 72% of students experiencing difficulties. This was followed by locating references (70%), understanding vocabulary (68%), and finding specific information (67%), which showed similar levels of difficulties. Making inferences posed the least challenge, with 63% of students encountering difficulties. Locating references, understanding vocabulary, and finding specific information also presented considerable difficulties, while making inferences was the least challenging. These findings emphasize the need for targeted ways to improve students' reading comprehension skills.

English reading habit and comprehension are crucial aspects of English language learning. Researchers have identified issues concerning students' English reading habit and English reading comprehension. Palani (2012) found in her research that mainstream media influence contributes to declining interest in reading books among the populace. Moreover, she suggested that there was an urgent need to develop reading habit among students of English language. Another prominent issue is the lack of interest in reading, a problem prevalent among Indonesian students of English (Khaira et al., 2019; Putri et al., 2021; Hamdiah & Yusof, 2021). UNESCO research (as cited in Sartika et al., 2020), highlights findings from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) conducted in 2003, revealing that Indonesian fifteen-year-olds' reading proficiency ranked low compared to other nations. Only 37.6% of students could read without comprehension, and 24.8% could understand only basic information. Limited access to adequate reading resources, particularly in rural areas, exacerbates this challenge. Insufficient infrastructure and resources hinder students' exposure to diverse reading materials, hindering the development of strong reading habit. Additionally, Napitupulu (2023) and Febriana (2021) indicate reading comprehension ability of Indonesian school children was still low, suggesting that the government needed to provide reading books and or non-textbooks. In terms of English proficiency, Indonesia

ranked number 79 out of 113 countries worldwide (EF, 2023) and the study of Isma and Nur (2023) also showed that Indonesian university students had difficulties in reading English with low reading performance.

Given these challenges in reading habit and comprehension, further research is needed to explore specific reading skills that can enhance students' proficiency. This study aims to fill that gap by focusing on reading comprehension with a special emphasis on scanning, skimming, and intensive reading. This study explored that factors which were not covered in the previous studies, namely reading comprehension with special emphasis on reading skills namely scanning, skimming, and intensive reading. Conducted during the first semester of the 2023 / 2024 academic year among 7<sup>th</sup>-grade students at a selected private middle school in Minahasa Utara Regency, this study was mainly intended to find answers to the following research questions:

- What is the extent of students' English reading habit?
- What is the level of students' English comprehension?
- Is there any significant correlation between students' English reading habit and comprehension?

This study encapsulates the conceptual framework of this study into the following hypotheses:

- H<sub>a</sub>: There is a significant correlation between English reading habit and English reading comprehension.
- H<sub>o</sub>: There is no significant correlation between English reading habit and English reading comprehension.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***English reading habit***

Habit, as defined by Nilsen et al. (2012), is behavior that becomes automatic through repetition, often performed unconsciously. Siagian (2015) adds that habits are consistent activities with predictable outcomes. Hanafy (2014) suggests that behavior is shaped by repeated actions in specific situations, reflecting habitual responses. Wood (2017) asserts that reinforcing desired behaviors through habits can make them automatic. In the context of reading, if students develop the habit of engaging with texts regularly, it will likely become an ingrained routine. Over time, this habitual reading can enhance cognitive skills, improve language proficiency, and foster a deeper understanding of various subjects. Furthermore, when reading becomes second nature, students may find it easier to comprehend complex materials, engage in critical thinking, and apply knowledge, in different contexts. Thus, cultivating reading as a habitual behavior is not only essential for academic success but also for lifelong learning and intellectual development.

A reading habit is a regular, daily activity that involves a strong inclination towards reading. Kumara and Sampath (2019) describe learning through reading as an active process focused on understanding the material. Developing independent reading skills can lead to a positive reading habit. Owusu-Acheaw and Larson (2014) note that students with strong reading habits can respond to questions more easily than those with weaker habits, highlighting the importance of intention and consistency in forming reading habits. Mastering reading comprehension skills enhances one's ability to understand text.

In his analysis, Cesar (2011) identified key components for developing an effective reading habit including reading frequency, books read, academic reading, and non-academic reading. Reading frequency measures how often students participate in independent reading activities, which can range from daily reading to occasional or rare reading, depending on individual preferences, interests, and the time they have available. The number of books students have read in the past three months represents a quantifiable measure of their reading activity, covering reading academic materials related to their field of study and non-academic materials, such as novels, comic books, romance novels, horror novels, and similar content.

Reading habit also includes some purposes such as hobby, recreation, and concentration (Ochanya, 2010). A hobby is an activity pursued by an individual for the sheer pleasure and satisfaction it brings. Engaging in recreational reading allows students to delve into subjects beyond their academic curriculum. This diversification can positively affect their cognitive abilities by enhancing memory retention, expanding vocabulary, and acquiring valuable knowledge. Concentration represents a key aim of the reading habit, with distinct objectives of its own. It involves directing one's focus towards the act of reading. Consequently, concentration is a skill that requires deliberate cultivation and isn't inherently automatic.

### *English reading comprehension*

Reading comprehension, according to Indriani (2019), consists of understanding meaning, functions, and looking for information included in books. Reading comprehension can be called true reading comprehension only if the reader is able to understand the meaning contained in the text. When someone reads a text, they will apply their intelligence and knowledge to comprehend and capture the meaning and content of the text. Based on Duke et al. (2021), comprehension is important, it is the only goal to derive meaning from the text. Without comprehension, reading becomes a boring and meaningless activity, just focusing on pronouncing words. Aprilia (2019) additionally states that understanding written language is necessary for reading comprehension in order to understand the text's substance. It means that when someone read is important to understand what the text is about.

Numerous reading techniques exist, with Grellet (1999) having put forth several strategies. He categorizes these techniques into four groups: skimming, scanning, intensive, and extensive reading which are all valuable techniques for efficiently engaging with texts. Skimming involves quickly looking over a passage to grasp its main ideas, usually within two minutes, by focusing on the first words or lines of each paragraph. Scanning is about swiftly searching for specific information within a text, useful when time is limited, helping to locate key details efficiently. Intensive reading focuses on understanding shorter texts thoroughly, contributing to improved comprehension skills as students become more interested in reading.

Extensive reading, on the other hand, involves reading a wide variety of materials in large quantities for enjoyment. These techniques cater to different reading needs, whether it is quickly grasping main ideas, finding specific information, comprehensively understanding texts, or simply enjoying the act of reading, all contributing to a well-rounded approach to literacy and learning.

Reading comprehension has challenges which can stem from various factors identified throughout the reading process. Fajar (2009) delineates several internal obstacles faced by readers, including difficulties with comprehending lengthy sentences and texts, limited background knowledge, struggles with employing effective reading strategies, and issues with maintaining concentration. These factors collectively contribute to the overall difficulty in understanding written material. Additionally, insights from Meniado (2016) and Perfetti (2007) highlight learners' vulnerability to text structure, their aptitude for drawing conclusions, and the efficacy of comprehension checks. These considerations further compound the complexities students encounter in grasping the meaning of what they read, suggesting that challenges in reading comprehension extend beyond basic language comprehension. Moreover, Dennis (2008) illuminates the significance of vocabulary in navigating reading difficulties. Individuals with a robust vocabulary are better equipped to clarify meanings and comprehend passages more swiftly compared to those reliant on contextual clues to decipher unfamiliar words. Essentially, vocabulary proficiency emerges as a pivotal factor influencing the speed and efficacy with which individuals comprehend written information, offering a valuable tool for overcoming obstacles in reading comprehension.

### *Related studies of reading habit and comprehension*

Several studies have explored the relationship between students' reading habits and their reading comprehension abilities, consistently finding a significant correlation. Muawanah (2016) conducted research at SMA Dua Mei Ciputat involving forty second-grade science and social studies students during the 2013/2014 academic year. The study concluded that there is a significant relationship between students' reading habits and their reading comprehension abilities. Indriani (2019) investigated this correlation among eighth-semester English department students at IAIN Palangka Raya during the 2015-2016 academic year. The study, which included thirty students, found that those with strong reading habits (average score of 88) also had satisfactory reading comprehension achievements (average score of 60), indicating a positive correlation. Riski (2020) examined the correlation at MTsN 4 Kediri with a sample of 80 students out of a population of 320. The results showed high average scores for both reading habits (97.86) and reading comprehension (71.90), confirming a correlation between these variables.

Moreover, Sartika et al. (2020) studied eleventh-grade students at SMA N 1 Madang Suku 3 OKU Timur. The average scores for reading habits and reading comprehension were 60.89 and 56.94, respectively. A correlation value of 0.555 indicated a significant relationship, suggesting a moderately strong association between reading habits and reading comprehension. Fajr (2022) explored the correlation among third-grade English language education students at Universitas Islam Riau, confirming a relationship between students' reading habits and their reading comprehension abilities.

In summary, these studies consistently show a significant correlation between students' reading habits and their reading comprehension, underscoring the importance of developing strong reading habits to improve comprehension skills. However, none of these studies delved deeply into specific reading skills. In contrast, this study focused on detailed reading skills, including scanning, skimming, and intensive reading.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### ***Research design, site, and participants***

A quantitative approach is adopted for this study as it enables the objective measurement and statistical analysis of variables, allowing researchers to systematically describe and assess data using numerical methods. According to [Fraenkel and Wallen \(2007\)](#) and [Sugiyono \(2010\)](#), quantitative research focus on a specific population or sample, collects data through structured research instruments, and applies statistical techniques to analyze the findings in relation to pre-established hypotheses. Furthermore, [Cresswell and Cresswell \(2018\)](#) highlight that within this approach descriptive and correlational research designs are particularly suitable for addressing the study's research questions.

### ***Site and participants***

In this study, the participants were the 7th Grade students who were enrolled in the even semester of the 2023/2024 school year at a selected private middle school in Minahasa Utara Regency, Sulawesi Utara Province, Indonesia. This school was selected due to its status as a laboratory school where its students were fully aware that the school is used as a research place. Thus, the participants were likely a convenient and practical option for data collection, making convenience sampling an appropriate method for gathering data ([Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018](#); [Johnson & Christensen, 2010](#)). Additionally, 7<sup>th</sup> graders are at developmental stage where they are transitioning into more complex academic tasks, including reading and comprehension, making them relevant respondents for this study. Their participation ensures a feasible and timely data collection process while still providing valuable insights into the research objectives.

There were 30 students (16 females and 14 males) in grade 7<sup>th</sup> A who participated in the data collection for pilot study which was intended to examine the validity and reliability of the questionnaires. In the real study, there were 94 students of grade 7<sup>th</sup>, consisting of 30 students in grade 7<sup>th</sup> B, 31 students in grade 7<sup>th</sup> C, and 33 students in grade 7<sup>th</sup> D participating in responding to the questionnaire from which the data were derived for analysis and interpretation. The 49 female and 45 male students, their ages ranged from 12 to 14 years old. This number of students was also acceptable for use of validity of questionnaire items, reliability of the questionnaire construct, and analysis of correlation ([Pallant, 2020](#); [Green & Salkind, 2016](#)).



### *The questionnaire: Validity and reliability*

This first questionnaire was specifically designed to gather information regarding students' English reading habit. Initially developed by Cesar (2011), it was adapted for this research. The adjusted questionnaire comprised three items. The questionnaire (See Table 1) encompasses various indicators related to different aspects of reading habit, including the quantity of books read, academic reading, reading frequency, and non-academic reading. The first section of the questionnaire, encompassing statements 1, focusing on reading frequency, while statement 2 pertained to number of books read. Statements 3 focused on academic and non-academic reading.

**Table 1.** *Indicator of English reading habit*

Item Number	English Reading Habit
1	Frequency of Reading
2	Number of Books Read
3	Time Spent on Academic Reading

The second instrument was a reading comprehension test, which was based on the Grade 7<sup>th</sup> students' textbook. The test comprised a total of 14 items. The indicator of the test was based on the theory from Grellet (1999). The initial section of the test, encompassing three questions (part 1), involved matching the sentence beginnings to the endings (a-f) to complete sentences, which required scanning to locate the relevant information in the text. Question number two consisted of question item number 1 to 5 (part 2) entailed choosing the correct options, involving skimming through the text to identify key details that matched the given statements. Question number three consisted of question item number 1 to 4 involved answering the questions, which required intensive reading as it involved carefully analyzing the text to find specific answers to each question (See Table 2).

**Table 2.** *Indicator of English reading comprehension*

English Reading Comprehension Indicator		Item Number
Scanning	Part 1 number 1 - 6	
Skimming		Part 2 number 1-5
Intensive Reading		Part 3 number 1-4
Total	15	

### *Validity and reliability*

Priyanto (2010) suggests that before distributing the questionnaire, both the tools underwent validity and reliability tests to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the questionnaire items. To Further assess its effectiveness, a pilot study was conducted in which the questionnaire was distributed to 30 students in Grade 7<sup>th</sup> A. To examine the validity of the first instrument, each score of the three items was correlated to mean score of the three

items. The output shows that the significance value ( $p = .00$ ) for each item – frequency of reading, number of books read, and time spend on reading – which are all less than significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). This suggests that all items are valid, as stated by Priyanto (2010). Furthermore, all the three valid items underwent scale reliability analysis. Cronbach's Alpha is .598 or 60%, which, according to De Vellis (2012), falls within acceptable range. This indicates that the three items were both valid and reliable.

In assessing the reliability of second instrument, namely the reading comprehension test, reliability scale analysis was also conducted. The Cronbach's Alpha was found to be .824, indicating a high level of internal consistency among the 14 items in the reading comprehension test. This suggested that the test demonstrated strong reliability, as it surpassed the recommended threshold (De Vellis, 2012). The high Cronbach's Alpha value provided confidence in the consistency of the test's results, indicating that it effectively measured English reading comprehension levels among the target population.

### ***Data collection***

After securing a written permit from the laboratory school principal, the concerned English teachers were consulted to arrange the administration of questionnaire and test which were clearly printed in hard copies. Before distributing the questionnaires in the classrooms, the participants were verbally informed – alongside the written notice in the questionnaire – that their participation was entirely voluntary and confidential. They were assured that they could withdraw at any point before, during, an after completing questionnaire. It took the participants about 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

### ***Data analysis***

After the data were collected, the statistical techniques were employed to examine the findings. First, descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to determine the mean scores for students' English reading habits and their level of students' English reading comprehension. Second, Pearson bivariate correlation was used to investigate whether a significant relationship exists between English reading habits and English reading comprehension.

### ***Descriptive analysis***

To provide a more detailed analysis, descriptive statistics were further applied to calculate the mean scores for three key items: the frequency of reading, the number of books read, and the time spent on reading. These items were analyzed based on the responses collected from the questionnaire. The interpreted mean scores are presented in Table 3.



**Table 3.** *Mean score interpretation of each item*

Item No.	Reading Habit	Mean Score Range	Response / Interpretation
1	Frequency of Reading	1.00 – 1.49	Never
		1.50 – 2.49	One a month
		2.50 – 3.49	Twice a week
		3.50 – 4.49	Almost everyday
		4.50 – 5.00	Everyday
2	Number of Books Read the last three months	1.00 – 1.49	None
		1.50 – 2.49	One
		2.50 – 3.49	Two
		3.50 – 4.49	Three
		4.50 – 5.49	Four
3	Time Spent on Reading per Week	5.50 – 6.00	More than Four
		1.00 – 1.49	One hour or less
		1.50 – 2.49	Three hours
		2.50 – 3.49	Five Hours
		3.50 – 4.49	Seven Hours
		4.50 – 5.49	Nine Hours
		5.50 – 6.00	Eleven Hours

Furthermore, descriptive statistic was also to determine the mean percentage score of the participants' reading comprehension test results. The interpretation of the mean score is adapted from Classification of Students' Score (See Table 4).

**Table 4.** *Predicate interval*

D = (Below Average)	C = (Average)	B = (Above Average)	A = (Superior)
< 70	70 – 78	79 – 89	90 – 100
< 71	71 – 78	79 – 89	90 – 100
< 72	72 – 81	82 – 90	91 – 100
< 73	73 – 81	82 – 90	91 – 100
< 74	74 – 81	82 – 90	91 – 100
< 75	75 – 82	83 – 91	92 – 100

### ***Correlation analysis***

Pearson bivariate correlation, inferential statistical method, was used to calculate the *p-value* (significance value). If the calculated *p-value* is less than  $\alpha = .05$ , the alternative hypothesis can be retained and the null hypothesis can be rejected, otherwise, the null hypothesis is retained. In cases where a significant correlation is found between the two variables, the correlation coefficient (*r*) is examined to determine whether the direction of the correlation is positive or negative. Understanding the strength of the relationship (See Table 5) is also important as it indicates the level of consistency in the significance or insignificance of the findings. Taylor (1990) categorized the value of the correlation coefficient *r* as follows:

**Table 5.** *Strength of correlation*

Correlation Coefficient r Range	Verbal Interpretation
$\leq 0.35$	Weak Correlation
0.36 – 0.67	Moderate Correlation
0.68 – 0.90	Strong Correlation
0.90 – 1.00	Very Strong Correlation

### ***Ethical considerations***

In conducting this study, ethical considerations were strictly observed to ensure the privacy, confidentiality, and safety of all student participants. The participants were well informed, that their participation was voluntary, and they can withdraw anytime during the data collection and or analysis. All responses were kept confidential and used solely for research purposes, with no personally identifiable information disclosed. Additionally, data was securely stored and accessed only by authorized researchers to maintain participant anonymity and protect their well-being. Furthermore, participation in this study had no impact on students' course grades ensuring that their academic performance was not jeopardized in any way.

## **FINDINGS**

This section focuses the primary objective of this study, by addressing the research questions regarding students' reading habits, their reading comprehension levels, and the extent to which these two aspects are significantly correlated. The analysis seeks to provide insights into how reading behavior influences comprehension skills, shedding valuable light into potential strategies for improving literacy outcomes.

### ***Reading habit***

The first research question pertains to outlining the participants' reading habit. Descriptive statistics was utilized to find the level of reading habit, which consists of three items as follows: frequency of reading, number of books read, and time spent on reading per week. Shown in Table 6, the mean score of frequency of reading is 2.61, the mean score of number of books read is 3.02, and the mean score of time spent on reading is 1.27. Based on the mean score interpretation (See Table 6), the frequency of reading ( $M = 2.61$ ) implies that averagely the respondents read English books twice a week; the number of books read the last three months ( $M = 3.02$ ) is two books, which apparently indicated that averagely the respondents read two English books; and the time spent on reading English book ( $M = 1.27$ ) is one or less than one hour which apparently indicated that the respondents spent one hour or less than one hours per week in reading English book.

**Table 6.** *Descriptive statistics of reading habit*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Frequency of Reading	94	1.00	5.00	2.6064	1.02881
Number of Books Read	94	1.00	6.00	3.0213	1.29498
Time Spent on Reading	94	1.00	5.00	1.2660	.77841
Valid N (listwise)	94				

### ***Reading comprehension***

The second research focuses on describing the reading comprehension level of the participants. Descriptive analysis was also utilized to find the level of reading comprehension, which is the test score in percentage. Table 7 shows the output indicates a significant variation in English reading comprehension among the test participants. The highest score reached 100, and the lowest was 7, while the possible score was 100. The mean score of the respondents is 73, suggesting the respondents scored around moderate level of reading comprehension. Based on calculations using Interval Predicate according to School (See Table 4), the result was classified as sufficient or average. Thus, it showed that the level of students' English reading comprehension at a selected private middle school in Minahasa Utara with a total 94 respondents from grade 7<sup>th</sup> B, C, and D was in the sufficient or average level.

**Table 7.** *Descriptive statistics of reading comprehension*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Test Score Percentage	94	7.00	100.00	73.0000	23.24530
Valid N (listwise)	94				

### ***Correlation between reading habit and reading comprehension***

This section explores the last research question regarding the relationship between the reading habit and comprehension of the participants. The Pearson bivariate correlation formula was applied to determine whether to accept or reject the alternative hypothesis, which posits a significant relationship between reading habits and reading comprehension. Table 8 indicates that the significance value ( $p = 0.043$ ) is below the threshold of .05, leading to the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, which asserts a significant correlation between reading habits and reading comprehension. It meant that the better the participants develop their reading habit, the better are the test score in reading comprehension.

**Table 8.** *Correlation between reading habit and reading comprehension test score*

		Reading Comprehension Test Score
Reading Habit	Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r)	.178*
	Significance Value (2-tailed) (p)	.043
	N	94

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

## DISCUSSION

The first findings indicate that the participants' reading habits are relatively limited. On average, they read English books twice a week, with approximately two books completed in the past three months. Furthermore, the time spent on reading is notably low, averaging only one hour or less per week. The findings revealed prevalent problems among Indonesian students of English as found by [Khaira et al. \(2019\)](#), [Putri et al. \(2012\)](#), and [Hamdiah and Yusof \(2021\)](#) who suggested that there was an urgent need to develop reading habit among students of English language. These results suggest that the participants may not be dedicating sufficient time to reading, which could make better their language development and comprehension skills. Further investigation is needed to understand the underlying factors affecting their reading engagement, such motivation, access to reading materials, or language proficiency.

The second results suggest that the participants English reading comprehension level is generally at a moderate level, with a mean score of 73. However, the wide range of scores, from 7 to 100, suggests significant variability in students' reading abilities, indicating a wide range of proficiency. The classification of the overall reading comprehension level as 'sufficient' or 'average' implies that while students have a foundational understanding of English texts, there may be room for improvement. These results differed slightly from the findings of [Febriana \(2021\)](#) and [Ramadhianti and Somba \(2023\)](#) highlighted the challenges faced by Indonesian college students in understanding English, suggesting that reading difficulties persist at higher levels of education.

The third finding aligns with previous research, reinforcing the idea that reading habits play a crucial role in shaping students' reading comprehension abilities. This result is consistent with findings of [Muawanah \(2016\)](#) and [Sartitika et al. \(2020\)](#), who reported a significant relationship between high school students' reading habit and reading comprehension proficiency. Their studies suggest that students who engage in regular reading activities tend to develop better comprehension skills over time. Furthermore, similar patterns have been observed at the higher education level. Research conducted by [Indriani \(2019\)](#) and [Fajr \(2022\)](#) found that this correlation also exists among Indonesian college students, indicating that strong reading habits contribute positively to reading comprehension across different educational stages. These findings highlight the importance of fostering consistent reading practices from an early age to enhance students' ability to understand and analyze texts effectively.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the study showed that the students averagely read English books only twice a week, two books read per week, and spent only three hours per week. Furthermore, students in a selected private middle school in Minahasa had a moderate level in English reading comprehension test. Lastly, the researcher found out that there is a significant correlation between students' reading habit and their reading comprehension, because the null

hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was retained. The reading comprehension test score showed a significant correlation with reading habit.

It can be inferred that students at a selected private middle school in Minahasa demonstrated a low level of reading habit. On average, they engaged in English reading activities twice a week, reading about two books per week, and dedicating approximately three hours weekly to reading. Their performance in English reading comprehension tests reflected a moderate level of proficiency. Notably, a significant correlation was observed between students' reading habit and their reading comprehension test scores, suggesting the better the respondent develop their reading habit, the better is their score in reading comprehension test. Based on the findings indicating a low level of reading habit and moderate reading comprehension among students at a selected private middle school in Minahasa, several strategies can be recommended to promote improvement: Firstly, encourage students to engage in regular and varied reading activities to increase exposure to English texts. Providing dedicated time for reading within the school schedule can support this effort. Additionally, diversifying reading materials based on students' interests and proficiency levels can enhance motivation and comprehension. Secondly, integrate reading comprehension strategies into language instruction to help students better understand and analyze English texts, since the reading habit affect to extent the score of the reading comprehension test. This could involve teaching skills such as summarizing, predicting, and making connections between ideas.

Furthermore, creating a supportive reading culture within the school community through initiatives like book clubs, author visits, or literary events can foster enthusiasm for reading. Providing feedback and monitoring students' progress in reading can also help tailor interventions to individual needs. It is advisable for future researchers to undertake further investigations to explore additional factors that could potentially influence the correlation between students' English reading habit and their proficiency in English reading comprehension. Exploring variables such as reading environment, attitudes towards reading, exposure to diverse reading materials, or the use of reading strategies could yield valuable insights for educators and researchers aiming to enhance language learning outcomes.

## **DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**

There is no conflict of interest in this study. The research was conducted objectively and independently, with no financial, personal, or institutional influences that could affect the findings or interpretations.

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