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ANALYZING THE EFFECT OF GENDER DIFFERENCES, AND EDUCATION OF PARENTS TOWARDS STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT

Research Article

Welly Ardiansyah 
Politeknik Negeri Sriwijaya
ardiansyahwelly@gmail.com

Murwani Ujihanti 
Politeknik Negeri Sriwijaya
anihanafi@yahoo.co.id

Nurul Aryanti 
Politeknik Negeri Sriwijaya
aryantinurul479@gmail.com

Welly Ardiansyah is an English lecturer in the Department of English study Program, Politeknik Negeri Sriwijaya, Indonesia. His research interests include Curriculum Development, Teaching and Learning Methodology, and Language skills.

Murwani Ujihanti is an English lecturer at the Department of English study Program, Politeknik Negeri Sriwijaya, Indonesia. Her research interests include Teacher Professional Identity, Curriculum Implementation, and Linguistics.

Nurul Aryanti is currently working as an English lecturer in the Department of English study Program, Politeknik Negeri Sriwijaya, Indonesia. Her areas of professional interest include English language Teacher Education, and Assessment and Curriculum Design in English Language Teaching.

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not, but also develop a vocabulary mastery, increased general knowledge and a better understanding of other cultures. In fact, a student's reading engagement is more likely to determine whether a student does well at school than their social or economic background (Bohn-Gettler & Rapp, 2011).

The study focuses on differences between reading comprehension achievement of female and male students, and a relationship between parental education level and students' academic performances of reading comprehension. English lecturers generally acknowledge that students' environmental conditions that impact the students who try to read a passage can be a contributing factor in their reading comprehension achievement. Despite this, there is scarce research on the extent and the mechanisms by which factors related to a students' home environment influence their achievement in EFL. This means that English lecturers and State Polytechnic of Sriwijaya are left unguided in their quest to find ways of capitalizing on the influence of a home environment on students' achievement. In short, this article presents evidence concerning gender differences in reading comprehension achievement and the influences of parental education level towards students' reading comprehension achievement.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Gender differences in reading literacy

USAID (2016) reports that there are significant differences between male and female learners in reading comprehension. Female students outscored male students in their reading comprehension, in general. Female students are more interested in reading activities, while male students generally dislike reading activities. So, it does not wonder when reading comprehension scores of female students are higher than those of male students (Fahim & Barjesteh, 2012; Sotoudenama & Asadian, 2011)

A study conducted by Dagnew and Aster (2017) say those female students are more prone to the feeling disheartened and less hopeful than male students, more void of shame or self-respect, more deceptive, and of more retentive memory. On the contrary, males are expected to be objective, independent, assertive, logical, and competitive. Also, Junaid (2015) conducted the largest study of gender differences in achievement scores and found that girls performed better than their male counterparts in reading achievement. They also found the typical male student lags a year and a half behind the typical female student.

Male students considered mathematics, science, and sport as interesting topics while female students placed a higher value on reading. Learners' motivation to read is an area where consistent and substantial gender differences are found (Marinak & Gambrell, 2010). This characteristic is stronger among female learners than male ones. Motivation is the individual character that is supposed to play an important role in a learner's reading comprehension. The learners' success in the reading skill, according to Hairul, Ahmadi, and Pourhosein (2012), is associated with their motivation to read because it is regarded as an activity requiring deep involvement on the part of the readers. Besides, male students like monitoring their reading pace, reading strategies, and paraphrasing strategies more often than female students did.

In short, it stands to reason if gender differences are found in reading motivation and reading comprehension, then gender identity can explain more variance in these variables. It is also implied that gender identity may explain significant variances in the performance of learners in reading various text types.

level and students' reading comprehension achievement as well as the correlation of the two variables.

3.2 Instruments of data collection

There were two types of instruments for the study. The first was a forty-readymade reading comprehension test item of multiple-choice, and the second was Structured Questionnaires developed for quantitative data and administered to students with Cronbach's alpha of ($r=0.78$). The questionnaire used in the research was adapted from Walker et al. (2005). However, the researchers modified the questionnaire by adding relevant questions and omitting several questions that were not necessary for supporting the framework of this study. All of the questions in the questionnaire were close-ended forms. Validity was checked by 11 English lecturers (5 from Sriwijaya University, 4 from State Polytechnic of Sriwijaya, and 2 from Polytechnic of Sekayu).

3.3 Study site

The study site was State Polytechnic of Sriwijaya in Palembang City. The students attending their education in this State Polytechnics of Sriwijaya come from different linguistics, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

3.4 The population of the study

The total number of population was 200 students from eight classes. The population of this study consisted of students in the fourth semester D IV at Public Sector Accounting and Business Administration study programs at State Polytechnic of Sriwijaya in the 2018-2019 academic year.

3.5 Sample of the study

To detect the sampling of the study, 100 students from eight classes that were chosen with the purposive random sampling method. The subjects were assured of the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses in the study. Of the total, 51 students were male and 49 students were female.

Table 1. *Demographic profile of the participants*

Variable		n	%	
Age	Average	19,34 years		
	Range	19 years	66	66%
		20 years	34	34%
Study Program	Public Sector Accounting	50	50%	
	Business Administration	50	50%	
Gender	Male	51	51%	
	Female	49	49%	

3.6 Data collection instrument

3.6.1 Demographic scale

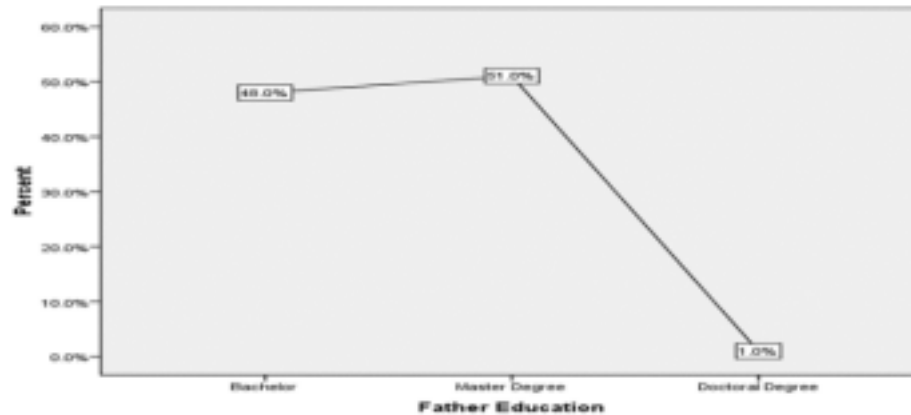


Figure 2. Father Educational Background

Regarding the father educational level, 100% of students come from literate fathers. Accordingly, 48.0% completed a Bachelor degree, 51.0% completed a Master degree, and 1.0% had a Doctoral degree.

Table 2. *Distribution of respondents on reading material*

Reading Material	Father (%)	Mother (%)	Students (%)
Novel	18.7	37.2	61.8
Short Story	17.2	29.8	57.1
Academic Book	11.4	35.4	78.3
Tabloid	10.2	19.7	19.2
Newspaper	53.4	49.7	40.3
Tabloid	9.2	20.7	19.2
Comic	2.0	2.2	45.9
Internet Article	45.2	54.4	52.7

Table 2 indicates different types of reading materials that respondents love reading. In this case, the writers can argue that students whose mothers love reading affect their students' reading interest. Father's reading preferences, though have had an impact too, influenced students' reading in fewer areas than that of the mothers.

Table 6. *The correlation between mothers' education and students' reading comprehension achievement*

Correlations			
		Reading Score	Mother Education
Reading Score	Pearson Correlation	1	.530**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	100	100
Mother Education	Pearson Correlation	.530**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	100	100

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As shown in the above table, there was a positive strong correlation between students' reading comprehension score and mother's education. The value of $r = 0.530$; this shows that mother's education is positively correlated with students' reading comprehension achievements. There was a strong correlation between the two variables (mother's educational level and students' academic performance).

Table 7. *The correlation between fathers' education and students' reading comprehension achievement*

Correlations			
		Reading Score	Father Education
Reading Score	Pearson Correlation	1	.029
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.778
	N	100	100
Father Education	Pearson Correlation	.029	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.778	
	N	100	100

The above table showed that the correlation between students' reading comprehension score and father's education is not strong (weak). The value of $r = 0.029$; this shows that a father's education is not positively correlated with students' reading comprehension achievements. There was a weak correlation between the two variables (father's educational level and students' academic performance).

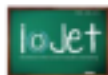
4.2 Discussion

The main concerns of this study were to examine the differences in reading comprehension achievement between female and male students and a relationship between parental education and students' academic performances of reading comprehension. Concerning these, the findings indicated that female students' reading comprehension scored significantly higher than male students', and the existence of the positive strong relationship between mothers' education level and students' academic performances of reading comprehension. These results suggest that the higher frequency of reading and better reading ability could be an explanation

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