

ELEMENTARY STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS READING ENGLISH TEXT: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOL

Shereen Gul¹, Shumaila Aijaz Memon², Insaf Ali Siming³

shereengul796@gmail.com

¹Research Scholar (ELDC) Mehran University of Engineering and Technology, Jamshoro.

²Mehran University of Engineering and Technology, Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan.

³Quaid-e-Awam University of Engineering, Science & Technology, Nawabshah-Sindh

Abstract

Reading plays a crucial role both in daily and academic life. Reading habit generates knowledge and expand information of the world and develops positive attitudes in learners. The aim of the study focused on Elementary students' attitudes towards reading English text. The objective of the study tried to find out the comparison between Public and Private Students' attitudes towards reading English text at the Elementary level in Pakistan. The current study was quantitative in nature. For data collection ERAS (Elementary reading Attitudes Survey) questionnaire was administered. The questionnaire divided into two broad categories; Recreational and Academic reading. Each category consisted of ten items, 10 items of academic reading and 10 items related to recreational reading. The convenient sampling procedure was used and 180 participants were selected. For data analysis, SPSS software version 20 was used and for comparison Independent T-test was tabulated. The findings revealed high significant differences between both groups. Private school children were shown active, habitual and interested readers. They have positive attitudes in both academic and recreational reading as compared to public school children.

Key Words:

Elementary Reading Attitudes survey, Private school, Public school

1. Introduction:

Gutherie & Coddington (2009) stated in education, reading skills, play a pivotal role in enhancing the learning process and it is also an essential part of the teaching. In today's society, reading skills expanded in all practices and encountered in every field. It is considered a primary skill at the very beginning of the learning process. McKenna, Kear, and Juliartan (2013) defines that reading is more important for students because the more they read, the better they gain, the more they know, the better they understand.

Reading in an academic place more supports the learners to think critically and develops logical ideas. McKenna et al (2012) stated that learners' attitude affects in their reading outcome and achievements.

It remains inconsistent with their growing age and their positive attitude towards reading turn into the negative one and competes with reading skills. It converts into different options and activities that would be more pleasurable for them. Further, he explained that comprehension of any literary text is affected by many factors: learner prior knowledge, teacher's attention, and other psychological factors like aptitude, willingness, motivation, and interest. Ellsworth (1995) & Petscher (2010) asserted that the teaching process is directly and positively affects on the attitudes of the young learners towards reading and reading outcomes. The current study focuses to explore the elementary students' attitudes towards reading of public and private children.

1.2 Reading Attitude Model:

1.2.1 Mckenna's model of Elementary Reading Attitude survey (ERAS):

The research concern is to identify the Elementary students' attitudes towards reading. Therefore, McKenna's model is used as a research framework and research instrument, which is particularly designed for investigating the young

children's attitudes towards reading. McKenna & Kear (1995) model of reading attitudes is based on three factors that highly influenced on the individual to perform any action for a long-time; including: 1) normative beliefs refer (subjective norms) 2) beliefs about the reading outcomes and 3) specific reading experiences. In view of this model, it is clearly shown, these three factors merge together to develop an individual belief system related to reading (Carla L. Wood & Clariebelle M. Gabas, 2017). Memon (2014) defined In McKenna's model "belief" is dominant as a one-dimensional approach towards reading.

The core factor of McKenna's model that contributed a lot towards attitudes of the children revolves around *social beliefs*. McKenna model depicts that how the individuals' social environment influenced on their attitudes, for example, how parents play a significant role in home, how teachers contribute in school and how socioeconomic setting influenced in their attitudes. He indicates that how once ability to read and growth will influence on students' attitudes towards reading within specific time and social context. McKenna (1994) illustrated that when children grow up and comes at the age of puberty, they encountered with their environment that promoted them other leisure options; for example, watching television, using android cell phones, other social networks, and playing with peers' replaced their attitudes towards reading. Moreover, students' positive attitude also influence on their attitudes to reinforce any situation, for example; when students are capable enough towards reading, but, don't have positive attitudes, then they will not engage in a long time and feel boredom and frustrated.

:

2. Research Questions:

Following are the research questions of the study that help to set up the context of what research purposes and target to be explored.

1. What are the students' attitudes towards academic reading in public & private schools at the elementary level at Shaheed Benazir Abad?
2. Investigate the difference between the reading attitudes in English of public and private schools' learners at Shaheed Benazir Abad?

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Data collection and Analyses:

S. Rajasekar, et'al (2013) Stated that research methodology is a process of scientific and systematic way to find out the hidden truth from the existing problem. The current study used quantitative approach as a methodology of the study. The study administered ERAS (Elementary, Reading Attitudes Survey) questionnaire inaugurated by (McKenna and Kear, 1990) as a research instrument. The Mckenna purpose to design the model is the assessment between reader and nonreaders' attitudes towards reading. His intention was to measure the positive and negative attitudes of the young learners towards reading. The survey questionnaire falls into three sections. The First section presents demographic information about the participants, including name, age, class and school. The second and third parts are divided into two categories of the questionnaire including Recreational and Academic reading. The questionnaire consisted of 20 items with 4 pictorial options of Garfield image.

The population of the study consisted of 180 participants who were selected through convenient sampling procedures. To carry out the study six elementary schools were selected (three private and three public schools) in Nawabshah. The study targeted fourth and fifth grade students from both schools. For data analysis, data were analyzed through SPSS software version 20 and data presented in charts and tables. The independent T-Test was used to compare the mean scores of both groups of public and private children. The study focused on both recreational and academic reading attitudes of the children; so the Independent T-test was used as per requirement of the study. The findings of the study divided into two factors, table 1 presented the information about recreational factor and table 2 presented information of academic factor.

3.2 Finding

The findings of the study divided into two factors, [Table 1] presented the information about recreational factor and table 2 presented information of academic factor.

Following tables shown the result of the participants in both Recreational and Academic readings.

[Table 1]: Recreational Reading Factors

	Recreational Reading Items	Participants identity	N	Mean
1)	How do you feel when you read a book on a rainy day?	Private Public	180 180	3.000 3.1278
2)	How do you feel when you read a book in school during free time?	Private Public	180 180	2.9111 2.8944
3)	How do you feel about reading for fun at home?	Private Public	180 180	3.2778 3.0222
4)	How do you feel about getting a book for a present/gift?	Private Public	180 180	3.3222 2.7833
5)	How do you feel about spending free time reading a book?	Private Public	180 180	3.2833 2.7167
6)	How do you feel about spending free time reading a book?	Private Public	180 180	3.7111 2.9222
7)	How do you feel about reading during summer vacation/holiday?	Private Public	180 180	2.6833 2.5278
8)	How do you feel about reading instead of playing?	Private Public	180 180	3.1833 2.7778
9)	How do you feel about going to a book store?	Private Public	180 180	3.4778 2.6889
10)	How do you feel about reading different kinds of books?	Private Public	180 180	3.2222 2.7333

Interpretation of [Table 1]

In the [Table 1], Among all the ten items, nine items demonstrate the result that the private students have a significantly higher mean score than the public students. As the items 5, 6, 9 and 10 of recreational reading shown significant higher mean score of private than public children, e.g., in item 5, “spending free time reading book” the private student mean score is (3.2) and the public student is (2.7), in the same way, in item 6 “starting new course book” shown the same result that the mean score of private is (3.7) significantly higher than and the mean score of public (2.9). While comparing these two groups, findings show that the private children possess positive attitudes towards reading as a comparison to the public children, they are habitual and confident readers, they love reading in their leisure time and

enjoying to buy different kinds of books. For them, reading is the best and pleasure full activity.

[Table 2] Academic Reading factors

	Academic reading Items	Participant identity	N	Mean
11)	How do you feel when a teacher asks you questions?	Private Public	180 180	3.0667 2.8222
12)	How do you feel about reading workbook pages and book activities?	Private Public	180 180	3.3056 3.1389
13)	How do you feel about reading school’s book at home?	Private Public	180 180	3.3611 2.9944
14)	How do you feel about reading your school books?	Private Public	180 180	3.3556 2.9111
15)	How do you feel about learning/ memorizing from a book?	Private Public	180 180	3.2278 2.8833
16)	How do you feel when it’s time for reading in class?	Private Public	180 180	3.1667 2.6833
17)	How do you feel about the stories you read in reading class?	Private Public	180 180	3.6556 3.1333
18)	How do you feel when you read out loud in class?	Private Public	180 180	2.9833 2.4833
19)	How do you feel about using a dictionary or asking meaning from teachers?	Private Public	180 180	3.3222 2.9389
20)	How do you feel about taking a reading test?	Private Public	180 180	3.6944 2.7444

Interpretation of [Table 2]

In the [Table 2], the data of both public and private schools has shown significant differences in their mean score. As the items, 14, 15, 17 show high mean scores. Moreover, the finding illustrated among all the ten items private children found positive attitude readers while the public children have negative attitudes and shown less interested in reading. For instance, item: 20 *How do you feel about taking a reading test?* Show less mean score of

public children (2.7) as a comparison to the (3.6) private children. Similar items no: 15 *How do you feel about learning/ memorizing from a book? Mean score of public children (2.8) lesser than private children (3.2)*. Hence, it can be summarized that the private students are active, habitual, and confident readers; they read not for the sake of reading but to get pleasure in it. Whereas public students have somehow hesitated, passive and frustrated reader, they found reading difficult, because they have limited vocabulary and fewer comprehension skills. To sum up the discussion, it is drawn that, public students considered nonreader and less interested than private students.

4. Conclusion and Discussion

To sum up the discussion, the study determined the answer regarding the effectiveness of positive and negative attitudes of the elementary children towards enhancement of the reading skills. Finding of the current study successfully proved that the private school children were positive readers and more motivated towards reading in both dimensions; recreational reading and academic reading as compare to the public school children. In both categories the private school children' performance remained outstanding and extraordinary through the whole process. They were shown confident, active and participated learners. While, public school children were found less confident, hesitated and silent readers. They were hardly asked any question because of fear of teachers and their fellows. However, they were mostly frustrating and boredom during lectures. Hence, it is concluded private children were the effective and positive attitudes readers as compared to the public school children.

References

- [1] Abro, A., & Qaisrani, N. (2017). An evaluation of the impact of students' reading attitude on their achievement in Pakistan. *The Shield-Research Journal of Physical Education & Sports Science*, 11.
- [2] Guthrie, J., & Coddington, C. (2009). Reading motivation. In K. Wentzel & A. Wigfield (Eds.), *Handbook of motivation at school* (pp. 503–525). New York: Routledge.
- [3] Fishbein, M., and I. Ajzen. "Belief, Attitude, Intention and Behavior: An Introduction to Theory and Research." (1975).
- [4] Juliarta, D. M. (2013). Teaching reading comprehension through Grammar Translation Method at the seventh grade students of WIDYASUARA SUKAWATI IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2013/2014.
- [5] Partin, K., & Hendricks, C. G. (2005). The relationship between positive adolescent attitudes toward reading and home literary environment. *Reading Horizons: A Journal of Literacy and Language Arts*, 43(1), 8.
- [6] Laurice, J. (2004). Reading-encouraging positive attitudes: strategies for parents and teacher. *Bethesda: National Association of School Psychologists*.
- [7] McKenna, M. C., Conradi, K., Lawrence, C., Jang, B. G., & Meyer, J. P. (2012). Reading attitudes of middle school students: Results of a US survey. *Reading research quarterly*, 47(3), 283-306.
- [8] McKenna, M. C., Kear, D. J., & Ellsworth, R. A. (1995). Children's attitudes toward reading: A national survey. *Reading research quarterly*, 934-956.
- [9] McKenna, M. C., & Kear, D. J. (1990). Measuring attitude toward reading: A new tool for teachers. *The reading teacher*, 43(9), 626-639.
- [10] Michael C. McKenna, Dennis J. Kear & Randolph A. Ellsworth. (2009). *Children's Attitudes toward Reading: A National Survey*.
- [11] Memon, S. (2014). Reading attitudes in L1 and L2 among rural and urban learners in a Pakistani context.
- [12] Petscher, Y. (2010). A meta-analysis of the relationship between student attitudes towards reading and achievement in reading. *Journal of research in reading*, 33(4), 335-355.
- [13] Wood, C. L., & Gabas, C. M. (2017). Young Spanish-English speaking children's reading attitudes in relation to language skills. *Educational Research*, 59(4), 408-425.
- [14] Rajasekar, S., Philominathan, P., & Chinnathambi, V. (2013). Research Methodology, Tamilnadu, India. *Social Research Methods Series*, 5.