

DIGITAL HUMOR AND ITS IMPACT ON ADOLESCENT LITERACY: A LOOK AT HIGH SCHOOL READING TRENDS

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Abstract: Reading is a critical skill that contributes significantly to academic success and personal growth, especially at the High School level. Therefore, this study explores the relationship between Reading Motivation, Reading Comprehension, and Online Humorous Reading Content among high school pupils. Leveraging a correlational design and quantitative research methods, data was collected from 186 eleventh grade pupils through questionnaires and tests. Statistical analysis, including Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA), was used to test the relationship between variables. Findings showed a significant effect of Reading Motivation on Reading Comprehension, with Online Humorous Reading Content as a moderating variable since the acceptance of alternate hypotheses (H_a) had been obtained. Specifically, Online Humorous Reading Content was found to increase pupils' interest in reading and reduce barriers to reading comprehension, thus improving overall reading performance. This study underscores the importance of incorporating entertaining reading materials into the curriculum to foster engagement and improve learning outcomes. Undeniably, these findings contribute valuable insights for educators aiming to improve reading skills and create a stimulating learning environment in high school settings.

Keywords: *reading motivation; reading comprehension; online humorous reading content; high school; pupils.*

INTRODUCTION

Through the process of interpreting and understanding written or printed text, reading is usually done by looking at and understanding the symbols of letters, numbers, and punctuation. Therefore, Koh (2022) states that reading involves in recognizing words, understanding their meaning, and reconstructing the information contained in the text. More than that, Coventry et al., (2023) and Xiao (2022) explain that reading can be considered a very important activity in one's learning and growth, as it allows us to acquire knowledge, understand ideas, and access information from various sources. Given this, reading is also a skill that develops with time and practice, which can be improved by expanding vocabulary, improving comprehension, and

exercising critical skills in evaluating and analyzing information.

Furthermore, Ayu & Rizky (2023) and Firdaus (2022) proficiency in reading at the High School level generally includes comprehension of more complex texts, and more in-depth analysis of the information presented, as well as the ability to interpret and evaluate texts. Instead, they are expected to be able to read with deep comprehension, whether it is narrative, expository or argumentative texts (Imaniah, 2022). It allows them to develop more complex reading skills, such as distinguishing between fact and opinion, finding the main argument in an essay, and recognizing the author's language style.

Subsequently, Oktavia et al., (2023) possess that critical skills help them to understand texts

well, analyze information, and extract meaning from different types of reading materials is also required. Moreover, it also entails the ability to recognize and apply a wide variety of reading strategies, such as predicting, interpreting word meanings contextually, identifying main ideas and important details, and connecting information between sentences or paragraphs (Alghonaim, 2020). Thus, it is possible to acquire strong reading ability by developing theoretical and practical cognitive that are important in life and academic achievement.

As it turns out, Hebbecker et al., (2019); Rizky & Zainil (2021) and Soemer et al., (2023) explain that reading skills at the High School level is often influenced by pupils' motivation. However, according to Xiao (2022) there are various sources of motivation, ranging from personal interest to encouragement from the surrounding environment. In addition, support and encouragement from teachers and parents can also play an important role in motivating pupils to read more and more frequently. Once they feel supported and valued in their reading endeavors, the pupils are more likely to be motivated to continue improving their reading skills in the service of achieving academic and personal goals (Alghonaim, 2020).

For this reason, it is believed that building strong motivation in pupils can be the key to improving their reading skills at the High School level. Through this, pupils at the High School level will be more eager to develop their reading skills and comprehension, especially in terms of knowledge, critical thinking skills, and opening doors to future opportunities (Imaniah, 2022 & Ramadansur et al., 2023).

Indeed, in the increasingly dynamic world of education in the High School, reading skills is an essential pillar for academic success and personal growth (Wang et al., 2022). It enables pupils to handle complex texts, analyze information critically, and extract meaning effectively, whether researching historical documents, understanding scholarly journals, or interpreting classic works of literature. Beyond academics, these skills prepare pupils to interact with multiple perspectives, empathize with others, and make informed decisions in their lives (Alghonaim, 2020).

For this rationale, in the level of High School environment, it is important to prioritize the development of reading skills in order to adequately prepare pupils as lifelong learners who can thrive in a changing world (Koh, 2022; Xiao,

2022). In this regard, adequate support from the education system and a stimulating environment are crucial in arousing pupils' interest and improving their Reading Comprehension skills, so that they are well equipped for the challenges presented by reality after completing their education (Zheng & Wang, 2023).

Regardless of the obvious benefits of incorporating reading materials in the High School level, the implementation of appropriate and feasible reading materials faces several challenges (Erdoğan & Çakıroğlu, 2021 and Firdaus, 2022). Yet, Coventry et al., (2023) describe that one prominent issue is the accessibility and availability of such reading materials, especially in resource-constrained educational settings. Furthermore, the influence of limited budgets, outdated libraries, and inadequate digital resources hinders pupils' access to a variety of high-quality reading materials.

Similarly, Hsieh & Teo (2023) propose that insufficient diversity and inclusivity in the selection of reading materials may fail to represent the experiences and perspectives of all pupils, thus perpetuating bias and reinforcing stereotypes. Addressing these challenges requires concerted efforts from educators, policymakers and communities to ensure equitable access to appropriate reading materials that promote holistic development and inclusivity in High School education.

Meanwhile, early studies also emphasized the importance of interesting and relevant reading content for readers. Among the many other factors, studies from Erdoğan & Çakıroğlu (2021); Shoda & Yamanaka (2022); Wang et al., (2022) and Zheng & Wang (2023) strongly recognize that the adaptation of Online Humorous Reading Content in learning is often considered as one of the elements that can increase interest and motivation in reading. Nonetheless, the existing literature has not sufficiently explored how factors such as Online Humorous Reading Content might influence the relationship between Reading Motivation and Reading Comprehension among High School pupils.

The emphasis in this study is on Online Humorous Reading Content, which refers to the materials available on various websites as per the study conducted by Nur (2020). Through the availability of internet access, both teachers and students have the opportunity to read these materials together. In contrast to serious reading materials such as news articles or scientific papers that aim to provide information or in-depth

analysis of a topic, Online Humorous Reading Content is specifically designed to elicit laughter or smiles from readers. Thus, Online Humorous Reading Content is more suitable for entertainment and relaxation, as well as to maintain a balance in their reading activities.

Additionally, to alleviate the problem of reading skills among pupils at the High School level, however, an alternative solution that can be considered by researchers is the use of a learning platform that incorporates elements of Online Humorous Reading Content in the learning process. Incorporation of humor in education has become a major highlight in an effort to create a more dynamic and positive learning atmosphere. Thus, the presence of Online Humorous Reading Content in learning, after all, was able to make pupils feel more relaxed and understand complex concepts more easily and can increase pupils' learning motivation, as they feel involved in a fun and engaging learning process (Firdaus, 2022).

Aside from that, this approach not only creates a more enjoyable learning environment, but also allows teachers to build stronger connections with pupils, as well as reduce boredom in the learning process. Notably, as emphasized by Shoda & Yamanaka (2022), this approach has emerged as a powerful catalyst in building an enjoyable learning environment. Similarly, Erdoğan & Çakıroğlu (2021) asserts that the use of humor in an educational context has diverse benefits, ranging from engaging students' interest to strengthening retention of material. In addition, humor allows teachers to give feedback effectively and provides opportunities for refreshing moments in a learning process that can sometimes feel monotonous.

By adopting this approach strategically, educators are able to create more active interactions and enrich students' overall learning experience. The growing importance of this pedagogical application reflects the recognition of humor's critical role in shaping a learning environment that not only hones students' academic abilities, but also builds a strong emotional connection to the educational material.

Moreover, it is anticipated that this approach will provide deeper insights into the complex dynamics behind the reading learning process in today's digital era. Drawing on this research, it offers an important contribution in enriching our understanding of how certain factors, such as entertaining reading content, can influence the effectiveness of Reading Motivation on Reading Comprehension, particularly among tertiary level

pupils. Through presenting Online Humorous Reading Content, it is assumed that it will be possible to create a more enjoyable learning environment, so that pupils not only learn more effectively, but are also more motivated to continue improving their reading skills.

METHOD

The research conducted at SMAN 1 Bangkinang, Kampar Regency, employed a correlational design under multivariate correlation within the realm of quantitative research. Furthermore, the correlation statistical test is used to determine and describe the relationship between the three variables and their influence on each other (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Focusing on pupils in grade eleven, the study encompassed a total population of 411 pupils, from which a sample of 186 pupils were selected using simple random sampling techniques. Employing a meticulous combination of questionnaires and tests as its instruments, the research incorporated a Reading Motivation questionnaire, an Online Humorous Reading Content questionnaire, and a Reading Comprehension test. The process of data collection entailed the careful administration of these instruments to ensure accuracy and reliability.

Subsequently, data analysis was executed using the IBM SPSS Statistics 25 application, serving as the primary statistical tool for extracting meaningful insights. Before distributing the research instruments, the researcher conducted a trial to establish the validity and reliability of the instruments, ensuring the robustness of the data collection process as had previously been proposed by Alghonaim (2020). This comprehensive methodology underscores the rigor and credibility of the research findings, offering valuable insights into the relationship between Reading Motivation, Online Humorous Reading Content, and Reading Comprehension among high school pupils.

Retrieved from above, analysis of the interaction test in the form of Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) is alternatively carried out to ascertain whether the moderator variable would reinforce or attenuate in the relation between the independent variable and the dependent variable. Then, the interpretation of the findings is based on Sugiyono's (2017) theory as in the following table:

Table 1. *The interpretation of correlation*

| R _{xy} | Interpretation |
|-----------------|--|
| 0.00-0.199 | There is negligible correlation between the two variables |
| 0.20-0.399 | There is a low correlation between the two variables |
| 0.40-0.599 | There is a moderate correlation between the two variables |
| 0.60-0.799 | There is a high correlation between the two variables |
| 0.80-1.000 | There is a very high correlation between the two variables |

(Sugiyono, 2017)

The reference to see how close or strong the relationship between two variables is interpreted through table 1 above. However, from this table, the results of the analysis can be categorized as those that fall into the five categories, those are rejection (0.00-0.199); weak (0.20-0.399); moderate (0.40-0.599); high (0.60-0.799) and or very high (0.80-1.000).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Discoveries from this study shed light on the complex dynamics between Reading Motivation, Online Humorous Reading Content, and Reading Comprehension among High School pupils. Thus, by leveraging rigorous methodology and statistical analysis techniques such as Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA), this study not only establishes correlations but also explores the nuances of these relationships (Alghonaim, 2020 & Firdaus, 2022).

To design effective strategies that promote reading engagement and comprehension among pupils, especially in an increasingly digitized

learning environment, it is imperative for educators and policymakers to have such insights. Alternatively, the interpretation of the moderating effect of the Online Humorous Reading Content variable adds depth to our understanding of how various factors interact to shape pupils' reading habits and skills. In this sense, this study makes a significant contribution to the discourse of educational practices aimed at improving literacy outcomes.

Likewise, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test has shown that the data has a normal distribution at a significance level of $\alpha=0.05$, with a p-value of 0.200. However, the significance of this step is important in ensuring the validity of further statistical analysis.

As adopted from Creswell & Creswell (2018), then the linearity test was established and clarified that there was a significant effect of Linearity with an F value of 239.236 and $p < .001$, confirming that there was a strong linear relationship between Reading Comprehension and Reading Motivation.

Thus, the results strongly signify that both Reading Comprehension and Reading Motivation have a significant impact on reading performance, and that the relationship between the two tends to be linear as discovered by Alghonaim (2020) & Soemer et al., (2023). Then a statistical analysis test was conducted to evaluate the effect of Reading Motivation on Reading Comprehension, this has been done to understand how much impact the independent variable has on the dependent variable.

Table 2. Model of summary

| Model Summary | | | | |
|---------------|-------|------|-------------|----------------------------|
| Model | R | R2 | Adjusted R2 | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1 | .784a | .615 | .609 | 13.989 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Interaction, Humorous Reading, Reading Motivation

Afterwards, table 3 illustrates the analysis that was conducted to the extent of the effect of Reading Motivation on Reading Comprehension, by observing the Coefficient of Determination (R-Square). However, the coefficient of determination (R2) was 0.615, which implied that an average of 61.5% of the variation in Reading Comprehension could be explained by Reading Motivation. Furthermore, as the findings stated by Erdoğan & Çakıroğlu (2021) and Wang et al., (2022) the linear regression model also shows that the independent variables, such as interaction, Online Humorous Reading Content, and Reading

Motivation significantly contribute to Reading Comprehension, which is reflected by the high R-value (0.784).

In addition, the adjusted R2 value which is close to the R2 value indicates that the model fits the data well, with a relatively low standard error of estimation (13.989). This therefore confirms that Reading Motivation has a significant influence on Reading Comprehension, while other variables also signify the model. Indeed, the finding claimed that the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted. In brief, as for the relative contribution of each independent variable to the

dependent variable and its significance in influencing Reading Comprehension are displayed in table 4 as follows:

Table 3. Table coefficient

| Model | Coefficients ^a | | Beta | t | Sig. |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|------|
| | Unstandardized Coefficients | Standardized Coefficients | | | |
| 1 (Constant) | -59.574 | 17.844 | | 3.339 | .001 |
| Reading Motivation | 1.440 | .255 | 1.028 | 5.651 | .000 |
| Humorous Reading | 1.772 | .536 | .595 | 3.308 | .001 |
| Interaction | .016 | .007 | .650 | 2.168 | .031 |

a. Dependent Variable: Reading Comprehension

However, the evidence found in Table 4 displays the model coefficients used to analyze the relationship between Reading Motivation, Online Humorous Reading Content, and the interaction between the two with Reading Comprehension. For example, the unstandardized coefficients show how much change in Reading Comprehension is expected to occur when the independent variable changes by one unit, while the standardized coefficients give an idea of the relative contribution of each independent variable to Reading Comprehension after controlling for the other variables.

As a result, it is evident from the SPSS calculation in table 4, the T count value was 2.168, which means that the T count was more than T table, which was only 1.976. In addition, the significance value obtained was 0.031, which means it was less than 0.05. Likewise, the significance value obtained was 0.031 which was less than 0.05. This means that both coefficients are significant as indicated by the sig value. Thus, the moderating variable in this study is categorized as a quasi-moderator variable.

Inevitably, upon diving into the data presented, a significant finding has emerged that the Online Humorous Reading Content has mediated the relation between pupils Reading Motivation and Reading Comprehension as the report's findings suggested by Erdoğan & Çakıroğlu (2021). To this end, this conclusion is drawn from the noticeable shift in R² values before and after including the interaction variable, coupled with the statistical significance with a p-value below

0.05. Therefore, the second hypothesis was tested, as it was evident that Online Humorous Reading Content exerted a significant moderating influence on the relationship between pupils' Reading Motivation and Reading Comprehension.

Notably, the current study yielded compelling results indicating a strong linear relationship between Reading Comprehension and Reading Motivation, as evidenced by the significant effect of Linearity ($F = 239.236$, $p < .001$). Moreover, the linear regression model emphasized the significance of the difference in mean scores between the various groups based on the combination of these factors. Other than that, the linear regression model confirms the significance of independent variables such as interaction, Online Humorous Reading Content, and Reading Motivation, which collectively contribute significantly to Reading Comprehension, as indicated by the high R value (0.784).

Therefore, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was supported, in which Online Humorous Reading Content acts as a moderator, and effectively influences the correlation between Reading Motivation and Reading Comprehension. This moderation is further emphasized through testing the second hypothesis, as stated earlier by Alghonaim (2020); Firdaus (2022); Shoda & Yamanaka (2022); Wang et al., (2022) and Xiao (2022), the significant moderating influence of Online Humorous Reading Content on the aforementioned relationship is evident. As a result, a detailed insight into the relative contribution and significance of each independent variable to Reading Comprehension is discovered.

The correlations between Reading Motivation and pupils' Reading Comprehension have been highlighted in previous research by Nur (2020) & Soemer et al., (2023). Some of them found that high reading motivation can improve pupils' reading comprehension. However, research has also highlighted that there are moderating factors that can affect this relationship are used in the learning process, especially humorous and online readings (Shoda & Yamanaka, 2022; Yus, 2023 and Zheng & Wang, 2023).

Indeed, through this study, a deeper understanding of how aspects such as Online Humorous Reading Content can influence pupils' engagement and interest in reading can be gained. Besides, Alghonaim (2020); Wang et al., (2022) and Zheng & Wang (2023) propose a delightful reading content such as Online Humorous Reading Content could also help create a more enjoyable reading experience for pupils, which in

turn can increase their motivation to read more. However, it is important to remember that this effect of Online Humorous Reading Content may not be evenly distributed among all pupils. Therefore, in fact, some pupils may be more responsive to this type of content than others, depending on their personal preferences, cultural background, or other factors (Soemer et al., 2023; Xiao, 2022).

Apart from that, Hebbecker et al., (2019); Ives et al., (2023) and Zheng & Wang (2023) claim that the Online Humorous Reading Content has the power to change the learning atmosphere into a more relaxed and positive one. While the pupils are engaging with entertaining material, they tend to feel more relaxed and comfortable in the learning process. After all, this relaxed and positive environment creates a strong foundation for pupils' motivation and engagement in reading. Indeed, when pupils feel emotionally connected to the material through the element of humor, they are more likely to deepen their understanding of the content presented (Xiao, 2022).

In the broader context of education, Xiao (2022) asserts that the use of Online Humorous Reading Content might also promote inclusion. Some pupils might feel more connected to the material presented through Online Humorous Reading Content, which could reduce the gap in learning achievement between pupils. By expanding the range of reading materials to include a variety of genres and styles, in turn, teachers can create an inclusive and diverse learning environment where every student can feel valued and engaged (Coventry et al., 2023; Ramadansur et al., 2023 and Shoda & Yamanaka, 2022).

Particularly, this phenomenon applies to pupils who might have difficulty in reading or be less motivated by more serious or classical reading materials. Many pupils feel overwhelmed by texts that are considered "serious" and tend to lose interest in the learning process. However, by introducing readings that contain elements of Online Humorous Reading Content, teachers are able to create a more enjoyable and interesting learning environment for pupils. Thus, learning becomes not only an obligation, but also an enjoyable experience that pupils anticipate (Xiao, 2022; Zheng & Wang, 2023).

Likewise, a deeper understanding of the relationship between Reading Motivation and Reading Comprehension might varies the access for educators to design more effective learning strategies (Ayu & Rizky, 2023 and Rizky &

Zainil, 2021). For instance, a better understanding of motivation can help in identifying what drives pupils' interest in reading. This could be the recognition of different types of motivation, such as the desire to achieve personal goals, the desire to expand knowledge, or even the desire to gain social rewards or recognition. By understanding this, educators can tailor their approach to engaging pupils' interest in reading.

Other than being an effective strategy in improving pupils' Reading Comprehension, the use of Online Humorous Reading Content also motivates them to learn (Ayu et al., 2022 and Bastian et al., 2023). Humorous reading naturally attracts pupils' interest and arouses their curiosity. In the learning process, this interest is the key that helps pupils engage actively. When pupils enjoy what they read, their focus on the material increases, and they feel motivated to understand the text better (Alghonaim, 2020). For example, if a student loses motivation because they find it difficult to understand the text, educators can look for ways to increase the student's motivation while providing additional support in reading comprehension. This could involve using instructional differentiation techniques or using reading materials that are more appropriate to the student's comprehension level.

With a greater understanding of the dynamics between motivation and comprehension, educators have the opportunity to more effectively assist pupils in developing their Reading Skills (Ayu et al., 2022; Bastian et al., 2023; Rizky, 2020; Wong, 2023). By integrating learning strategies, Erdođdu & Çakırođlu (2021) affirm that it match pupils' needs and interests, also, educators can create a learning environment that supports continued growth in pupils' reading skills. This can provide benefits not only in terms of reading ability, but can also help pupils develop broader problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

Accordingly, the use of Online Humorous Reading Content has proven itself to be an effective tool in improving pupils' reading comprehension as well as motivating them to learn (Shoda & Yamanaka, 2022; Yus, 2023 and Zheng & Wang, 2023). Through entertaining reading, pupils not only become more engaged in the learning process, but also develop their ability to understand figurative language and complex language styles.

Hence, it cannot be denied that in shaping one's humor preferences, cultural differences play an important role. It is believed that each

demographic group has a unique cultural background, as well as values and norms that influence how humor is understood and accepted.

In addition, social context also has a major impact on the effectiveness of humor. Humor delivered in a context that matches the values and beliefs of a particular social group tends to be more successful and well-received by the audience. Therefore, an understanding of cultural differences and sensitivity to social context is key to using humor effectively in a variety of situations and social interactions.

As a result, learning becomes more enjoyable and meaningful for pupils, building a solid foundation for their academic growth. This can lead to more productive discussions in class, where pupils feel freer to share their views and participate in challenging learning activities.

CONCLUSION

As to explore the correlation between the variables concerned, therefore, a Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) and other statistical tests, including the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Normality test, were adopted in this study. According to the interpretation, it is clear from the statistical analysis that Reading Motivation has a significant influence on Reading Comprehension, characterized by an R-squared (R^2) value of 0.615. However, what makes this study even more interesting is the role of Online Humorous Reading Content as a moderating variable.

This content effectively affects the correlation between Reading Motivation and Reading Comprehension. Hence, the use of humor in reading content can help break the rigidity of learning and broaden students' understanding of various genres of literature. Apart from that, Online Humorous Reading Content adding a dimension of student engagement in learning. It demonstrates that it is not only improving Reading Comprehension, but also boosting pupils overall Reading Motivation.

With these benefits in mind, however, it is crucial for educators to incorporate Online Humorous Reading Content into their curriculum. This addition is not only to improve reading comprehension, but also to create an engaging, motivating and rewarding learning experience for students. Besides, the effective use of online humor reading content also depends on the teacher's ability to manage and direct the discussion properly. Consequently, it is important to treat Online Humorous Reading Content as a learning tool that requires appropriateness and

care in its use. By ensuring that the Online Humorous Reading Content still has strong educational value and is in line with the set learning objectives, educators can create a more enjoyable and effective learning environment, and provide a more memorable and valuable learning experience for students.

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