

EXPLORING STUDENT-IDENTIFIED FACTORS AFFECTING READING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT



Oriyomi H., Sogeyinbo, MEd and Adeyemi Abiodun, Adeyinka, PhD
Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

<https://doi.org/10.54922/IJEHSS.2025.1098>

Received: 1 September 2025/Published: 09 October 2025

ABSTRACT

This study examined the factors that affect students' achievement in English reading comprehension in selected secondary schools within Ibadan North Local Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria. The aim was to identify the major challenges students face in understanding English texts and to suggest practical ways to improve their performance. A mixed methods sequential exploratory design was used. It combines qualitative and quantitative insights to give a fuller picture of the problem. Qualitative data were collected through focus group discussions and analysed thematically. Quantitative data were then processed using SPSS, with descriptive statistics such as percentage scores and measures of central tendency. The study first involved a focus group sample of 30 students, followed by a randomly selected sample of 285 students from five secondary schools in the study area. The findings showed that personal conditions, study habits, reading habits, and home-related factors all influence reading comprehension. Among these, personal conditions, including health issues and classroom engagement, were found to be the strongest barrier, while study and reading habits had a comparatively lower effect. The study was limited to students from five schools in a single local government area, which may restrict the generalisation of the results to other settings. Unlike many studies that focus broadly on literacy or general academic achievement, this research provides a context-specific understanding of English reading comprehension challenges among Nigerian secondary school students.

Keywords: Reading comprehension, English achievement, Secondary school students, Student-identified factors, Ibadan-North Nigeria, Reading Habits.

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is a central skill for academic success and literacy development (Adora et al., 2021). In Nigeria, where English serves as the main language of instruction in secondary schools, the ability to understand texts is closely tied to students' overall performance (Muhammad, 2018). Yet, many learners continue to struggle with comprehension, which affects achievement across different subjects (Ugwu, 2022). These challenges have been linked to factors such as linguistic competence, teaching practices, socio-economic conditions, and student motivation (Tran & Duong, 2018). Exploring how these factors shape students' learning experiences is important for understanding why comprehension remains a persistent problem.

The effects of weak comprehension go beyond English lessons. Subjects such as literature, history, and science also demand strong reading skills, and students who cannot process information effectively often find themselves disadvantaged (Meinawati et al., 2022). In Ibadan North Local Government Area, Nigeria, this problem is shaped further by the diverse linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds of students (Lazarus, 2020). Limited access to learning materials, weak

instructional support, and few opportunities to practise English outside the classroom make comprehension even more difficult (Olaosebikan & Kolawole, 2023). Identifying which conditions weigh most heavily on students provides direction for designing effective support systems.

Research has shown that language proficiency plays a central role in comprehension. Students with limited vocabulary and grammar skills struggle to infer meaning and make sense of complex texts (Talebi, 2025; Selvathurai & Ismail, 2024). At the same time, teaching methods that rely heavily on memorisation may not equip learners with the strategies required for deeper interpretation (Saori, 2022; Javed et al., 2024). In addition, socio-economic conditions shape reading outcomes, as access to books, digital tools, and parental involvement varies widely (Munir et al., 2023; Georgiou & Zhang, 2023). Motivation is also a decisive factor: some students lose confidence due to repeated difficulties, while others disengage when reading materials fail to reflect their interests or cultural contexts (Akinsola & Osundiran, 2024; Moradiyousefabadi et al., 2022; Nambiar et al., 2020). Classroom conditions add another dimension, with large class sizes and poor library resources restricting opportunities for practice (Shamim & Coleman, 2018; Akinsola & Olaosebikan, 2021).

While these factors have been widely acknowledged, most existing studies approach them through predictive quantitative methods. There is still little focus on how students themselves describe the barriers they encounter in reading and how these challenges overlap in their daily learning experiences. Prior research often treats linguistic, socio-economic, and instructional issues in isolation, without examining their combined effect on comprehension. This gap limits understanding of the real difficulties students face and makes it harder to design interventions that reflect their lived realities.

This study is motivated by the need to give students a stronger voice in discussions about their academic struggles. By considering their perspectives, the research seeks to provide evidence that can guide teachers, policymakers, and curriculum developers in building strategies that respond more directly to the conditions shaping reading comprehension in Nigerian secondary schools.

1. 1. Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to explore students' perspectives on the factors influencing their achievement in English reading comprehension in selected secondary schools in Ibadan North Local Government Area. To achieve this aim, the study is guided by the following objectives:

1. To identify the challenges students perceive as affecting their English reading comprehension.
2. To examine the factors students consider most significant in influencing their reading comprehension achievement.

1.2. Research Questions

1. What challenges do students perceive as affecting their English reading comprehension?
2. Which factors do students consider most significant in influencing their reading comprehension achievement?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW: THEORETICAL ORIENTATION AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW

2. 1. Theoretical Framework: Metacognitive Theory of Reading

This study is anchored in the metacognitive theory of reading, which underscores the importance of awareness and regulation of cognitive processes in achieving reading comprehension (Ahmadi et al., 2025). Originating from Flavell's (1979) broader concept of metacognition, the theory posits that proficient readers do not passively decode text but actively monitor their understanding, evaluate their progress, and modify their strategies whenever comprehension difficulties arise. Within this framework, three interrelated components are identified: metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive regulation, and metacognitive experiences.

Metacognitive knowledge concerns the reader's understanding of their own cognitive abilities, the demands of the reading task, and the strategies that can be applied for comprehension (Samarajeewa, 2023). Metacognitive regulation, on the other hand, involves planning, monitoring, and evaluating one's reading processes (Olaskiewicz, 2023). Finally, metacognitive experiences refer to the reader's moment-to-moment awareness of whether comprehension is successful or whether a breakdown is occurring (LaBad et al., 2025).

The relevance of this theory lies in its ability to explain why many students encounter persistent difficulties in English reading comprehension. Several studies suggest that students' struggles are not limited to linguistic challenges but also stem from their inability to regulate their learning and employ corrective strategies when comprehension falters (Khasinah et al., 2024; Delgado & Salmerón, 2021). Learners with strong self-regulation are more likely to engage in adaptive strategies such as summarisation, questioning, and re-reading, thereby improving comprehension outcomes (Manik et al., 2024).

The present study aligns with this framework by focusing on students' perceptions of the barriers to comprehension. When students attribute difficulties solely to external factors such as complex vocabulary or inadequate instruction, they may be demonstrating limited self-awareness, a core component of metacognition (Rosyada-AS & Apoko, 2023). In contrast, students who acknowledge the need to develop personal strategies reflect higher metacognitive awareness and are more likely to benefit from targeted interventions (Lazarus & Anwalimhobor, 2023). Importantly, the theory also emphasises the role of instructional practices in fostering metacognitive development. Teaching methods that encourage prediction, self-questioning, and reflection strengthen students' ability to monitor comprehension (Hashmi, 2024; Syahmani et al., 2023). This highlights the dual importance of both learner agency and pedagogical approaches in shaping reading outcomes. Longpoe & Adebisi (2023) demonstrate how individualised cognitive skill instruction supported by parents and educators improves retention and comprehension, underscoring the combined influence of home and school conditions on academic achievement.

2. 2. Linguistic and Cognitive Barriers to Reading Comprehension

A substantial body of literature identifies linguistic limitations as primary obstacles to comprehension. Ifeanyichukwu et al. (2019), in a study of Nigerian secondary schools, found that inadequate vocabulary knowledge, weak grammatical competence, and poor decoding skills were major barriers to comprehension. Similarly, Leboho et al. (2024) observed that complex sentence structures and the prevalence of unfamiliar words hindered students' ability to derive meaning from texts. These findings reinforce the argument that a lack of sufficient exposure to English vocabulary continues to limit comprehension among learners in multilingual contexts.

Beyond vocabulary and grammar, cognitive skills also play a crucial role. Students who are unable to integrate background knowledge, infer meaning, or evaluate information critically often struggle to construct coherent interpretations of texts. The metacognitive theory provides explanatory power here, as it situates these struggles within broader issues of self-monitoring and cognitive regulation. Thus, linguistic limitations and weak cognitive engagement often operate in tandem, compounding students' reading difficulties.

2. 3. Resource-Related and Environmental Influences

Another recurring theme in the literature is the impact of school and home environments on reading comprehension. Sholihah (2013) reported significant disparities between students in urban and rural schools, largely due to unequal access to reading materials, libraries, and instructional support. Students in under-resourced environments had fewer opportunities for independent reading and thus displayed weaker comprehension skills.

At the household level, socio-economic status and parental involvement are critical. Wang et al. (2023) demonstrated that children from higher-income families with educated parents engaged more frequently in literacy-related activities outside school, which translated into stronger comprehension abilities. By contrast, students from lower-income households had limited access to books and digital resources, restricting their exposure to English and weakening their comprehension development. Together, these studies underscore that comprehension outcomes are not solely determined by individual effort but are deeply shaped by structural and environmental conditions.

2. 4. Psychological and Motivational Factors

Motivation and affective factors also significantly influence students' engagement with reading. Omoba (2020), in a survey of secondary school students in southwestern Nigeria, found that lack of interest and low self-confidence were key obstacles to effective reading. Many students reported experiencing anxiety when confronted with comprehension tasks, which in turn led to avoidance behaviours and reduced practice. Such patterns are consistent with findings from metacognitive research, which highlights the importance of motivation and self-belief in activating self-regulatory strategies (Subramaniam et al., 2024).

When students lack confidence, they are less likely to persist with challenging texts or to experiment with new comprehension strategies. Conversely, those with high motivation tend to develop resilience and are more willing to employ metacognitive approaches to resolve comprehension problems. This suggests that interventions must address not only cognitive skills but also students' attitudes, beliefs, and emotional engagement with reading.

2.5. Instructional Methods and School Resources

Several studies point to instructional practices and school resources as central to shaping comprehension outcomes. Shapaka (2024) found that interactive, student-centred teaching strategies, such as group discussions, summarisation exercises, and teacher-led questioning, were strongly associated with improved comprehension. Students perceived these methods as supportive because they actively engaged them in meaning-making, rather than relying solely on rote memorisation. Traditional teacher-dominated approaches, by contrast, were regarded as less effective in promoting deep comprehension.

William et al. (2025) further emphasised the importance of school resources, showing that schools with well-stocked libraries, smaller class sizes, and adequate instructional materials fostered better comprehension performance. Access to diverse reading materials exposed students to different genres, vocabulary, and sentence structures, which expanded their comprehension capabilities. These findings reinforce the argument that both pedagogy and institutional resources must be considered when addressing comprehension challenges.

2.6. Synthesis and Research Gap

Taken together, the reviewed studies reveal that reading comprehension is shaped by a complex interaction of factors: linguistic proficiency, cognitive regulation, motivation, instructional methods, and environmental resources. However, much of the existing literature has relied heavily on teacher evaluations, researcher observations, or test-based performance data, often neglecting the voices of students themselves. Few studies systematically investigate how learners interpret their own challenges, which strategies they perceive as effective, and what external factors they believe most constrain their comprehension.

This gap is significant because students' self-perceptions are directly linked to their metacognitive awareness which is a determinant of how they engage with and regulate their reading processes. By foregrounding students' perspectives, the present study not only builds on the theoretical insights of metacognitive theory but also extends empirical work on reading comprehension by situating learners' voices at the centre of analysis. This approach provides a richer, context-sensitive understanding of comprehension difficulties, offering insights that can inform both instructional practices and policy interventions.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The study employed a mixed methods design (QUAL → quan) that followed a sequential exploratory approach. This choice of design allowed the inquiry to begin with an in depth exploration of students' experiences, ensuring that the voices of participants shaped the direction of the study. The subsequent quantitative phase provided a means of confirming patterns that emerged during the qualitative phase and assessing their wider relevance among a larger sample. The combination of these two phases produced a more comprehensive perspective on the factors influencing students' reading comprehension achievement. The first phase focused on qualitative data collection. A focus group discussion was conducted with students drawn from the study schools. The discussion sought to capture how students described their experiences with reading comprehension, the challenges they faced, and the strategies they believed supported or hindered their learning. This stage was intended to uncover themes that might not easily be identified through structured survey questions. The findings from this stage provided the basis for the development of the questionnaire used in the second phase. The second phase involved quantitative data collection through structured questionnaires. The questionnaires measured the extent of themes identified earlier. The two phases were integrated during interpretation, where qualitative insights were compared with statistical results. This process ensured that the findings reflected both lived experiences and wider trends, strengthening the overall validity of the study.

3.2. Locale of the Study

The target population for this study comprised all Senior Secondary School (SSS) 2 students in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State. This group was selected because students at this level had been exposed to English reading comprehension for at least a year and were not under the immediate pressure of external examinations. Given the large number of schools in the area, a representative sample was selected for feasibility and accuracy.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

A simple random sampling technique was used to select five schools out of the 42 secondary schools in Ibadan North Local Government Area. From each of the selected schools, one intact Senior Secondary School (SSS) 2 class was included in the study. This level was considered most appropriate because SSS 2 students had adequate exposure to reading comprehension while not being constrained by terminal examinations, unlike SSS 3. The total number of students across the selected classes was 285, which became the final sample for the quantitative phase. This number was adequate because, according to Sathyanarayana et al. (2024), sample sizes above 200 are generally sufficient for educational research where the goal is to identify patterns and relationships among variables with reasonable confidence. Thus, the sample ensured representativeness while remaining manageable for analysis. For the qualitative phase, 30 students were purposely selected to take part in the Focus Group Discussions. The inclusion criteria required that the students must be in SSS 2, be regular in school attendance, and be willing to share their experiences on reading comprehension. These conditions ensured that the discussions were guided by students who were directly involved in learning English at this level and could provide practical insights into the challenges they encountered.

3.4 Research Instruments

The study utilised two instruments: a focus group discussion (FGD) guide and a questionnaire designed to measure students' perceptions of factors influencing their achievement in reading comprehension. The FGD guide was developed to generate qualitative insights from English language teachers regarding the challenges students face. To ensure its appropriateness, the guide underwent both face and content validation by faculty members of the Language Unit in the Department of Arts and Social Science Education, University of Ibadan. Their expert feedback helped refine the clarity, relevance, and sequencing of the questions.

The questionnaire, titled *Questionnaire on Factors Predicting Achievement in English Reading Comprehension for Students*, was self-developed from themes and factors identified during the qualitative phase. It was structured into two sections. Section A captured demographic information such as gender, age, and school type. Section B contained items measuring factors influencing achievement in English reading comprehension using a four-point Likert scale ranging from 4 = great extent to 1 = never. The content and face validity of the questionnaire were reviewed and approved by the research supervisor and other lecturers in the department.

To establish reliability, the instrument was pilot-tested with 30 students drawn from a secondary school outside Ibadan North Local Government Area. This trial run was necessary to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. Data from the pilot test were analysed using the Cronbach Alpha method, which is widely recommended for attitudinal and perception-based questionnaires. The analysis produced a reliability coefficient of 0.84, which exceeds the

commonly accepted minimum threshold of 0.70, indicating that the instrument had high reliability for the study.

3.6. Method of Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data from the Focus Group Discussions, allowing for the identification of key themes related to students' reading comprehension challenges and perceived influencing factors. The quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires were analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, percentage scores, mean, and standard deviation. This approach provided a structured analysis of students' responses, allowing for meaningful interpretation of the findings.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Research Question 1: What challenges do students perceive as affecting their English reading comprehension?

The analysis of the focus group discussions revealed four overarching themes that capture the challenges students face in developing English reading comprehension. These are personal conditions, study habits, reading habits, and home-related factors. Within each theme, clusters of challenges emerged, supported by significant student statements. Table 1 provides a summary of the themes, clusters, and representative quotations, which are then discussed in detail.

Table 1. Themes, Clusters, and Representative Student Statements on Challenges in English Reading Comprehension

Theme	Clusters	Representative Statements
Personal conditions	Physical limitations, fatigue, hunger	"Some of us have a hard time comprehending because we read on an empty stomach... some can't even see what we are reading properly." (Students 18, 21, 27).
Study habits	Irregular study routines, exam-driven learning	"We get bored when the book is lengthy... we most of the time concentrate on reading when the exam is approaching." (Students 18, 21, 27).
Reading habits	Laziness, distraction, reliance on translation	"I personally find it difficult to read where there is the slightest distraction, whether it is at home or in school." (Student 1).
Home-related factors	Household chores, parental involvement	"Some of us here, our parents, come back late from work... we are always left with numerous house chores, and as a result, we have limited time to read." (Students 18, 19, 22, 29).

4.1.2. Personal Conditions

Students frequently highlighted personal conditions, such as poor eyesight, hunger, and fatigue, as direct obstacles to effective reading comprehension. One participant explained: "*Some of us have*

a hard time comprehending because we read on an empty stomach... some among us would have slept off half way into reading, while some of us can't even see what we are reading properly" (Students 18, 21, 27). These experiences reflect how physiological and health-related challenges affect concentration and comprehension, echoing findings by Kampylafka et al. (2023), who observed that physical discomforts such as vision difficulties and hunger significantly impair students' ability to engage with texts.

Additionally, participants stressed the importance of teachers recognizing individual differences and adapting classroom practices to accommodate weaker learners. As one student noted: *"Our teachers must recognise individual differences because the rates of comprehension are different between two individuals"* (Student 11, 13, 16). This calls for responsive pedagogy aligns with Busa & Chung (2024), who emphasised that teacher-centred approaches exacerbate reading difficulties when individual needs are ignored. The findings thus suggest that personal conditions cannot be separated from instructional responsiveness, highlighting the need for inclusive pedagogical strategies.

4.1.3. Study Habits

Many admitted to studying only in preparation for examinations or tests, describing themselves as unmotivated to engage with reading tasks outside assessment periods. As one participant explained: *"We get bored when the book is lengthy and we most times concentrate on reading when the exam is approaching"* (Students 18, 21, 27). Others highlighted the influence of economic pressures, with some students too burdened to study at home: *"Because of the economic situation of the country, many of us are fixed for the period of the day and have less time to gloss over things that were taught at school"* (Student 25).

These patterns suggest that comprehension outcomes are closely tied to students' reading strategies and motivation, supporting Hilmi (2024), who found that effective study routines and intrinsic motivation enhance comprehension outcomes. Conversely, the findings also reveal the contextual reality of Nigerian students, where socioeconomic hardship constrains study time. This contrasts with evidence from Pido & Sujitno (2022), who emphasised that digital distractions rather than economic strain were more detrimental to reading practices in their context. Thus, while poor study habits are a common barrier across contexts, their underlying causes may differ significantly.

Students also expressed that creative teaching approaches, such as breaking texts into rhymes or poems, could make reading more engaging: *"Teachers can break down text into poetry and rhymes because music is good for comprehension"* (Student 25). This suggestion underscores the role of pedagogy in shaping study habits, supporting the argument of Banditvilai (2020) that structured and creative instructional strategies strengthen comprehension.

4.1.4. Reading Habits

The students further identified specific reading habits that hinder their comprehension. Several admitted to laziness or lack of interest in reading novels and comprehension passages: *"As for me, I am kind of lazy to read; especially novels and comprehension passages. They are just always boring"* (Student 5). Others complained of difficulty sustaining attention in noisy or distracting environments: *"I personally find it difficult to read where there is the slightest distraction, whether it is at home or in school"* (Student 1).

Interestingly, some students described using translation into their mother tongue as a useful coping strategy: *"Teacher tells us to translate to our mother tongue, which in turn, helps us to understand*

what has been read in English language” (Students 5, 8, 11, 13, 17, 18, 19, 22, 29, 30). Others reported rereading passages and using dictionaries to clarify difficult words: *“After reading books, we are told to explain the passage, then we go to the questions. We are always asked to read a second time or use a dictionary to check for difficult words”* (Student 27).

These accounts highlight the dual role of reading habits: while poor habits such as procrastination or disinterest reduce comprehension, compensatory strategies like translation and rereading can improve it. This supports the findings of Pada (2024), who argued that the adoption of strategic reading behaviours facilitates comprehension even among students with low initial proficiency. However, it also resonates with Jean-Baptiste et al. (2022), who warned that reliance on the mother tongue may interfere with English reading development, as cross-linguistic influence can sometimes impede rather than aid comprehension.

4.1.5. Home-Related Factors

The final theme relates to the home environment. Many students reported that parental involvement, or lack thereof, significantly affected their reading practices. While some described supportive parents who encouraged reading during daily chores, others highlighted the constraints of excessive household responsibilities. One participant shared: *“Even when my mother is washing the dishes, she asks me to come read beside her when home. Some parents are not well read, but desire that their children do go to school. These parents go as far as getting extra lesson teachers. They have duties of monitoring to do”* (Student 17). Conversely, others expressed frustration: *“Some of us here, our parents come back late from work... we are always left with numerous house chores, and as a result, we have limited time to read. Even with this limited time, we are distracted as our parents call us at intervals to still send us on errands”* (Students 18, 19, 22, 29).

These findings highlight the importance of home support in shaping reading outcomes. Students with parents who actively encourage reading reported more positive engagement, aligning with Pada (2024), who observed that parental monitoring strengthens comprehension development. At the same time, the accounts highlight structural inequalities, as students from economically disadvantaged families bear heavier domestic workloads that interfere with learning. This resonates with the argument of Georgiou & Zhang (2023) that socioeconomic background, rather than ability alone, determines students’ exposure to and practice with reading.

4.1.6. Synthesis of Findings

Taken together, the findings reveal that challenges to English reading comprehension are multidimensional, arising from personal, behavioural, and environmental conditions. While personal conditions such as hunger and fatigue hinder focus, study and reading habits reflect students’ motivational patterns and their coping strategies in learning. Home-related factors further highlight the structural constraints students face, where parental involvement can either enhance or impede reading outcomes.

Mvundura & Svongoro (2021) provided evidence for the importance of effective teaching strategies and classroom environment, showing that task-based instruction to be facilitated by instructors, parents or peers, strengthens reading comprehension and higher-order thinking skills. This aligns with this research recommendation for differentiated instruction and curriculum delivery improvements. These findings suggest that interventions should not focus solely on pedagogy but should adopt a holistic approach, addressing health, home support, and socio-economic realities alongside classroom instruction.

4.2. Research Question 2: What factors do students consider most significant in influencing their reading comprehension achievement.

Table 2. The factors students consider most significant in influencing their reading comprehension achievement.

S/N	ITEMS	Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Little Extent	Never	Mean	SD	Ranks
1	Personal Condition	17.0 %	25.0%	33.0 %	25.0 %	3.12	0.82	1st
2	Study Habits	19.0 %	30.0%	29.0 %	22.0 %	2.62	0.11	5th
3	Reading Habits	17.1 %	29.6%	30.7 %	22.7 %	2.96	1.21	4th
4	Home-Related Factor	18.0 %	25.3%	33.7 %	23.0 %	3.00	0.98	3rd
5	School Related Factor	13.1 %	26.4%	37.1 %	23.3 %	3.04	1.00	2nd

Note: Weighted mean = 2.95 Threshold= 2.50

The analysis of the data in table 2 showed that personal conditions emerged as the most significant factor influencing students' reading comprehension achievement, with a mean score of 3.12. This indicates that students' health, emotional state, and psychological readiness play a central role in their ability to process and understand texts. Such a finding is consistent with Wani & Ismail (2024), who reported that students' physical and emotional well-being strongly affects their capacity to retain information and perform reading tasks effectively. When students are fatigued, stressed, or dealing with health-related issues, their comprehension tends to decline regardless of the quality of instruction or available resources. This demonstrates that learning outcomes cannot be separated from the personal realities that students face in and outside the classroom.

School-related factors were ranked as the second most influential with a mean score of 3.04. The emphasis students placed on these factors highlights the importance of teacher quality, classroom environment, and instructional methods in shaping comprehension skills. This aligns with Villarente & Moral (2024), who argued that supportive school settings, particularly where teaching is interactive and structured, contribute significantly to reading success. Well-trained teachers who use varied instructional strategies can help students develop comprehension strategies, while poor teaching quality or disorganized learning environments often weaken performance. Nevertheless, this view has been questioned by Yang et al. (2018), who suggested that intrinsic motivation and self-directed learning may play a stronger role than school resources or instructional methods. This tension in the literature suggests that while external school-related influences are important, they cannot be separated from the individual's internal drive to learn.

Home-related factors followed closely with a mean score of 3.00. This finding shows that family support, parental involvement, and home literacy environments continue to be strong influences on reading comprehension. The home environment provides the first exposure to language, and where reading materials and parental encouragement are present, students are more likely to succeed. Davidovitch (2023) similarly observed that home circumstances often have a more immediate and direct effect on students' learning outcomes than individual study routines, especially in communities where socio-economic conditions shape access to educational resources. This underscores the view that educational achievement is a shared responsibility between schools and families.

Reading habits were ranked fourth with a mean score of 2.96. Although the score is above the decision mean of 2.50, it indicates that students may not fully acknowledge the value of personal reading routines in improving comprehension. This result appears to downplay the role of regular practice in language acquisition. Adora et al. (2024), however, found that students who maintain consistent reading habits and engage actively with different forms of texts demonstrate significantly higher comprehension performance. The relatively lower rating given by students in this study could reflect a tendency to attribute difficulties more to external conditions such as home or school rather than to their own responsibility in cultivating effective habits. This suggests a gap between students' perceptions and what research identifies as a vital contributor to academic success.

The least influential factor identified was study habits, which had a mean score of 2.62. Although still above the benchmark of 2.50, this suggests that students see structured study routines and strategies as less impactful compared to personal and environmental conditions. This perception may be linked to limited awareness or undervaluing of the role of self-discipline, time management, and organized study methods in academic achievement. The finding, however, contrasts with the position of Adora et al. (2024), who highlighted that study habits remain a strong predictor of comprehension performance when consistently applied. Hafezi et al. (2022) *emphasised the importance of disciplined study habits and structured reading activities, establishing the need for awareness programs and opportunities for independent practice in comprehension development.* Students who dedicate time to reviewing texts, summarising content, and practicing comprehension exercises often perform better than those who rely solely on classroom instruction. The result of this study therefore indicates that while students acknowledge the presence of multiple influences on comprehension, they tend to give greater importance to personal and environmental conditions than to their own effort and engagement.

Taken together, the weighted mean of 2.95 confirms that students perceive a combination of personal, school-related, home-related, and individual factors as contributors to reading comprehension. The fact that the mean exceeds the threshold of 2.50 suggests that all identified factors are relevant, though they vary in significance. The prominence of personal and environmental conditions in these findings highlights the need for educational stakeholders to pay close attention not only to instructional practices but also to the broader contexts in which students learn. This reinforces the position of Wani & Ismail (2024) that educational outcomes should be understood within the context of health, environment, and instruction. At the same time, the relatively weaker emphasis placed on reading and study habits indicates the need for schools to

strengthen programmes that encourage independent learning and promote a culture of regular reading among students.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

This study has implications for students, teachers, parents, and policymakers concerned with improving reading comprehension. The finding that personal conditions had the strongest influence suggests that interventions should not only focus on classroom instruction but also address students' psychological, social, and emotional well-being. Programmes that provide counselling, mentoring, and support for self-confidence could therefore contribute to stronger comprehension outcomes (Danao et al., 2025).

The prominence of school-related factors highlights the importance of teacher effectiveness, curriculum delivery, and classroom environment. Professional development initiatives that equip teachers with strategies for differentiated instruction and active engagement may directly enhance comprehension skills. In addition, investing in learning materials and supportive school structures is likely to strengthen the reading culture within schools (Miftahurrohman et al., 2021).

The influence of home-related conditions indicates that the role of parents and guardians cannot be ignored. Efforts to encourage family involvement in reading, such as home reading programmes and parent-teacher collaborations, are essential for reinforcing what is taught in school.

The relatively low rating of study and reading habits shows that students may not fully appreciate the benefits of consistent reading practice and disciplined study routines. This points to the need for awareness programmes and structured opportunities for independent reading both within and outside the classroom.

Overall, the results imply that the improvement of reading comprehension requires a coordinated approach, one that combines individual support, effective teaching, family participation, and deliberate efforts to cultivate strong reading and study practices.

6. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that students' reading comprehension achievement is influenced by a range of personal, school, and home-related conditions, with personal factors emerging as the strongest. This infers that efforts to improve comprehension must extend beyond the classroom. School-related factors ranked next, pointing to the importance of teacher quality, classroom practices, and access to resources. Strengthening schools in these areas can provide students with the structure needed to improve comprehension. Home-related conditions also proved significant, showing that parental support, availability of materials, and a stable environment help shape students' reading performance. Study and reading habits received lower ratings, suggesting that many students may not yet appreciate the role of self-discipline and structured engagement with texts. This indicates the need for programs that raise awareness of how personal study strategies can improve comprehension outcomes. The findings suggest that lasting improvement in reading comprehension requires an approach that addresses personal well-being, strengthens school support, involves families, and encourages effective study and reading habits.

7. Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

REFERENCES

- [1] Adora, R., Aguilar, J., Arsua, E., Asis, M., Pereja, M., Reyes, J., & Tolentino, J. (2024). Reading comprehension and students' academic performance in English. *International Journal of Science and Research Archive*, 11(2), 1240–1247. <https://doi.org/10.30574/ijrsra.2024.11.2.0523>.
- [2] Ahmadi, M., Ismail, H., & Kabilan, M. (2025). The importance of metacognitive reading strategy awareness in reading comprehension. *English Language Teaching*, 6(10), 235. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v6n10p235>.
- [3] Akinsola, I. T., & Olaosebikan, B. O. (2021). Content adequacy of oral literature in selected English studies textbooks: Implications for inculcating moral values into in-school adolescents. *International Journal of Social Learning (IJSL)*, 1(3), 250-259.
- [4] Akinsola, I. T., & Osundiran, E. E. (2024). Writing Anxiety, Knowledge of and Attitude to Yoruba Orthography as Correlates of Secondary Students' Achievements in Yoruba Essay Writing. *Journal of Educational Sciences*, 547-558.
- [5] Banditvilai, C. (2020). The effectiveness of reading strategies on reading comprehension. *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity*, 46-50. <https://doi.org/10.18178/ijssh.2020.V10.1012Boon>.
- [6] Busa, J. & Chung, S.-J. (2021). Engaging readers through choice: Encouraging a lifelong love of reading. *IASL Annual Conference Proceedings*. <https://doi.org/10.29173/iasl7894>.
- [7] Danao, A. B., Enriquez, M. E. ., Montejo, K. B., Patricio, A., Sonido, M. W., & Ador, Z. . (2025). Digital natives: A case study exploring the digital literacy gaps in a Rural High School. *Journal of Social, Humanity, and Education*, 5(2), 143–158. <https://doi.org/10.35912/jshe.v5i2.2247>
- [8] Davidovitch, N. (2023). Social factors influencing students' reading habits. *African Educational Research Journal*, 11, 351-359. <https://doi.org/10.30918/AERJ.113.23.057>
- [9] Dibdyaningsih, H., Rifai, M., & MS, S. (2024). Analysis of students' difficulties in developing English listening skills: A case study of SMA 3 Yogyakarta. *Journal of Pedagogi*, 1(1), 37–43. <https://doi.org/10.62872/0bxxdb46>.
- [10] Delgado, P., & Salmerón, L. (2021). The inattentive on-screen reading: Reading medium affects attention and reading comprehension under time pressure. *Learning and Instruction*, 71, 101396. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2020.101396>
- [11] Flavell, J. H. (1976). Metacognitive aspects of problem solving. R L. B. Resnick (Ed.), *The nature of intelligence* (pp. 231-236). Erlbaum.
- [12] Forte, S., & Salamah, M. (2022). Importance of home in the literacy process of child. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*, 36(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajess/2022/v36i1766>
- [13] Georgiou, G., & Zhang, L. (2023). The role of home literacy environment in reading and spelling beyond the early grades. *Preschool and Primary Education*, 12. <https://doi.org/10.12681/ppej.35467>.

- [14] Hafezi, Akram, & Samira Etemadinia. "Investigating the Relationship Between Homework and Academic Achievement in Elementary Students." *Journal of Social, Humanity, and Education*, vol. 2, no. 3, 11 May. 2022, pp. 185-195, doi:[10.35912/jshe.v2i3.813](https://doi.org/10.35912/jshe.v2i3.813)
- [15] Hashmi, S. (2024). The effects of metacognitive strategies on reading comprehension of ESL students. *Global Educational Studies Review*, IX, 1– 12.
[https://doi.org/10.31703/gesr.2024\(IX-I\).01](https://doi.org/10.31703/gesr.2024(IX-I).01).
- [16] Hilmi, M. (2024). The influence of reading strategies on comprehension skills in English language learners. *MASALIQ*, 5, 37-49.
<https://doi.org/10.58578/masaliq.v5i1.4295>
- [17] Ifeanyichukwu, A., Kadiri, G., & Ekwueme, J. (2019). Investigating the impediments to reading comprehension in junior secondary schools: Evidence from JSSII students in Nsukka Metropolis. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 10, 143. <https://doi.org/10.7575/aiall.v10n.2p.143>.
- [18] Javed, A., Bagum, M., Iqbal, K., & Qaswar, A. (2024). Students' perceived role of rote learning in vocabulary learning strategies at secondary level. *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 12(2).
<https://doi.org/10.52131/pjhss.2024.v12i2.2118>.
- [19] Jean-Baptiste, M. B., Sanfo, & Soubeiga, A.-K., & Sanoh, Y. (2022). Linguistic diversity and students' reading achievements in developing countries: A hierarchical linear model analysis using PISA-D data. *Educational Role of Language Journal*, 2022- 1, 20-31. <https://doi.org/10.36534/erlj.2022.01.02>
- [20] Kampylafka, C., Polychroni, F., & Antoniou, A.-S. (2023). Primary school students with reading comprehension difficulties and students with learning disabilities: Exploring their goal orientations, classroom goal structures, and self-regulated learning strategies. *Behavioral Sciences*, 13, 78. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs13020078>
- [21] Khasinah, S., Akmal, S., Izza, K., Amiruddin, A., & Farhan, M. (2024). Examining students' linguistic and non-linguistic speaking issues and coping mechanisms in English presentations. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 11, 1290– 1315.
<https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v11i3.30709>
- [22] LaBad, R., Jerez, M., & Yolim, D. (2025). Effects of metacognitive awareness on reading comprehension in English among senior high school students. 01, 65–72.
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14652146>.
- [23] Lazarus, K. (2020). Socio-demographic factors affecting reading comprehension achievement among secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Nigeria. *IAFOR Journal of Education*, 8(1), 145–158. <https://doi.org/10.22492/ije.8.1.09>.
- [24] Lazarus, K., & Anwalimhobor, B. (2023). Metacognitive awareness of reading strategies as predictors of reading comprehension achievement among students with learning disabilities in Nigeria. *IJDS Indonesian Journal of Disability Studies*, 10. <https://doi.org/10.21776/ub.ijds.2023.010.01.07>.
- [25] Leboho, G., Olifant, F., & Cekiso, M. (2024). Challenges faced by high school learners in English first additional language reading comprehension in the Soshanguve Township, South Africa. *E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences*, 3280-3290. <https://doi.org/10.38159/ehass.202451647>

- [26] Li, J. (2024). Exploring factors influencing children's learning of English as a second language. *Journal of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences*, 42,743–749. <https://doi.org/10.54097/7w7etf55>.
- [27] Longpoe, P. K., & Adebisi, R. O. (2023). Cognitive skill instruction on enhancing retention in pupils with mild intellectual disability. *Journal of Social, Humanity, and Education*, 3(4), 297–306.
- [28] Mahwasane, N., & Mudzielwana, N. P. (2016). Challenges of students in accessing information in the library: A brief review. *Journal of Communication*, 7,216–221. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0976691X.2016.11884900>.
- [29] Manik, K., Husein, R., Nasution, J., Sembiring, Y., & Yunanda, F. (2024). Metacognitive reading strategies to enhance students' reading comprehension in the first Harry Potter novel's synopsis "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone (2001)" in tutoring of Official School at Master Plato College (MPC). *The Eastasouth Journal of Learning and Educations*, 2, 31–42. <https://doi.org/10.58812/esle.v2i01.204>
- [30] Meinawati, E., Alawiyah, S., Setianingrum, H., Purwaningrum, P., & Chodidjah, C. (2022). Increasing English reading comprehension through literary text extensive reading program. *VELES Voices of English Language Education Society*, 6(1), 41– 51. <https://doi.org/10.29408/veles.v6i1.4986>
- [31] Miftahurrohman, U. U., Hariri, H., & Rini, R., & Rohmatillah. (2021). Exemplary leadership practices in early childhood education in preparing the golden generations for Indonesia, *Journal of Social, Humanity, and Education*, 1(4), 253–268.
- [32] Moradiyousefabadi, M., Ghasemnezhad, T., & Akbarie, Y. (2022). The effect of anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence in language learners' reading proficiency. *NeuroQuantology*, 20, 16–4966. <https://doi.org/10.48047/NQ.2022.20.16.NQ880504>
- [33] Muhammad, H. (2018). Teaching and learning English language in Nigerian schools: Importance and challenges. *Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies*, 3(1), 10. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.tecs.20180301.13>.
- [34] Munir, J., Faiza, M., & Daud, S. (2023). The impact of socio-economic status on academic achievement. *Journal of Social Sciences Review*, 3(2), 695–705. <https://doi.org/10.54183/jssr.v3i2.308>.
- [35] Mvundura, E., & Svongoro, P. (2021). The significance of tasks in second language learning: The case of Africa University in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Social, Humanity, and Education*, 1(4), 297–307.
- [36] Nambiar, R. M. K., Ibrahim, N., Hashim, R., Mohammad Yasin, R., Azman, H., Yusof, N., Ramli, R., & [37] Mustafa, R. (2020). Impact of local culture-based reading materials on students' skill development and confidence in English. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 8(2), 445–453. <https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2020.080215>.
- [38] Olaosebikan, B., & Kolawole, C. O. O. (2023). English language teachers' classroom practices in Ibadan, Nigeria. *International Journal of Social Learning (IJSLS)*, 3(3), 261–280. <https://doi.org/10.47134/ijsl.v3i3.88>.
- [39] Olaskiewicz, K. (2023). Metacognitive regulation: Implications for reading and literacy. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.11422.24640>.
- [40] Omoba, F. (2020). Self-identification as predictor of pleasure reading among students of university-owned senior secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria. *PUSTABIBLIA*

- Journal of Library and Information Science*, 10, 42-56.
<https://doi.org/10.17509/edulib.v10i1.23810>.
- [41] Pada, J. (2024). Impact of parental involvement on students' reading proficiency. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 2.
<https://doi.org/10.69569/jip.2024.0218>
- [42] Pido, N. & Sujitno, F. (2022). The effect of digital technology on students' reading behavior. *Journal of English Teaching and Linguistic Issues*, 1, 81-93.
<https://doi.org/10.57153/jetli.v1i2.210>
- [43] Rosyada-AS, A., & Apoko, T. (2023). Investigating English vocabulary difficulties and its learning strategies of lower secondary school students. *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*, 11, 489. <https://doi.org/10.33394/jollt.v11i3.8404>.
- [44] Sathyanarayana, S. S., Pushpa, B. V., & Harsha, D. (2024). Selecting the right sample size: Methods and considerations for social science researchers. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, 13(7), 152–167. <https://doi.org/10.35629/8028-1307152167>
- [45] Saori, S. (2022). Teaching reading comprehension by using some methods in senior high schools. *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*, 10(1), 66.
<https://doi.org/10.33394/jollt.v10i1.4638>.
- [46] Samarajeewa, C. (2023). Metacognition in reading comprehension. 13, 38.
<https://doi.org/10.46360/globus.edu.220232005>
- [47] Selvathurai, S., & Ismail, H. (2024). Second language learners' difficulties in reading comprehension: A review. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 13(4). <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v13-i4/23972>
- [48] Shapaka, R. (2024). The effect of teachers' instructional strategies on the teaching of reading comprehension in English as a second language. *European Journal of English Language Teaching*, 9. <https://doi.org/10.46827/ejel.v9i4.5601>
- [49] Shamim, F., & Coleman, H. (2018). Large-sized classes. In S. Abrar-ul-Hassan (Vol. Ed.), & J. I. Lontas (Gen. Ed.), *Teaching English as an International Language (Vol. 1, The TESOL Encyclopedia of English Language Teaching)*. John Wiley & Sons.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118784235.eelt0633>.
- [50] Sholihah, L. (2013). Comparative study on reading comprehension between students of junior high schools in city and rural areas. *Premise Journal*, 2.
<https://doi.org/10.24127/pj.v2i2.690>
- [51] Subramaniam, S., Komarudin, N., Ashiquin, N., C. Alih, N., Fakhruddin, S., Bahasa, A., Teknologi, U., and Alam, S. (2024). Investigating the influence of metacognitive awareness in academic reading. *Asian Journal of Research in Education and Social Sciences*, 6. <https://doi.org/10.55057/ajress.2024.6.1.13>.
- [52] Syahmani, S., Almubarak, A., and Azizah, N. (2023). Improving students' metacognitive skills and learning outcomes through the application of task-based learning model of direct instruction. *Vidya Karya*, 38(1).
<https://doi.org/10.20527/jvk.v38i1.13649>
- [53] Talebi, S. H. (2015). Linguistic proficiency and strategies on reading performance in English. *International Journal of Instruction*, 8(1), 47–60.
<https://doi.org/10.12973/iji.2015.814a>

- [54] ran, T., & Duong, T. (2018). The difficulties in ESP reading comprehension encountered by English-major students. *VNU Journal of Foreign Studies*, 34. <https://doi.org/10.25073/2525-2445/vnufs.4253>
- [55] Ugwu, E. (2022). Classroom process and causes of worsening high school students' performance in Literature-in-English in Nigeria. *African Journal of Teacher Education*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.21083/ajote.v10i1.6637>.
- [56] Villarente, M., & Moral, R. (2024). Teaching strategies and their effect on reading comprehension performance of junior high school students in an inclusive classroom setting. *EIKI Journal of Effective Teaching Methods*, 2, 134-149. <https://doi.org/10.59652/jetm.v2i1.138>
- [57] Wang, Q., Ma, M., Huang, Y., Wang, X., and Wang, T. (2023). Influence of parents' education and home literacy environment on reading interest of deaf children. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 46, 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9817.12421>.
- [58] Wani, E., & Ismail, H. (2024). The effects of reading habits on academic performance among students in an ESL classroom: A literature review paper. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v13-i1/20207>
- [59] William, B., Muhammed, T., & Olamide, Q. (2025). Impact of learning resources and school facilities on literacy skills in rural and urban Philippine schools. Available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/388217913_Impact_of_Learning_Resources_and_School_Facilities_on_Literacy_Skills_in_Rural_and_Urban_Philippine_Schools.
- [60] Yang, G., Badri, M., Rashedi, A., and Almazroui, K. (2018). The role of reading motivation, self-efficacy, and home influence in students' literacy achievement: A preliminary examination of fourth graders in Abu Dhabi. *Large-scale Assessments in Education*, 6, 10. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40536-018-0063-0>