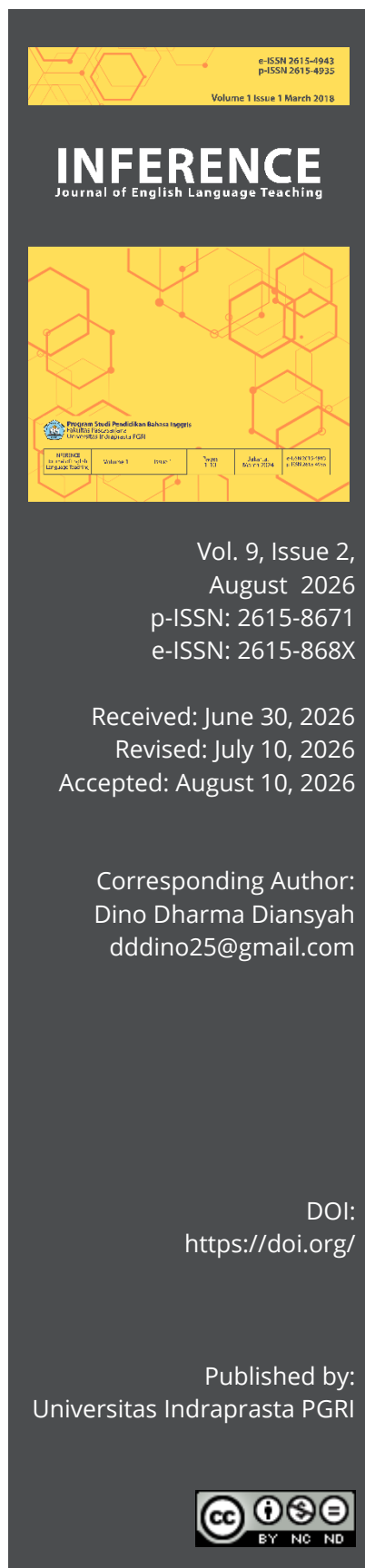




RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE CORRELATION OF SELF-EFFICACY AND LEARNING MOTIVATION WITH STUDENTS' ENGLISH READING COMPREHENSION

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Abstract: Reading comprehension is a fundamental component of English language learning. However, many students continue to face challenges in comprehending English texts. This study aimed to investigate the correlation between self-efficacy and students' English reading comprehension and to examine the correlation between learning motivation and students' English reading comprehension. The population of this study consisted of eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Kedungwuni, with 36 students selected as the research sample. A quantitative correlational design was employed. Data were collected through self-efficacy and learning motivation questionnaires and a reading comprehension test. The collected data were analyzed using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation technique after meeting the assumptions of normality and linearity. The findings revealed significant positive correlations between self-efficacy and reading comprehension ($r = .817$, $p < .001$) and between learning motivation and reading comprehension ($r = .782$, $p < .001$). Self-efficacy showed a stronger correlation with students' English reading comprehension than learning motivation. The results emphasize the important role of psychological variables in supporting reading success. Future studies may involve larger samples and different educational contexts.

Keywords: self-efficacy; learning motivation; reading comprehension

KORELASI EFIKASI DIRI DAN MOTIVASI BELAJAR DENGAN PEMAHAMAN MEMBACA BAHASA INGGRIS SISWA

Abstrak: Pemahaman membaca merupakan salah satu keterampilan yang sangat penting dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Meskipun demikian, banyak siswa masih menghadapi kendala dalam memahami teks berbahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui korelasi antara efikasi diri dengan pemahaman membaca bahasa Inggris siswa serta mengetahui korelasi antara motivasi belajar dengan pemahaman membaca bahasa Inggris siswa. Populasi penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas VIII SMP Negeri 1 Kedungwuni, dengan sampel penelitian sebanyak 36 siswa kelas VIII-A. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kuantitatif korelasional. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner efikasi diri, kuesioner motivasi belajar, dan tes pemahaman membaca. Data dianalisis menggunakan Korelasi Pearson Product-Moment setelah memenuhi asumsi normalitas dan linearitas. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa efikasi diri memiliki korelasi positif dan signifikan dengan pemahaman membaca ($r = 0,817$; $p < 0,001$). Selain itu, motivasi belajar juga memiliki korelasi positif dan signifikan dengan pemahaman membaca ($r = 0,782$; $p < 0,001$). Efikasi diri menunjukkan korelasi yang lebih kuat dibandingkan motivasi belajar terhadap pemahaman membaca siswa.

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Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya faktor-faktor psikologis dalam mendukung keberhasilan membaca. Penelitian selanjutnya dapat melibatkan sampel yang lebih besar dan konteks pendidikan yang berbeda.

Kata kunci: efikasi diri; motivasi belajar; pemahaman membaca

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension plays an important role in English language learning because it enables students to understand written texts, access information, and further develop their language abilities. Referring to Grabe's interactive and cognitive theory of reading, Kusumarasyati (2022) explains that reading comprehension is an active process in which readers construct meaning through interaction between textual information and their prior knowledge. Therefore, reading comprehension is particularly important at the junior high school level, where students are expected to develop the ability to understand and interpret various types of texts. Although reading comprehension is essential, a considerable number of students continue to encounter challenges when interpreting English texts. They often struggle to identify main ideas, understand unfamiliar vocabulary, make inferences, and interpret information presented in a text. Recent studies have reported that EFL learners still encounter challenges in comprehending English texts, especially in vocabulary mastery and text understanding (Tiwery & Tiwery, 2024).

Among the factors influencing reading comprehension, self-efficacy and learning motivation have received considerable attention in educational research. According to Basileo et al. (2024), who adopted Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory, self-efficacy describes students' confidence in their ability to accomplish academic tasks and attain their learning objectives. Students with stronger self-efficacy are generally more willing to face academic challenges with confidence, persistence, and sustained effort, whereas those with lower self-efficacy are more likely to hesitate, avoid demanding tasks, and question their own capabilities. In addition, Basileo et al. (2024) highlighted that self-efficacy is an important factor influencing students' academic achievement, learning motivation, and active participation in educational activities. Consequently, self-efficacy is expected to influence students' reading comprehension performance.

Learning motivation is another important factor that may affect students' reading achievement. According to Alturki and Aldraiweesh (2024), drawing on Self-Determination Theory, students' motivation is influenced by the fulfillment of their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Motivated students are more likely to participate actively in learning activities, invest effort in completing academic tasks, and maintain their interest in learning. In reading activities, students with higher learning motivation tend to engage more frequently with texts and demonstrate greater willingness to improve their reading skills. Therefore, learning motivation is expected to contribute positively to students' reading comprehension achievement.

Previous studies have reported positive relationships between self-efficacy, learning motivation, and academic achievement, including reading comprehension. Meldawati and Hamid (2023) showed that students with stronger self-efficacy generally achieved better reading performance, while Fitria et al. (2024) reported that both self-efficacy and learning motivation significantly contributed to students' English reading comprehension. These findings indicate that psychological factors play an important role in students' reading success. However, many previous studies focused on senior high school students or examined only one of the variables. Furthermore, research investigating self-efficacy and learning motivation simultaneously in relation to English reading comprehension among junior high school students remains limited. Therefore, further investigation is needed to examine the correlation of

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self-efficacy and learning motivation with students' English reading comprehension, particularly among junior high school students.

The present study seeks to enrich current research on psychological factors associated with English reading comprehension. The results are expected to provide practical guidance for English teachers in designing learning strategies that foster students' confidence and motivation during reading activities. Furthermore, the study may serve as a reference for future researchers interested in investigating similar variables in different educational settings.

Based on the background above, this study addressed the following research questions: (1) What is the correlation between self-efficacy and students' English reading comprehension? (2) What is the correlation between learning motivation and students' English reading comprehension? and (3) Which of the two variables, self-efficacy or learning motivation, demonstrates a stronger association with students' English reading comprehension? The objectives of this study were to investigate the correlation between self-efficacy and students' English reading comprehension, to investigate the correlation between learning motivation and students' English reading comprehension, and to determine which variable has a stronger correlation with reading comprehension.

The following hypotheses were proposed: (1) self-efficacy is significantly correlated with students' English reading comprehension, and (2) learning motivation is significantly correlated with students' English reading comprehension. In addition, this study compared the strength of the correlations between self-efficacy and reading comprehension and between learning motivation and reading comprehension. The study was limited to eighth-grade students of class VIII-A at SMP Negeri 1 Kedungwuni and focused on the correlation of self-efficacy and learning motivation with students' English reading comprehension.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative correlational research design to investigate the correlation of self-efficacy and learning motivation with students' English reading comprehension. The study was conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Kedungwuni on 30 April 2026. The participants were 36 eighth-grade students of class VIII-A. The sample was selected purposively based on the English teacher's recommendation regarding the suitability of the class for the research.

Data were collected using a questionnaire and a reading comprehension test. The questionnaire consisted of 20 items measured on a five-point Likert scale, comprising 10 items assessing self-efficacy and 10 items assessing learning motivation. Students' English reading comprehension was measured using a short-answer reading comprehension test consisting of 20 items based on recount texts. Before the data collection process began, the research instruments underwent a review and validation process to confirm their suitability for achieving the objectives of this study. The data were gathered during regular classroom sessions after approval had been obtained from the school principal and the English teacher.

The collected data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics. Descriptive statistics were first employed to summarize students' scores. Prior to examining the correlations among the variables, assumption testing was carried out through normality and linearity analyses. Normality was assessed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov procedure, whereas linearity analysis was applied to verify whether the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable followed a linear pattern. After the assumptions were met, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was applied to examine the relationships of self-efficacy and learning motivation with students' English reading comprehension. The level of significance used in this study was 0.05. Students' responses were treated confidentially and used solely for research purposes.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

IBM SPSS Statistics was utilized to examine the relationships among self-efficacy, learning motivation, and students' English reading comprehension. Before the correlation analysis was carried out, the data were subjected to assumption testing, including normality and linearity analyses.

Table 1. Normality Test Results

Variable	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Self-Efficacy	0.200
Learning Motivation	0.200
Reading Comprehension	0.200

The results of the Kolmogorov–Smirnov normality test indicated that all variables had significance values greater than 0.05. These results indicate that the data were normally distributed, allowing further analysis using parametric statistical techniques.

Table 2. Linearity Test Results

Relationship	Deviation from Linearity
Self-Efficacy – Reading Comprehension	0.513
Learning Motivation – Reading Comprehension	0.711

The linearity test showed that the significance values of Deviation from Linearity for both relationships were greater than 0.05. Therefore, the relationships between self-efficacy and reading comprehension as well as between learning motivation and reading comprehension were linear.

Table 3. Correlation Analysis Results

Variables	N	Pearson Correlation (r)	Sig. (2-tailed)
Self-Efficacy – Reading Comprehension	36	0.817	< 0.001
Learning Motivation – Reading Comprehension	36	0.782	< 0.001

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis indicated a strong positive relationship between self-efficacy and students' English reading comprehension ($r = .817$, $p < .001$). This indicates that students with higher levels of self-efficacy tended to achieve better reading comprehension scores. Furthermore, learning motivation also showed a strong positive correlation with students' English reading comprehension ($r = .782$, $p < .001$), suggesting that highly motivated students tended to demonstrate better reading comprehension.

The finding that self-efficacy had a strong positive correlation with students' English reading comprehension supports the concept of self-efficacy. According to Basileo et al. (2024), who applied Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory in an educational context, explained that self-efficacy represents students' confidence in carrying out academic tasks successfully and achieving their educational goals. Students who possess higher self-efficacy tend to demonstrate greater effort, persistence, and confidence when facing academic challenges. In reading activities, students with higher self-efficacy are more likely to engage actively with texts and persist when facing difficulties, which may contribute to better comprehension performance. This finding is consistent with Meldawati and Hamid (2023), who reported that learners with stronger self-efficacy demonstrated better reading comprehension and employed more effective reading strategies.

The study also found a positive relationship between learning motivation and students' English reading comprehension. Drawing on Self-Determination Theory, Alturki and Aldraiweesh (2024)

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explained that students' motivation develops through the satisfaction of their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Students with higher motivation tend to participate more actively in learning activities, invest greater effort in completing academic tasks, and maintain their interest in learning. In reading activities, motivated students are more likely to devote attention and effort to reading tasks, leading to improved comprehension outcomes. This finding also supports Fitria et al. (2024), who reported that learning motivation contributed significantly to students' English reading comprehension.

Another important finding is that self-efficacy showed a stronger correlation with reading comprehension than learning motivation. This suggests that students' belief in their capability to complete reading tasks may contribute more directly to reading achievement than motivation alone. Although motivated students are generally willing to learn, confidence in their own ability may determine how effectively they approach and complete reading tasks. Therefore, strengthening students' self-efficacy may become an important consideration for English teachers in improving reading comprehension achievement.

This study was limited to one class consisting of 36 eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Kedungwuni. Therefore, the findings may not be generalized to broader populations. Future studies are recommended to involve larger samples from different educational contexts and to investigate additional factors that may influence students' English reading comprehension.

CONCLUSIONS

The present research examined the relationships between students' self-efficacy, learning motivation, and English reading comprehension among eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Kedungwuni. The findings revealed that both self-efficacy and learning motivation had significant positive correlations with students' English reading comprehension. Self-efficacy showed a stronger correlation ($r = .817$, $p < .001$) than learning motivation ($r = .782$, $p < .001$), indicating that students' confidence in their ability to perform reading tasks may play a more influential role in reading achievement.

The significant correlation between self-efficacy, learning motivation, and reading comprehension underscores a critical shift needed in Indonesian EFL classrooms. Historically, English language instruction in Indonesia has heavily emphasized structural competence, rote memorization, and grammar-translation methods to satisfy standardized test requirements. However, these findings imply that cognitive skill development cannot be decoupled from students' psychological and affective states. For Indonesian learners, who often face high anxiety due to the linguistic distance between Bahasa Indonesia and English, building reading comprehension requires a pedagogical approach that actively fosters a growth mindset. Teachers should design reading tasks that offer a "scaffolded success" model—starting with highly relatable, culturally familiar localized texts before transitioning to complex authentic materials. This strategic leveling helps cultivate strong self-efficacy, ensuring students feel capable of decoding unfamiliar syntax rather than feeling overwhelmed and disengaged.

Furthermore, these results have direct implications for curriculum design and teacher professional development within the framework of Indonesia's *Kurikulum Merdeka* (Independent Curriculum). Since autonomous learning and student-centered outcomes are central to current educational reforms, enhancing intrinsic motivation is paramount. EFL educators must move away from passive reading exercises and instead implement interactive, task-based strategies such as reciprocal teaching, literature circles, and project-based reading. By allowing students more autonomy in selecting reading materials or engaging in peer-led discussions, teachers can stimulate the internal drive necessary for sustained reading engagement. Ultimately, fostering high self-efficacy and strong learning motivation creates a positive feedback loop: as Indonesian students become more confident and



motivated readers, their comprehension skills naturally sharpen, better preparing them for both academic success and global communication.

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