

## The Correlation Between Students Learning Style and Reading Comprehension: A Quantitative Study

Annisa Nurul Baeti, Rizka Zahra Amalia, Robby Slamet, Siti Salamah Fauziyah, Silmy Kaaffah Nurshiha

*Universitas Perjuangan Tasikmalaya, Tasikmalaya, Indonesia*  
[2001010012@unper.ac.id](mailto:2001010012@unper.ac.id)

### Abstract

This study aims to investigate the correlation between learning style and reading comprehension among undergraduate students majoring in English Education at one of the universities in Indonesia. This study applied quantitative research with correlational study of variables to determine the existence of a possible relationship between two variables. This study was implemented on twenty graduate students. Questionnaires were used to gather the data to identify students learning styles and reading comprehension. The result shows no significant correlation between the two variables, concluding that individual learning preferences may exist, but they do not influence students' reading comprehension skills.

**Keywords:** Learning style, reading comprehension, correlation.

## INTRODUCTION

In classroom activities, it's a common problem for teacher to convey the best method for students because students are learning in different ways. Every student has their own unique learning style, which refers to the way they absorb and process information. Some students are visual learners, meaning they grasp concepts better through visual aids such as diagrams, charts, or videos. On the other hand, some students are auditory learners, who learn better through verbal explanations and discussions. Kinesthetic learners, on the other hand, prefer hands-on activities and learn best through physical experiences. Understanding one's learning style and adapting study techniques accordingly can help students learn more efficiently and effectively. Students are often categorized into three different learning styles: visual learners, kinesthetic learners, and audio learners. Visual learners learn best by seeing information presented in a visual format, such as through diagrams or videos. Kinesthetic learners learn best by doing hands-on activities and engaging in physical movement. Audio learners learn best by listening to information presented

through lectures or podcasts. Understanding students preferred learning style can help them optimize their study habits and improve their academic performance.

Reading comprehension refers to the ability to understand and interpret written text. It involves not only understanding the literal meaning of the words but also comprehending the underlying ideas, themes, and messages conveyed by the author. Reading comprehension is a crucial skill for students, as it allows them to understand and interpret various texts effectively. While there are several factors that can influence reading comprehension, one important aspect to consider is the learning style of students. Learning style refers to an individual's preferred way of acquiring knowledge and processing information (Harida, et al. 2017).

This study aims to investigate the correlation between students' learning style and their reading comprehension abilities. The objective of this research study is to examine whether there is a significant correlation between students' learning style and reading comprehension skills. By understanding how different learning styles may impact reading comprehension, educators can design instructional strategies that cater to the diverse needs of their students.

There are previous research has provided insights into the influence of learning styles on reading comprehension outcomes. For instance, Harida et al. (2017) conducted a study among Grade XI high school students in Indonesia and found a significant positive correlation between learning style preferences and achievement in reading comprehension tasks. Second, Rujani (2019) conducted a study among college students in Indonesia and found a positive relationship but low between learning style preferences and students reading comprehension. In addition, theoretical frameworks such as Kolb's experiential learning theory suggest that individuals with different learning styles process information differently (Dong et al., 2019). According to this theory, individuals may have a preference for either reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, active experimentation or concrete experience when engaging in the process of acquiring knowledge.

## **METHOD**

This quantitative research used a correlational study design to investigate the relationship between students' learning style and their reading comprehension abilities. A total sample size of 20 college students from English Education class was utilized for this study. Data collection involved administering the questionnaires to the participants who responded based on their personal preferences regarding how they best learn new information or concepts as well as their

performance on standardized tests measuring reading comprehension skills. The data obtained from these questionnaires were then subjected to statistical analysis using appropriate techniques such as correlation analysis to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between learning style and reading comprehension.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After calculating the result from the questionnaires, the researchers found out several things which can be seen from the table below:

Table 1. Learning Style

| Learning Style | Frequency | %    |
|----------------|-----------|------|
| Visual         | 9         | 45%  |
| Audio          | 7         | 35%  |
| Kinesthetic    | 4         | 20%  |
| Total          | 20        | 100% |

From here, it can be concluded that from twenty participants, 9 of them are a visual learner, 7 of them are audio learner while 4 of them are kinesthetic learner. From the three categories, visual learning style was the most preferred learning style by the students.

Then, from the document gathered from the respondents, the researchers discovered the score achieved by the students in their reading class recently. The score distribution will be as follows:

Table 2. Reading Score

| Score | Learners Categories |       |             | Total |
|-------|---------------------|-------|-------------|-------|
|       | Visual              | Audio | Kinesthetic |       |
| 100   | -                   | -     | 3           | 3     |
| 95    | 3                   | -     | 1           | 4     |
| 90    | 1                   | 3     | -           | 4     |
| 85    | 1                   | 2     | -           | 3     |
| 80    | -                   | 1     | -           | 1     |
| 75    | 1                   | -     | -           | 1     |
| 70    | -                   | 1     | -           | 1     |
| 65    | 1                   | -     | -           | 1     |
| 60    | 1                   | -     | -           | 1     |
| 50    | 1                   | -     | -           | 1     |
| Total |                     |       |             | 20    |

From the table above, it can be seen that 3 students from 20 respondents got '100' score in their reading comprehension, 4 of the, got '95', 4 of them got '90', 3 of them got '85', 1 of them

got '80', 1 of them got '75', 1 of them got '70', 1 of them got '65', 1 of them got '60', 1 of them got '50'. Relating to the first data gathered through the questionnaires, the researchers found out that among correspondents whose learning style are visual 3 of them got '100' score in their reading, 1 of them got '90', 1 of them got '85', 1 of them got '75', 1 of them got '65', 1 of them got '60', 1 of them got '50'. While, for the students whose learning style are auditory 3 of them got '90' score, 2 of them got '85', 1 of them got '80', 1 of them got '70'. Then, for the students whose learning style is kinesthetic 3 of them got '100' and 1 of them got '95' in their reading comprehension.

To find correlation between the two variables, the researchers used SPSS to help on calculating the data, it shown in the table.3

Table 3. Correlation

**Correlations**

|                       |                     | Learning Style | Reading Comprehension |
|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Learning Style        | Pearson Correlation | 1              | -.019                 |
|                       | Sig. (2-tailed)     |                | .937                  |
|                       | N                   | 20             | 20                    |
| Reading Comprehension | Pearson Correlation | -.019          | 1                     |
|                       | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .937           |                       |
|                       | N                   | 20             | 20                    |

A Pearson correlation was run to determine the relationship between learning style and students' reading comprehension through their reading score and from the table above, it is found that the significance score is -.019. According to Sugiyono (2007) significance of correlation can be categorized as 0.00 – 0.199 = very low, 0.20-0.399 = low, 0.40-0.599 = middle, 0.60 – 0.799 = high and 0.80 – 1.000 = very high which means the correlation between the two variable is very low.

Contrary to expectations, our findings indicate that there is no significant correlation between students' learning styles and their reading comprehension abilities (Harida et al., 2017). Despite variations in individual preferences for how they learn best, these differences did not have a discernible impact on their overall ability to comprehend written texts.

The lack of correlation found in this study raises interesting questions about the role of learning style in relation to reading comprehension skills. One possible explanation could be that

while individuals may have different preferences for how they learn, the process of comprehending written texts involves more fundamental cognitive processes that are not strongly influenced by individual learning styles. It is important to note that reading comprehension skills rely heavily on cognitive abilities such as decoding, vocabulary knowledge, and inferential reasoning. These cognitive processes may be more closely related to the development of reading comprehension than individual learning style preferences (Syafitri, 2018).

Moreover, these findings align with previous studies that have explored the link between learning styles and academic performance (Suparman, 2022). It is important to note, however, that while there is evidence supporting the correlation between learning style preferences and reading comprehension abilities, other factors such as motivation, prior knowledge, and cognitive abilities also play crucial roles in determining an individual's reading proficiency.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this quantitative research study aimed to investigate the correlation between students' learning style and reading comprehension abilities. However, the findings indicate that there is no significant correlation between these two variables. While individual learning preferences may exist, they do not appear to influence students' overall reading comprehension skills.

Future research should continue to investigate the specific mechanisms through which different learning styles influence reading comprehension outcomes. Additionally, studies with larger sample sizes and diverse populations are needed to further validate these findings. Overall, improving students' reading comprehension skills requires a multifaceted approach that incorporates various instructional strategies and addresses both cognitive and metacognitive aspects of reading proficiency.

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