



Interest and Habit in Reading English Literature of The Forth Semester Nursing Students at Stikes Eka Harap Palangka Raya

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ABSTRACT

The advancement of information and technology in health requires health science students to continuously adapt themselves globally and internationally by improving their access to various literature, especially those written in English. This study intended to give a description of students' reading interest and habit, especially toward English written literature. This study was carried out by a descriptive quantitative method. The respondents were 175 students who were selected by a purposive sampling technique. The research findings showed that students' interest and habit towards English-written literature were low. It could be derived from the majority (50.9%) "like" to read. Unfortunattely, only 30,9% who "like" to read English Literature, 45,1% stated "so-so" and 24% "dislike" reading English-written literature. In addition, as much as 67.9% respondents spent less than an hour per day to read English-written literature. Therefore, some integrative efforts to improve students' reading interest and to build students reading habit are needed, for instance, by integrating literacy program into students' learning activities of all courses.

Keywords: reading habit, reading interest, English literature, nursing students.

INTRODUCTION

The formation of a reading culture is one of the catalysts in the development of a nation's civilization. A society with a good reading culture is often claimed to be a strong pillar of a country's democracy (Oladele & HawwauA, 2015; Jegbefume et al., 2017; Yusof, 2010). Some literature even states that reading is a command given by prophets in several religions (Black, 2010; Anyira & Udem, 2020). The importance of cultivating and maintaining a reading culture is a top priority for the majority of countries in the world (Tavsanli & Kaldirim, 2017), including Indonesia. In order to foster a reading culture in society, the government has launched several policies and strategies such as the School Literacy Movement (Wiedarti et al., 2016; Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015), the Indonesian Reading Movement program, and the Literacy Village which has been held since 2015 (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2019).

In contrast to the government's efforts, several studies have shown quite disappointing findings. Based on a survey conducted by Central Connecticut State University (CCSU), Connecticut, United States, Indonesia is ranked 60th out of 61 countries studied in terms of literacy (CCSU, 2016). Indonesia is only one level above Botswana, which is in the lowest position. In addition, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) organized by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) concluded that Indonesian students showed lower reading skills than the average student from other OECD member countries (OECD, 2019). The average Indonesian student only scored 371 out of a total score of 600, while the average for all participating countries reached 487. Indonesia is ranked 4th from the bottom of 79 participating countries. On the other hand, studies conducted by Indonesian researchers also show something not much different. Research (Triatma, 2016) with elementary school students as subjects in Yogyakarta and Siswati's research (2010) with university students as subjects, concluded that in general, Indonesian students' interest in reading is still low.

A good level of literacy should be possessed by every individual as part of a nation. However, certain professions require a better level of literacy and reading habits, one of which is health workers. How could it not be, health workers are required to always update and increase their insight in order to actualize their knowledge and skills to be able to provide the best health services. This actualization effort certainly cannot be done without reading. Almost all forms of the latest discoveries, theories, and approaches are published in the form of articles in scientific journals, books, and news portals. So, stopping reading is the same as closing unlimited access to the latest discoveries and knowledge. For health workers, this kind of thing certainly has broad implications.

In the learning process in college, nursing students are expected to have good reading interests and habits because later these habits will help them in the process of actualizing their insights. In addition to general reading interests, students are also expected to have a high interest in health literature in English. Interest and habits in reading English literature are very much needed considering that the development of health sciences is published globally in English. In addition, this habit will also improve English language skills which will be very useful for health workers to be able to master technology in the health sector and play a role in the international health world.

In order to instill good reading interests and habits, English teachers must understand the description of students' reading interests, especially in English literature. This understanding can be a provision in determining student needs and learning objectives (needs analysis), as well as exploring various learning methods to improve learning outcomes, especially in English courses. Good reading skills and interests in English literature are expected to be a provision for prospective health workers to continue learning and actualizing themselves with the latest developments in knowledge in the health sector.

Previous studies examining reading interests and habits were conducted by Owusu-Acheaw (2014). This study examined the influence of reading habits on academic achievement of students at Koforidua Polytechnic, Ghana. This study showed that the majority of respondents believed that good reading habits had a positive impact on their academic achievement. The data also showed that reading habits had a direct impact on students' academic achievement.

Another study on reading habits was conducted by Soliman and Neel (2009) at the Medical College of King Saud University, Saudi Arabia. This study describes the reading habits of students who are also prospective health workers. The study shows that the reading habits of students are not very good, especially since the reading materials of these students are generally only tied to textbooks used in the learning process at the university.

In these studies, researchers did not discuss and link students' reading habits to a

particular language. Then, in the study conducted by Soliman and Fouda, for example, the reading sources studied were only textbooks. In fact, in the current era of globalization, in addition to reading habits, the content and language used in reading materials are also equally important. Mastering an international language is the key to getting various information from various parts of the world (Mustika & Lestari, 2020). In addition, reading materials are no less important because reading materials are closely related to reading interests and the impressions that readers get when reading. Reading that suits the reader's interests can create a pleasant feeling when read and can foster reading habits. Therefore, in this research, interest in the type of reading and the language used in reading will also be the focus of the research.

METHOD

This research was a quantitative descriptive research covering the reading interests and habits of students, especially in English literature, as well as the obstacles faced by students in reading English literature. The population of this research was 175 students of the Bachelor of Nursing study program in the fourth semester. The sample was selected using a purposive sampling technique with the inclusion criteria of students' willingness to participate in the research.

All data needed in this research were recorded and collected through questionnaires distributed and filled out by respondents online and voluntarily. This method was chosen to protect the confidentiality of the identity and data provided by respondents. The data collected included respondents' interest in reading activities, the average length of time they read each day, the media or types of reading used, obstacles in reading English literature and so on. The data were recorded in one questionnaire consisting of several closed-ended and open-ended questions. These questions generally cover two things, namely students' reading requests and students' reading habits in English literature. The data collection process was carried out in January 2025.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The students of Bachelor of Nursing study program, semester IV, divided into 4 classes, namely class A to class D, a total of 175 students were willing to fill out the questionnaire provided. Because this research only focuses on students' reading interests and habits, the character and personal data of each respondent would not be discussed except for the level of education being taken. The data was taken to provide a little picture because it is possible that there are differences in the interests and reading habits of students in different classes.

Table 1. Respondents' Education Level (n=175)

Bachelor of Nursing	Amount
Class A	44
Class B	42
Class C	43
Class D	46
Total	175

It could be seen in Table 1, the number of respondents with undergraduate education levels from class A to D. It was known that class D had the largest number of students, namely 46 people. While class B had the smallest number of students, namely 42 people. Furthermore, quantitatively, students' reading interests or preferences are presented in Tables 2 - 9. Students' reading habits were described in Tables 10 - 13. The following tables would present data based on questions asked to respondents through questionnaires.

Table 2. Do you like reading? (n=175)

	Respondents	Presentation
Yes	89	50.9%
So-so	82	46.9%
No	4	2.2%

Table 3. Do you like reading English literature? (n=175)

	Respondents	Presentation
Yes	54	30.9%
So-so	79	45.1%
No	42	24%

Tables 2 and 3 present the distribution of reading interest in fourth semester Bachelor of Nursing study program students at STIKes Eka Harapan Palangka Raya. Based on these data, it could be concluded that 50.9% of students generally like to read. However, only 30.9% of students like to read English literature, 45.1% answered that they were so-so and 24% answered that they did not like to read English literature. The next question asked about the motivation that drives students to read English literature. In this question, students were allowed to choose more than one answer. The answers most often given by students were 'want to improve English language skills' at 47.4%, 'want to know' at 41.2%, 'assignment from lecturer' at 31.6%, and because they 'like' at 6.2%. Other answers that emerged included wanting to understand films in English, wanting to be fluent in English to be able to work abroad, wanting to get a lot of health information, and so on. The form of reading material most frequently accessed by students could be seen in Table 4.

Table 4. What form of English literature do you read most often? (n=175)

	Number of Responses
Print	48 (27.4%)
On line/electronic	85 (48.6%)
Both of them	40 (22.9%)
No answer	2 (1.1%)

Table 5. What sources of English printed literature do you frequently use? (n=175)

Types of English Print Literature	Number of Responses
Novels, comics, and other works of fiction	60 (34.2%)
Textbook	48 (27.4%)
Scientific articles	39 (22.2%)
Encyclopedia	22 (12.5%)
Magazine	4 (2.2%)
Newspaper	2 (1.1%)

**Table 6. What online/electronic English literature sources do you frequently use?
(n=175)**

Types of English Online/Electronic Literature	Number of Responses
Novels, comics, and other works of fiction	121 (69.1%)
Blog	15 (8.5%)
News portal	21 (12%)
Encyclopedia	18 (10.2%)

The form of English reading sources read by students was not much different from the form of reading sources read by students in general. The number of students who more often access English literature in print form only was 48 people or 27.4%. Uniquely, students who prefer to access English readings online were 48.6%. So, in reading English literature, students tend to have a preference for a certain form rather than both at once. This could be seen from the preference for both forms of reading sources (print and online) which was only 22.9%.

English reading sources for pleasure reading were also widely accessed by students with the most common type being fiction. So, students did not only read English literature to fulfill their college assignments. Some differences that emerge include students also not accessing social media to get English literature. In addition, reading sources with the type of scientific articles actually appear in printed reading sources in English. Normally, scientific articles, especially in foreign languages, were easier to find online. It was not unusual for students to read English scientific articles. Many lecturers asked students to find lecture references through scientific articles. This was a little different because the number of students who read English scientific articles online was not many, only seven students. However, there were 39 students who read English scientific articles. There were several possibilities behind this finding. First, finding English scientific articles was not easy for most students. The next possibility was that students only read English scientific articles shared by lecturers in order to complete assignments. For this reason, lecturers were advised to teach, give examples, and get students used to accessing English scientific articles.

In addition to the form and type of reading, the questions asked through the questionnaire also concerned the benefits felt by students from the habit of reading English literature. Because the questions were open-ended, students were free to express their responses. The answers most often given by students included: increasing English vocabulary (74.9% of students), improving English language skills (47.9% of students), increasing knowledge (35.1% of students), and sharpening logic (22% of students). The following tables would present data related to students' reading habits both in general and in English literature.

Table 7. How much time do you spend reading every day? (n=175)

	Respondents	Presentation
There isn't any	4	2.2%
Less than 1 hour	74	42.2%
1 – 2 hours	87	49.8%
More than 2 hours	10	5.8%

Table 8. How much time do you spend reading English literature every day? (n=175)

	Respondents	Presentation
Never	67	38.3%
Less than 1 hour	71	40.5%
1 – 2 hours	32	18.4%
More than 2 hours	5	2.8%

Table 7 showed that most students spend a maximum of 2 hours per day reading. Only 5.8% of respondents read more than 2 hours per day. Of that duration, most (40.5%) students spend less than one hour reading English literature. From these data, it could be said that reading habits have not been formed among nursing students. Only a few students read more than 2 hours per day, both for English and other readings. This was in line with a research conducted by (Soliman & Neel, 2009) which revealed that the reading habits of nursing students were not very good and were limited to textbooks used in lectures.

To provide a little additional insight into the activities or hobbies that were preferred and that may also hinder the formation of students' reading interests and habits, Table 9 presented a list of activities that respondents prefer over reading, and Table 10 presented the duration of time that students spend doing these activities or hobbies.

Table 9. What activities do you prefer to reading? (n=175)

Type of activity	Number of Responses
Watching movies/television	11 (6.2%)
Sport	29 (16.5%)
Playing gadgets	80 (45.8%)
Listening to music	42 (24%)
Write	9 (5.2%)
Cook	3 (1.8%)
Draw	1 (0.5%)

Table 10. How much time do you spend doing these activities every day? (n=175)

Activity Duration / Day	Number of Responses	Presentation
Less than 1 hour	27	15.4%
1 – 2 hours	76	43.4%
3 – 4 hours	59	33.8%
More than 4 hours	13	7.4%

The students' answers in table 9 were very diverse. The activities mentioned above were only the activities that were most often mentioned by students. Based on the data presented in Table 9, the activities that students like most more than reading were watching movies, dramas, or television shows. Students even spend more of their time doing these activities. As many as 43.4% of students spend more than one hour per day, and 7.4% of them even spend more than 4 hours a day doing hobbies other than reading. This was in line with the results of research conducted by (Siswati, 2010) which stated that one of the reasons why students could not develop their reading hobby was their habit of watching television for an average of two hours a day. This large portion of time could of course interfere with students in forming a reading culture because the free time that nursing students have could be said to be very limited.

In addition to the above activities, some things that students think hinder their interest

in reading English literature were their difficulty in understanding the meaning of each word in the reading they want to read. This obstacle was felt by 541 (85.5%) respondents. Students believed that they must understand every word they find in every reading they read. In learning a foreign language, when the main focus of each activity was to translate each linguistic unit, the process of understanding the language would actually be hampered.

In addition to meaning, the biggest obstacle for students in reading English literature was the difficulty of accessing reading sources that suit the needs or desires of the respondents. This obstacle was experienced by 22.1% of respondents. This data was quite reasonable considering that students actually read English scientific articles more often in print than online, even though most English scientific articles were available online. Basically, English-language materials and readings were the most abundant materials on the internet. If students found it difficult to find reading sources, this was a sign that students were not used to searching for information on the internet in English, which they consider foreign. Over time, if students did not stop trying to make English more familiar to them, then understanding and reading culture would form by themselves.

CONCLUSION

From the results and discussion, it could be concluded that respondents generally did not have good reading habits, especially in reading English literature. From the 175 students who were being the respondents, 50.9% of respondents like to read. Unfortunately, only 30.9% like to read English literature. In addition, most respondents read less than 2 hours per day. From that duration, the time they spend reading English literature was still under one hour per day. Then, both Indonesia and English readings, most respondents prefer to access data online rather than in printed form. Other activities that students generally did for a long time and hinder them from developing their reading habits include watching television/movies, sports, playing gadgets, and others. Meanwhile, other obstacles that students also face in reading English literature were the unknown meaning of words, as well as the difficulty of accessing sources of English reading.

Based on these findings, students' interests and habits of reading English literature needs to be improved, one of which was by integrating English literature reading activities into lecture activities. Lecturers were also expected to be able to guide students to choose good reading materials, as well as show how to access these reading sources. In addition, the formation of a literacy program as an extracurricular activity for students could also be another effort. This program was expected to be able to make students enjoy reading activities, especially English literature.

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