

Teachers' Perceptions of Strategies for Enhancing Reading and Comprehension Skills in  
Early Childhood Education

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**ABSTRACT**

*An important basis for later academic success is early reading comprehension and it is influenced by learner motivation and instructional practices. This research aims to investigate how motivation affects children's reading. Exploring how persistence, interest and engagement interact with strategies that are well organized. It also aims to analyze the effects of selected teaching strategies which entails phonemic awareness, guided reading, vocabulary development, parental involvement and visual aids on children's comprehension and reading in early childhood education. This study explored how early childhood teachers reported use of strategies for reading comprehension, their opinions on motivating students and the relationship between motivation, instructional practices and apparent outcomes of reading and comprehension. A quantitative survey was conducted, where data was collected from more than 100 early childhood teachers. The questionnaire consisted of items on student motivation, teaching strategies, parental participation and approved improvement in students' comprehension of stories over time.*

*All the data in this quantitative research were analyzed using SPSS(v25). Teachers practices and perception were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Pearson correlation analysis was used which analyzed the relationships among motivational factors and reading comprehension outcomes. Multiple Regression analysis assessed the predictive role of motivation and teaching strategies. Due to a binary response format and due to the inclusion of multiple constructs, reliability was interpreted construct wise.*

*Research findings showed that teachers frequently used phonemic awareness activities, visual aids and guided reading to improve children's comprehension and reading outcome. Correlation analysis showed strong positive relationships among instructional strategies, engagement and student motivation with formative practices such as questioning strongly linked to apparent comprehension improvement. The multiple regression model was not statistically important and explained only a minor portion of the variance, signifying that the examined variables did not independently predict comprehension improvement when considered altogether.*

*In conclusion, this study shows that while student motivation and instructional strategies are closely associated and observed as beneficial, they may not independently forecast improvement in reading comprehension. A central role is played by formative assessment practices, in particular monitoring and understanding through questioning. The conclusions show the significance of integrating effective instructional strategies with ongoing assessment and motivational support in early reading instruction.*

**Keywords:** *Early reading comprehension, learner motivation, instructional strategies, formative assessment, early childhood education.*

## INTRODUCTION

### Background and Contextual Setting

Reading comprehension is an important skill in early childhood education (ECE), forming the basis for educational success and lifelong learning. According to (van den Brook, Kendeou et al. 2011), in preschool and early primary years, children develop important literacy tools such as phonemic awareness, vocabulary, inferential reasoning and narrative understanding, which allow them to make sense of the written text. Deficiencies in these basic skills when not properly developed leads to children struggling throughout their schooling and eventually results in long-term academic challenges.

Universally, education has shifted from rote memorization towards understanding and active participation. Strategies such as guided reading, storytelling, dialogic reading and multimodal activities encourage interaction, reflection and deeper understanding of text (Alisaari, Heikkola et al. 2019). These student-centered approaches, often supported by visual and digital resources, enhance motivation and cater to diverse learning needs. They help students link concepts, share their own understandings and draw on different forms of expression to make sense of ideas and convey what they have learned.

In Pakistan, however, early childhood instruction continues to face challenges. Many teachers rely heavily on memorization and repetition, leaving limited room for comprehension-focused activities (Rehman, John, & Latif, 2024). Reports show that nearly half of Grade 3 children cannot read grade-level texts with understanding this is because teacher training programs often lack emphasis on comprehension pedagogy and access to age-appropriate materials remains limited. A lack of developmentally suitable reading materials, gaps in teachers' professional preparation, and reliance on conventional teaching routines continue to limit students' exposure to meaningful comprehension-focused learning (Malik & Khan, 2023). Research conducted in Sindh and other provinces shows that many learners face difficulty interpreting even basic texts, pointing to deeper, system-level weaknesses in instructional practices (Solangi, Bango, & Abbasi, 2024; Laghari et al., 2024).

Research suggests that linking phonemic awareness, vocabulary instruction, guided reading, visual aids, and parental involvement can generate a literacy-rich atmosphere supporting comprehension and motivation (Putri & Anjarwati, 2025; Shoukat, Usman, & Faheem, 2024). A survey of teachers' perceptions across urban ECE classrooms in Pakistan aims to find strategies currently used, their perceived effectiveness and barriers affecting their implementation. Gaining insight into these perspectives is important for developing contextually relevant instructional practices that promote reading and comprehension skills in early learners.

### Statement Of The Problem

In spite of various literacy programs in Pakistan, many children in early grades continue struggling with reading comprehension. While they are often able to decode words they fail to understand the meaning, relating text to their experiences (Rehman et al., 2024). Recent studies from Sindh and Karachi show that many early grade students continue to display weak comprehension skills, largely because classroom instructions does not adequately incorporate proven approaches like systematic vocabulary teaching or guided reading (Solangi et al., 2024; Laghari et al., 2024).

Although international research shows the effectiveness of guided reading, phonemic awareness, and project-based learning in improving comprehension (Shoukat et al., 2024; Al-Mansour & Al-Shorman, 2011), However, there is minimum corresponding evidence of how early childhood teachers in Pakistan apply and view these strategies. Most local studies emphasize student performance rather than exploring

teacher's views on practicality, motivation. Furthermore, teachers' perceptions regarding the practicality challenges and feasibility of implementing these strategies in urban Pakistani settings have not yet been adequately investigated and the contextual constraints that shape their instructional decisions (Wasi & Kang, 2023).

The current study seeks to bridge the gap by surveying early childhood educators in urban settings (preschool to Grade 3) to explore the strategies they use, their perceptions of effectiveness and the motivational factors influencing students' reading comprehension. The findings aim to provide valuable insights for improving teachers' preparation, instructional practices and policy planning related to literacy development in urban early education contexts.

### **Research Objectives**

1. To investigate the effects of selected teaching strategies including guided reading, phonemic awareness, vocabulary development, visual aids and parental involvement on children's reading and comprehension in early childhood education. This objective focusses on assessing how these strategies enhance understanding of text, promote cognitive engagement and support literacy skill development among preschool to Grade 3 learners in urban south, Pakistan.
2. To analyze the influence of children's motivation on reading outcomes, examining how factors such as interest, persistence and engagement influence comprehension when combined with structured instructional strategies. By analyzing the interaction between motivation and teaching practices, the study seeks to provide valuable insights for teachers, curriculum planners and policymakers to optimize early literacy experiences.

### **Hypotheses**

1. **H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a significant relationship between students' reading comprehension and the implementation of selected teaching strategies and outcomes. Learners who receive instructions to guided reading, phonemic awareness, visual aids, vocabulary instruction, and parental involvement are expected to demonstrate stronger comprehension scores than their peers taught through traditional methods.
2. **H<sub>2</sub>:** Children's motivation is a strong predictor of their reading comprehension outcomes. Higher levels of interest, engagement and persistence are hypothesized to positively influence comprehension, acting as a mediating factor between teaching strategies and literacy achievement in urban early childhood classrooms.

### **Significance Of The Study**

This study holds an academic, social and institutional significance. Academically, it contributes measureable evidence on early childhood reading comprehension in Pakistan, addressing a gap in research focused on instructional strategies and motivational influences. Institutionally, the findings will provide valuable guidance for teachers, school administrators and curriculum developers, guiding the design of effective teaching programs, instructional materials and teacher training modules to enhance comprehension outcomes. Socially, enhancing reading and comprehension skills in early learners is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG-4) by promoting equitable quality education and reducing literacy inequalities. Strengthening early literacy not only equips children with a strong cognitive foundation for lifelong learning but also nurtures independent thinking, curiosity and self-confidence, all qualities important for active participation in society (Malik & Khan, 2023).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Introduction**

Reading comprehension is a multidimensional process involving decoding, interpreting and constructing meaning from written text. Within early childhood education (ECE), it serves as a critical foundation for lifelong learning and overall academic success. International and regional studies highlight that children's comprehension abilities are influenced not only by cognitive growth but also by the quality of instruction, their motivation to learn, and the broader sociocultural context (Putri & Anjarwati, 2025; Kim & Jang, 2025).

Early Literacy research emphasizes that comprehension is shaped by a number of factors such as cognitive skills, social interaction, motivation, and instructional methods. This chapter reviews both empirical and theoretical literature on reading comprehension in ECE, focusing on key teaching strategies—phonemic awareness, vocabulary development, guided reading, visual aids and parental involvement and examines their influence on comprehension and learners motivation. It also identifies gaps in the current body of research, especially within the Pakistani educational context.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Cognitive and Constructivist Foundations**

According to Piaget's cognitive constructivism (1952) children actively build knowledge through interaction with their environment. When textual information is linked with prior knowledge by children, their reading comprehension develops. It has been suggested in the contemporary early literacy models, that comprehension grows when teachers support students' learning through interactive read-alouds, purposeful questioning and activities that encourage learners to construct meaning together (Kim & Jang, 2025; Williamson et al., 2023). Vygotsky's social constructivist theory (1978) highlights the importance of social interaction and guidance within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Instructional approaches such as shared reading, guided reading and scaffolding reflect this framework by providing structured support that enables children to internalize effective comprehension strategies.

#### **Schema and Metacognitive Theories**

It has been highlighted by recent studies, that children make better sense of texts when they are encouraged to draw on what they already know and to think carefully about how they understand new ideas. This process is sparked in the classroom, when teachers use images, short discussions before reading as well as introducing key words in advance. Thus, allowing young learners to link upcoming content with familiar experiences (Putri & Anjarwati, 2025). Practices that prompt children to pause, question and check their own understanding also help them develop the habits of independent, thoughtful readers.

#### **Recent Perspectives on Multimodality and Engagement**

It has been pointed out by Multimodal literacy theorists that young children understand ideas by drawing on a mix of audio, visual and hands-on experiences. Strategies using supports such as interactive story maps, picture cues and visual organizers have proven helpful for building comprehension, especially in classrooms where several languages are used (Al-Mansour & Al-Shorman, 2011; Alwi, Samson, & Shahzadi, 2022). According to research on learner engagement by Wasi & Kang, 2023; Kim & Jang,

2025 also shows that motivation has a strong influence on literacy progress; those children who genuinely feel confident and are interested as readers are more likely to comprehend texts well.

### **Review of Empirical work on Effective Teaching Strategies**

#### **Phonemic Awareness**

Phonemic awareness serves as a fundamental component for early reading development. It helps children to differentiate, identify and manipulate individual sounds in words. According to Alwi et al., 2022 it has been observed that from the data collected from primary schools in urban settings show that organized peer-support activities and consistent work with phonemes and sounds lead to noticeable gains in children's early reading skills. Extensive reviews of preschool literacy levels also show that when young learners are introduced to phonemic awareness from the beginning, they are better prepared to understand texts as they progress through later grades (Idris et al., 2024). Collaborative learning plays a significant role in improving reading fluency and comprehension in early childhood classrooms. Thus showing the importance of collaborative learning environments in literacy development.

#### **Vocabulary Development**

Consistently research shows that children's ability to understand what they read is very closely tied to the depth and breadth of their vocabulary. Young children's understanding of text has been found to be significantly improved when strategies are used that introduce new words within meaningful situations such as through storytelling, visuals or real-life contexts. (Rehman et al., 2024; Williamson et al., 2023). In multilingual classrooms like those in Pakistan, vocabulary activities that are centered on meaning offer important support for children who are developing proficiency in more than one language. In the Pakistani context, studies have shown that integrating targeted vocabulary instruction with picture cues can significantly improve reading outcomes in early grades (Rehman, John, & Latif, 2024), highlighting the importance of contextualized and new methods for teaching new words.

#### **Guided Reading**

Guided reading allows teachers to work with small groups according to their specific stages of reading development, offering space for focused support. Research shows that this kind of structured grouping helps children build strong comprehension skills, Teachers can guide them through key skills like asking purposeful questions, anticipating content and summarizing what they read (Shoukat et al., 2024). Further research in Indonesia shows that when guided reading is combined with direct teaching of reading strategies, children's early literacy progress improves to a great extent..( Putri & Anjarwati, 2025).

#### **Visual Aids and Multimodal Learning**

Multimodal and Visual resources, such as flashcards, illustrated texts, story maps play an important role in enhancing reading comprehension by helping students connect ideas and effectively retain information (Williamson, Hedges, & Jesson). Grounded in multimodal learning principles, these tools combine auditory, visual and tactile elements to support diverse learning styles and needs (Kress & Bezemer, 2020) van den Broek et al.). Research by Al-Mansour and Al-Shorman (2020); Alwi, Samson, & Shahzadi) demonstrates that picture-supported instructional materials significantly enhance comprehension, particularly in multilingual environments. In Pakistan, this trend is seen where visual scaffolds facilitate understanding across linguistic boundaries. Thus when teachers use structured aids and visual prompts, the reading and (Khan et al.; Rehman, John, & Latif).

### **Parental Involvement**

When parents are actively involved in their children's early literacy the children are more motivated, their vocabulary is far improved and their comprehension skills are greatly enhanced.

Research from Karachi by Rehman et al., 2024 show that activities like shared storybook reading in the house and regular communication between parents and teachers lead to noticeable gains in young learners' reading skills Global studies likewise show that when families and schools, work together, learners are more likely to engage confidently and consistently with literacy tasks (Wasi & Kang, 2023). Table 1 presents a summary of the key teaching strategies reviewed above and outlines evidence of their effectiveness from both global and local studies.

### **Motivation and Reading Outcomes**

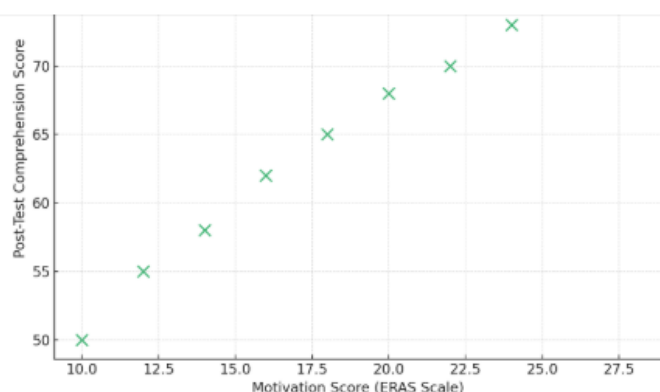
In the early years of schooling, one of the strongest influences on a child's ability to comprehend what they read is motivation. Research has shown that children remain focused on reading activities and are also willing to use comprehension strategies only when they are sincerely interested in their tasks and feel genuinely involved in the reading process. (Williamson, Hedges, & Jesson, 2023; Kim & Jang, 2025). It has been seen that activities in which children are actively participating for example small group reading, storytelling sessions and discussions driven by questions have been seen to strengthen not only comprehension but also motivation in early childhood classrooms. (Al-Mansour & Al-Shorman, 2011; Shoukat, Usman, & Faheem, 2024).

However, in the classrooms in Pakistan, traditional rote memorization is emphasized thus decreasing motivation in children to read and leaving limited room for exploration and meaning making. Children's interest in reading and the opportunities for developing independent thinkers is greatly reduced when following the traditional methods of reading which is often based on repetition and memorization. (Khan, Khan, Hafeez, Ayaz, & Sheikh, 2021; Rehman, John, & Latif, 2024).

Increasing research in traditional studies demonstrates that when teachers use strategies that promote discussion, offer choice or encourage teamwork for instance guiding children through shared conversations, allowing them to select storybooks or involving them in paired reading—children remain more engaged and show clearer comprehension gains (Alwi, Samson, & Shahzadi, 2022; Putri & Anjarwati, 2025). Furthermore, children's motivation is also highly increased by teachers behavior, attitude and the creation of a supportive learning environment. Thus a supportive learning environment helps children feel confident, which in turn strengthens their willingness to participate actively in reading and understanding of what they are reading (Wasi & Kang, 2023; Williamson et al., 2023).

Children's motivation is also shaped by the way a teacher interacts with her students and their beliefs. Responsive and supportive teaching practices help children feel more confident which motivates them to participate more actively in reading and making sense of texts. (Wasi & Kang, 2023; Williamson et al., 2023).

On the whole the findings from global and local contexts show that motivation is not a secondary component of reading instructions but a primary and significant driver of comprehension. When teachers promote curiosity, build confidence and persistence and create and promote enjoyable reading experiences, it helps to develop young learners comprehension and establish the foundations for lifelong literacy. (Shoukat et al., 2024; Kim & Jang, 2025).



Graph 2 depicts the relationship between motivation and reading comprehension, underscoring the importance of motivational strategies in early literacy development. This relationship underlines the need for teachers to design literacy experiences that nurture intrinsic motivation and self-regulation alongside cognitive skills.

### Global And Pakistani Context

Internationally it has been seen that focus on strategies like interactive practices, student engagement and structured instruction are the best for promoting and strengthening early reading skills. Research in Finland highlights the important role played by motivational factors, cognitive development, scaffolding and making sense of text contribute to strengthening comprehension skills in early childhood education. (Alisaari et al., 2020; van den Broek, Kendeou, Lousberg, & Visser, 2025). Similarly, strategies led by teachers including vocabulary instruction, storytelling and guided reading have demonstrated positive effects in varied early childhood contexts. (Al-Mansour & Al-Shorman, 2011; Kim & Jang, 2025; Williamson, Hedges, & Jesson, 2023). Studies from Indonesia further reinforces the value of peer collaboration, scaffolded literacy tasks, interactive reading strategies, and scaffolded literacy activities, in enhancing reading literacy among early childhood learners (Putri & Anjarwati, 2025).

Pakistan, faces significant barriers in early literacy development. These challenges include limited instructional resources, overcrowded classroom and inconsistent teacher training decrease the ability of teachers to implement comprehension focused instruction effectively. (Malik & Khan, 2023; Rehman, John, & Latif, 2024). Local research focusing on peer tutoring, teacher-guided story reading and collaborative learning can strengthen reading and comprehension skills and their outcomes, this is especially seen in primary classrooms of urban region, where attention of individuals is limited (Alwi, Samson, & Shahzadi, 2022; Shoukat, Usman, & Faheem, 2024).

**Chart 1** shows the distribution of research on early reading comprehension strategies internationally compared to Pakistan. While global studies explore a broad range of motivational factors, multimodal approaches and instructional techniques (Alisaari et al., 2020; Kim & Jang, 2025; Putri & Anjarwati, 2025; van den Broek et al., 2025), local research remains infrequent, with limited examination of context-specific strategies such as parental involvement, peer-supported reading and visual aids (Alwi, Samson, & Shahzadi, 2022; Rehman, John, & Latif, 2024; Wasi & Kang, 2023). This comparison shows that Pakistan requires to do more research exploring how children develop comprehension skills and how teachers teach.

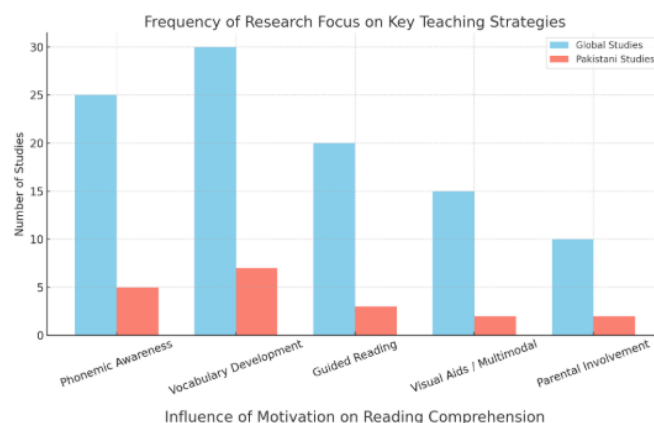


Chart 1 illustrates the research distribution on strategies for early reading comprehension internationally compared to Pakistan, highlighting the relative scarcity of local studies on teaching practices. This comparison highlights that while global studies explore diverse teaching strategies and affective factors.

### Research Gaps

The literature highlights these gaps:

1. In Pakistan most studies focus on fluency rather than comprehension.
2. Limited studies evaluate combined strategies such as guided reading, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, visual aids parental involvement) in one framework.
3. Emotional engagement and motivation remain underexplored.
4. Multimodal Literacy theories and Engagement theory have not been widely applied in Pakistani ECE classrooms.

This study addresses these gaps by using a quantitative approach to understand how teachers' apply different perceptions and strategies for examining motivation as a mediating factor for comprehension in (urban) Pakistani classrooms.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

A cross-sectional survey approach was adopted. This was a suitable method for gaining an overview of teachers' classroom practices and their views on reading instructions in a huge urban situation. (Kim & Jang, 2025; Shoukat, Usman, & Faheem, 2024). Rather than testing or altering specific teaching methods, the study focusing on recording the strategies already used by teachers and how effective they believe these practices to be. This strategy made it possible to gather information efficiently and to discover how different aspects of instruction relate to children's engagement and teachers' assessments of comprehension.

Variables included in the study were as follows:

- **Independent variables:** instructional practices connected to vocabulary teaching, guided reading, phonemic awareness, visual supports, and parental participation (Williamson, Hedges, & Jesson, 2023; Putri & Anjarwati, 2025).
- **Dependent variable:** teachers' conclusions about students' reading comprehension (Shanahan et al., 2010; Laghari et al., 2024).
- **Mediating variable:** learner motivation is not only reflected in teachers' observations of students' but also the effort, focus, and overall engagement (Mukhopadhyay et al., 2020; Wasi & Kang, 2025).

### **Research Paradigm**

The study adopts a positivist framework, focusing on the potential to generalize findings, objectivity and measurable data (van den Broek, Kendeou, Lousberg, & Visser, 2021). Survey responses from teachers provide us with the numerical data on the practices used in classrooms and students' reading outcomes thus, allowing for statistical analysis of how instructional strategies, motivation and comprehension are related. The approach is based on the premise that professional insights from teachers offer a reliable representation of the factors shaping early reading development (Alwi, Samson, & Shahzadi, 2019; Rehman, John, & Latif, 2024).

### **Population And Sampling**

#### **Target Population**

The target population comprises preschool to Grade 3 teachers in urban schools across the province of Sindh, Pakistan. These include both public and private institutions in major cities, representing a range of socio-economic and instructional contexts (Khan et al., 2021; Malik & Khan, 2024).

#### **Sampling Technique And Sample Size**

A total of 100 teachers will be surveyed using purposive sampling, ensuring participants have experience teaching literacy and comprehension skills in early grades. Purposive sampling is appropriate as it targets teachers who are familiar with the instructional strategies under study, ensuring the reliability of reported perceptions.

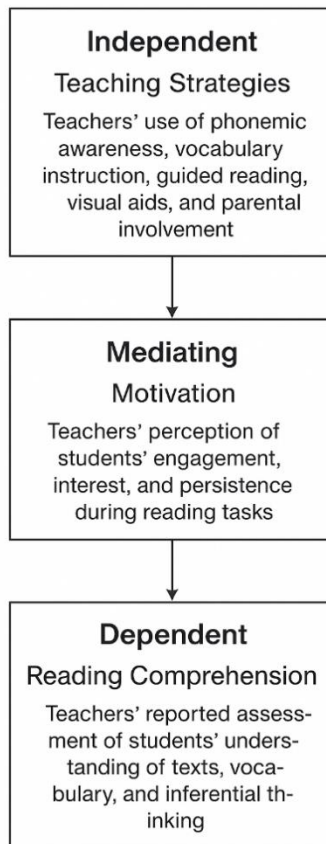
#### **Participants**

Participants are:

- **Teachers:** Preschool to Grade 3, experienced in early literacy instruction.
- **Students (indirectly):** Their reading comprehension and motivation are assessed via teacher reports.

Ethical procedures, including informed consent and confidentiality were strictly followed.

**Variables used in research:**



**Instruments**

The study uses a **structured online questionnaire:**

1. **Teacher Survey:** Includes Likert-scale items on the frequency and perceived effectiveness of teaching observations and teachers' strategies of student motivation and reading comprehension.
2. **Demographic Section:** Captures teaching experience, grade level taught and school type.

The survey will be pilot-tested with 10 to 15 teachers to ensure reliability and clarity. Cronbach's alpha will be calculated for internal consistency.

**Data Collection Procedures**

The survey will be distributed online via Google Forms. Participants will receive an information sheet, consent form, and instructions. Responses will be collected over two weeks. Reminder emails will ensure a higher response rate. All responses will remain anonymous.

**Data Analysis Plan**

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS (Version 25).

- **Descriptive statistics** (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations) were used to summarize teachers' demographic information, instructional practices, perceptions of student motivation, and perceived reading comprehension outcomes.
- **Reliability analysis** (Cronbach's alpha) was conducted to assess the internal consistency of the motivation and comprehension scales. Due to the presence of multiple constructs, reliability was interpreted at the construct level rather than for the total scale.
- **Correlation analysis** (Pearson's  $r$ ) was used to examine the relationships between teaching strategies, perceived student motivation, and reading comprehension outcomes.
- **Cross-tabulations and chi-square tests of association** were performed to examine relationships between selected demographic variables (e.g., teaching experience) and instructional practices.
- **Multiple regression analysis** was conducted to examine whether teaching strategies and perceived student motivation predict reading comprehension outcomes. Model fit was evaluated using  $R^2$  and adjusted  $R^2$  values, with statistical significance tested at  $p < .05$ .

### **Ethical Considerations**

Prior to data collection ethical approval was taken from the school administration. Verbal consent was taken from all teachers participating outlining the voluntary nature of participation, purpose of the study and their rights. The teachers will be free to withdraw at any stage without any consequences. No personal identifiers will be collected; all responses will be anonymized and stored securely. The data will be used exclusively for academic research and will not be shared with any unauthorized individuals or institutions.

### **Limitations**

The study uses only a survey design, which may limit the depth of understanding of classroom practices compared to observational or experimental methods.

- Teachers' answers are formed by social desirability bias, possibly reporting ideal practices rather than actual implementation in classrooms.
- Since the study emphasizes exclusively on urban schools, the findings may not fully apply to rural areas where training, resources, and learning environments differ significantly.
- Differences in teachers' access to resources across schools, their experience and training, may influence perceptions and reported practices.
- The short period of collecting data may not fully capture the fluctuations in teaching strategies over a school year.
- Nevertheless, of these limitations, the study provides valuable perceptions into current instructional practices, motivational factors and perceived effectiveness influencing reading comprehension.

- By reaching teachers from various locations, the survey method collects varied insights that can support improvements in policy, curriculum design, and professional development across Pakistan.
- The survey method allows collecting data from a broad range of teachers, capturing diverse teacher perspectives across multiple cities, making the findings relevant for policy, curriculum planning and teacher professional development in Pakistan.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

### Reliability

#### Scale: Teacher's Strategies

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
.201	5

The low internal consistency in the teaching strategies scale was anticipated and showed that the items showed various instructional practices instead of one construct. Thus using descriptive statistics the items were analyzed.

#### Scale: Student Motivation

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
.802	3

Good internal consistency was shown in the student motivation scale, indicating that a single construct was measured related to student's engagement, interest and perseverance during reading activities.

#### Scale: Comprehension Outcomes

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
.664	2

Moderate reliability was seen in the reading comprehension scale. Due to the relatively low number of items, this level of reliability is considered acceptable for exploratory educational research.

#### Scale: Motivation & Comprehension

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
.704	5

A combination of the motivation and comprehension scale demonstrated acceptable consistency internally, supporting the conceptual relationship between comprehension and student outcomes.

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Reliability Statistics	
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>No. of Items</b>
.313	12

The Cronbach's alpha is 0.313. This is because it included different types of questions and used yes or no answers. Therefore, reliability was checked separately for each part instead of the entire scale.

### Frequency Table

<b>4) Do you teach phonemic awareness activities (e.g., sounds, rhyming, blending)?</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Y</b>	80	78.4	78.4	78.4
	<b>N</b>	22	21.6	21.6	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	102	100.0	100.0	

Majority of teachers (78.4%) showed that teaching phonemics awareness activities showed strong emphasis on foundational literacy skills.

<b>5) Do you teach new vocabulary reading?</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Y</b>	49	48.0	48.0	48.0
	<b>N</b>	53	52.0	52.0	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	102	100.0	100.0	

The responses were fairly, evenly split. Suggesting how frequently teachers use explicit vocabulary to improve reading.

<b>6) Do you use guided reading in 2 or 1?</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Y</b>	70	68.6	68.6	68.6
	<b>N</b>	32	31.4	31.4	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	102	100.0	100.0	

As seen above 68.6% of teachers used guided reading, emphasizing how differentiated instruction practices are used.

<b>7) Do you use visual aids (pictures, flashcards, story illustrations) to support reading?</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
		93	91.2	91.2	91.2
		9	8.8	8.8	100.0
		102	100.0	100.0	

Majority of the teachers (91.2%) used visual aids, showing widespread dependence on reliance on visual support in reading.

<b>8) Do you involve parents in helping children read at home?</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

<b>Valid</b>	<b>1</b>	75	73.5	73.5	73.5
	<b>2</b>	27	26.5	26.5	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	102	100.0	100.0	

About 73% of the teachers reported including parents in supporting reading at home. Thus showing collaboration between home and school

<b>9) Do your students show interest and enjoyment 2 reading activities?</b>					
		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>Valid</b>	<b>1</b>	92	90.2	90.2	90.2
	<b>2</b>	10	9.8	9.8	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	102	100.0	100.0	

During reading activities approximately 90.2% of teachers were of the opinion that

<b>10) Do your students stay engaged and focused 2 reading tasks?</b>					
		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>Valid</b>	<b>1</b>	88	86.3	86.3	86.3
	<b>2</b>	14	13.7	13.7	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	102	100.0	100.0	

A large proportion of teachers in the above table show that students remain engaged and focused during reading sessions.

<b>11) Do your students try to complete reading tasks even when they find them difficult?</b>					
		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>Valid</b>	<b>1</b>	81	79.4	79.4	79.4
	<b>2</b>	21	20.6	20.6	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	102	100.0	100.0	

The above table of student persistence showed that a large number of teachers reported that students attempted to complete reading tasks even when they found them difficult.

<b>Q2) What grade level do you currently teach?</b>					
		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>Valid</b>	<b>preschool</b>	33	32.4	32.4	32.4
	<b>Grade1-2</b>	28	27.5	27.5	59.8
	<b>Grade 3</b>	41	40.2	40.2	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	102	100.0	100.0	

The demographic profile of participants in this study consisted of 102 teachers teaching at early primary levels. The largest group taught was Grade 3 (40.2%), followed by preschool (32.4%) and Grades 1 and 2 (27.5%). This shows a balanced representation across early childhood education.

<b>Q3) How many years of teaching experience do you have?</b>					
		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>Valid</b>	<b>1</b>	25	24.5	24.5	24.5
	<b>2</b>	34	33.3	33.3	57.8

	<b>3</b>	43	42.2	42.2	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	102	100.0	100.0	

In terms of teaching experience most teachers had 3 plus years of experience (42.2%), followed by those with 2 years of experience (33.3%) and 1 year of experience (24.5%), thus, suggesting that the sample primarily consisted of teachers from early years. Overall, the demographics indicate a diverse mix of grade levels with teachers with more experience within the year range of 1 to 3 years.

<b>Q3) How many years of teaching experience do you have?</b>					
		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>Valid</b>	<b>1</b>	25	24.5	24.5	24.5
	<b>2</b>	34	33.3	33.3	57.8
	<b>3</b>	43	42.2	42.2	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	102	100.0	100.0	

Most respondents had moderate to high teaching experience, with over 75% having more than three years of experience.

<b>12) Do you check students understanding by asking questions about the story?</b>					
		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>Valid</b>	<b>1</b>	99	97.1	97.1	97.1
	<b>2</b>	3	2.9	2.9	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	102	100.0	100.0	

### Comprehension Questioning

Nearly all teachers (97.1%) reported checking students' understanding by asking questions, indicating widespread use of comprehension monitoring.

<b>13) Do your students show improvement in understanding stories over time?</b>					
		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>Valid</b>	<b>1</b>	101	99.0	99.0	99.0
	<b>2</b>	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	102	100.0	100.0	

### Improvement in Reading Comprehension

Almost all teachers (99.0%) perceived improvement in students' understanding of stories over time.

<b>Crosstab</b>							
				<b>Q3) How many years of teaching experience do you have?</b>			<b>Total</b>
				<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	
8)	Do you involve	1	Count	15	23	37	75

parents in helping children read at home?		% within 8) Do you involve parents in helping children read at home?	20.0%	30.7%	49.3%	100.0%
		% within Q3) How many years of teaching experience do you have?	60.0%	67.6%	86.0%	73.5%
		% of Total	14.7%	22.5%	36.3%	73.5%
	2	Count	10	11	6	27
		% within 8) Do you involve parents in helping children read at home?	37.0%	40.7%	22.2%	100.0%
		% within Q3) How many years of teaching experience do you have?	40.0%	32.4%	14.0%	26.5%
	% of Total	9.8%	10.8%	5.9%	26.5%	
<b>Total</b>		<b>Count</b>	25	34	43	102
		<b>% within 8) Do you involve parents in helping children read at home?</b>	24.5%	33.3%	42.2%	100.0%
		<b>% within Q3) How many years of teaching experience do you have?</b>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		<b>% of Total</b>	24.5%	33.3%	42.2%	100.0%

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.417 <sup>a</sup>	2	.040
Likelihood Ratio	6.685	2	.035
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.029	1	.014
N of Valid Cases	102		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.62.

**Cross-tabulation: Teaching Experience × Parental Involvement**

The cross-tabulation shows differences in parental involvement practices based on years of teaching experience. Among teachers who reported involving parents in helping children read at home, the highest proportion belonged to those with 6 or more years of experience (49.3%), followed by teachers with 3–5 years of experience (30.7%), and those with 0–2 years of experience (20.0%).

When examined within each experience group, 86.0% of teachers with 6+ years of experience reported involving parents, compared to 67.6% of teachers with 3–5 years and 60.0% of teachers with 0–2 years. This indicates that parental involvement practices increase with teaching experience.

Conversely, teachers who did not involve parents were more commonly found among those with less teaching experience, particularly in the 0–2 years and 3–5 years categories.

**Chi-Square Test of Association**

The chi-square test revealed a statistically significant association between years of teaching experience and parental involvement in reading activities,  $\chi^2(2, N = 102) = 6.417, p = .040$ . The likelihood ratio test and linear-by-linear association were also significant ( $p < .05$ ), further supporting this finding.

All expected cell counts were above 5, indicating that the assumptions for the chi-square test were met and the results are reliable.

**Combined Interpretation**

Taken together, the cross-tabulation and chi-square results indicate a significant relationship between teaching experience and parental involvement in children’s reading at home. Teachers with greater experience were more likely to involve parents, suggesting that professional experience may influence teachers’ recognition of the importance of home–school collaboration in early literacy development.

This finding aligns with the study’s first objective by highlighting how instructional practices, particularly parental engagement strategies, vary according to teachers’ professional experience.

**Regression**

Table X presents the variables entered into the multiple regression model. Students’ improvement in understanding stories over time was used as the dependent variable. Teaching strategies (phonemic awareness, vocabulary instruction, guided reading, and visual aids), parental involvement, and motivational factors (interest, engagement, and persistence) were entered as independent variables using the Enter method. All requested variables were included in the model, indicating that SPSS successfully estimated the regression equation.

<b>Model Summary</b>				
<b>Model</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
1	.157 <sup>a</sup>	.025	-.059	.102

**Model Summary**

The multiple regression model examined whether teaching strategies and student motivational factors predict students’ improvement in understanding stories over time.

The multiple regression model examined whether teaching strategies and student motivational factors predict students' improvement in understanding stories over time.

- $R = .157$  indicates a very weak relationship between the predictors and the dependent variable.
- $R^2 = .025$  shows that the model explains only a negligible proportion of the variance in reading comprehension improvement, and the negative adjusted  $R^2 (-.059)$  indicates the model performs worse than a mean-only model.
- The standard error of the estimate (.102) indicates limited predictive accuracy.

Interpretation: Overall, the predictors included in the model contribute very little to explaining improvement in reading comprehension.

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.024	8	.003	.293	.967 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	.966	93	.010		
	Total	.990	101			

a. Dependent Variable: 13) Do your students show improvement in understanding stories over time?

The ANOVA table tests whether the regression model as a whole is statistically significant.

- $F(8, 93) = 0.293$
- $p = .967$

Interpretation: The regression model is not statistically significant ( $p > .05$ ), indicating that the set of teaching strategies and motivational variables does not significantly predict students' improvement in understanding stories over time.

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.044	.069		15.047	.000		
	4) Do you teach phonemic awareness activities (e.g., sounds, rhyming, blending)?	-.014	.025	-.058	-.542	.589	.926	1.080
	5) Do you teach new vocabulary reading?	.022	.021	.111	1.034	.304	.903	1.108
	6) Do you use guided reading in 2 or 1?	-.016	.023	-.076	-.709	.480	.911	1.098

7) Do you use visual aids (pictures, flashcards, story illustrations) to support reading?	-0.004	.049	-0.012	-.083	.934	.530	1.885
8) Do you involve parents in helping children read at home?	-.016	.027	-.071	-.598	.552	.737	1.358
9) Do your students show interest and enjoyment 2 reading activities?	.011	.051	.034	.217	.829	.437	2.288
10) Do your students stay engaged and focused 2 reading tasks?	-.010	.049	-.035	-.205	.838	.358	2.793
11) Do your students try to complete reading tasks even when they find them difficult?	-.004	.034	-.018	-.132	.895	.551	1.816
a. Dependent Variable: 13) Do your students show improvement in understanding stories over time?							

### Coefficients (Individual Predictors)

The coefficients table shows whether any individual predictor significantly contributes to the model.

Predictor	$\beta$	p-value	Interpretation
Phonemic awareness	-.058	.589	Not significant
Vocabulary teaching	.111	.304	Not significant
Guided reading	-.076	.480	Not significant
Visual aids	-.012	.934	Not significant
Parental involvement	-.071	.552	Not significant
Interest & enjoyment	.034	.829	Not significant
Engagement & focus	-.035	.838	Not significant
Persistence with difficult tasks	-.018	.895	Not significant

None of the predictors had a **statistically significant effect** on students' reading comprehension improvement (all  $p > .05$ ).

### Collinearity Diagnostics

- **Tolerance values** range from .358 to .926
- **VIF values** range from 1.08 to 2.79

### **Interpretation**

There is no multicollinearity problem among the predictors, as all VIF values are below the acceptable threshold of 5.

### **Correlation vs. Regression Interpretation**

While the correlation analysis shows the strength and direction of relationships among teaching strategies, motivational factors, and students' improvement in story understanding, it does not test whether these variables can predict improvement when considered together. Regression analysis, on the other hand, examines the predictive power of these variables simultaneously. Therefore, even though practices like questioning students' understanding show a strong positive correlation with comprehension improvement, this does not necessarily translate into a significant regression effect once all teaching strategies and motivational factors are included in the model. This distinction helps explain why some individually significant correlations may not result in significant predictors in the multiple regression analysis.

### **Multiple Regression Analysis**

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine whether teaching strategies (phonemic awareness instruction, vocabulary teaching, guided reading, use of visual aids), parental involvement, and student motivational factors (interest, engagement, and persistence) predict students' improvement in understanding stories over time.

The overall regression model was not statistically significant,  $F(8, 93) = 0.293, p = .967$ , explaining only 2.5% of the variance in students' reading comprehension improvement ( $R^2 = .025$ ). The adjusted  $R^2$  value (-0.059) indicated that the included predictors did not meaningfully contribute to the model.

None of the individual predictors significantly predicted improvement in understanding stories ( $p > .05$ ). However, collinearity diagnostics showed acceptable tolerance and VIF values, suggesting that multicollinearity was not a concern.

### **Interpretive emphasis**

These findings suggest that while the examined instructional and motivational variables are important classroom practices, they may not independently predict reported improvements in reading comprehension when considered simultaneously. Instead, improvement in story understanding may be more closely associated with direct assessment and feedback practices, as indicated by subsequent correlation analyses.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Introduction**

To understand with the help of multiple regression analysis whether students' understanding of stories over time were predicted by teaching strategies and motivational factors. The multiple regression analysis revealed that the overall model was not statistically significant,  $F(8, 93) = 0.293, p = .967$ , indicating that the set of eight predictors did not reliably predict improvement in reading comprehension. The model explained only 2.5% of the variance in reading comprehension improvement ( $R^2 = .025$ ), suggesting a very weak relationship between the predictors and the outcome variable. Moreover, the adjusted  $R^2$  value of -.059 indicates that, after adjusting for the number of predictors included in the model, the regression performed worse than would be expected by chance alone. Examination of the individual predictors

showed that none made a statistically significant contribution to the model, with all p-values exceeding .05. The above findings indicate that there was no significant improvement in students reading comprehension as indicated by the instructional and motivational variables. This chapter examines the findings of the research study in accordance to the research objectives.

### **Teaching Strategies used for reading comprehension**

The conclusions drawn from the above research show that teacher mostly use phonemic activities, guided reading, visual aids and vocab words when teaching reading and comprehension. These policies are best for preschoolers, as they support decoding skills and help young learners connect written text with meaning. The most frequent use of phonemic awareness strategies and guided reading reflects teachers emphasis on early reading instructions. This is in accordance with Putri and Anjarwati (2025), which highlighted the role of guided reading and phonemic awareness in honing children's early comprehension and decoding abilities.

Visual aids like pictures, flash cards and story illustrations assist students to understand and decode texts and provide tangible representations of abstract ideas. Shanahan et al (2010) likewise noted that visual aids and scaffolding strategies improve comprehension, in particular for those early learners who are still developing language proficiency.

Whereas on the other hand parental involvement strategies were less frequent. This shows that reading is mostly teachers directed and classroom based. Kim and Jang (2025) are of the opinion that teacher led practices are more systematic and consistent than parental support. Limited home support was influenced by time restrictions, parental guidance or even greater dependence on formal classroom instruction.

In general, the supports indicates that teachers emphasize instructional strategies that can be managed in the classroom and are supported by early literacy. However, low parental involvement shows that this factor needs to be further strengthened in order to improve early reading.

### **Perceived student motivation during reading activities**

Teachers are of the opinion that children must be already motivated during reading lessons.

Student participation, attention and visual materials are encouraged by engaging instruction. Similarly, Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) found that scaffolded literacy and interactive literacy instructions encourages student motivation and engagement.

These researches show that motivation is not only an individual learner characteristic but is also directed by instructional practices. Engaging teaching and supportive school environment approaches contribute to children's willingness to participate in reading tasks. This is in accordance with Ryan and Deci's (2000) self-determination theory, which highlights the role of autonomy – supportive and engaging learning environment in fostering intrinsic motivation.

### **Perceived reading comprehension outcomes**

Teachers mostly observed positive relationships in teaching strategies, student motivation. This understanding of age appropriate texts which suggests that instructional strategies commonly used in the classes are effective in supporting students understanding. As emphasized by Shanahan et al. (2010) consistency between frequent strategy use and positive outcomes support scaffolded and structured

reading instruction. The above findings are mostly based on the perception of teachers instead of standardized assessments.

Although perception of teachers give valuable insight into learning in the classroom, they may not always be fully aligned with achievement measures. Classroom dynamics and expectations, show the importance of interpreting perceptual data cautiously.

### **Relationship between teaching strategies, motivation and comprehension**

The correlation analysis indicated that a positive relationship exists between student motivation, teaching strategies and reading comprehension. This revealed that the greater use of instructional strategies is linked with increased student motivation, which in turn is associated with improved comprehension outcomes. These research findings are associated with Guthrie et. Al (2004) who highlighted the interconnected role of instructional practices and motivation in supporting literacy development. Although these correlations show association among variables, they do not indicate causation. Field (2018) clarifies, that correlation does not establish predictive or causal relationships. However, the findings suggest that motivation may act as an essential link between instructional practices and learning outcomes

### **Predictive role of motivation and teaching strategies**

Multiple regression analysis showed that when considered together teaching strategies and student motivation did not considerably predict reading comprehension improvement. This suggests that within the regression model, even though these variables are associated to comprehension, they do not independently explain changes in comprehension outcomes.

This research finding indicate the sophisticated nature of reading and comprehension. They are influenced by several, instructional, cognitive and contextual factors beyond those apprehended through survey measures. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018) noted that the interacting variables often shaped the outcomes in education and they may not be fully represented in the quantitative models. The dependence on the self-reported data may also have restricted the predictive strength of the model.

### **Overall interpretation of findings**

The overall interpretation of the findings indicate that effective early reading instructions depends on instructional strategies and student motivation. Teachers have seen that guided reading, visual aids and phonemic awareness activities support comprehension development. Students who are motivated will benefit more from these strategies. According to Snow, 2002 teaching practices and learner engagement interaction are aligned with integrated perspectives.

The regression model outcome ( $R^2 = 0.025$ ) explains only a small proportion of variance in reading. The negative  $R^2$  shows that the predictors did not improve upon a mean model. This suggested that other variables that were not measured like language background, quality of instruction or context classroom also play a significant role in manipulating comprehension outcomes.

### **Educational implications**

These research findings suggest that while classroom environments support student motivation, teachers should consistently use structured and collaborative reading strategies. Further, reading comprehension can be enhanced through instructional approaches that promote engagement, interaction and positive

reinforcement. According to Guthrie & Wigfield, (2000) educational implications are in accordance with research laying stress on motivation and supportive teaching strategies.

### **Limitations of the study**

The following are the limitations of the study

- 1) The teacher self report data is affected by social desirability
- 2) In depth exploration not possible due to quantitative survey
- 3) Focus on urban schools and limited sample size
- 4) Cross sectional design does not allow for causal completion.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

Based on the above research findings, teachers must continue using strategies such as phonemic awareness, guided reading and visual aids, while also emphasizing motivational practices. Schools may also provide professional development courses which are dedicated to incorporating motivational techniques into reading instructions (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Early literacy development can further be strengthened by home and school initiatives, thus strengthening parental involvement.

### **Conclusion**

- 1) This study shows that early reading comprehension is supported in the class room as well as motivating reading in students.
- 2) Use of various strategies by teachers such as phonemic awareness, guided reading etc encourages and motivates students.
- 3) Reading comprehension cannot be improved by instructional methods or motivation alone but by a combination of various factors.
- 4) This study provides useful insight to policy makers and educators, who are seeking to strengthen reading and comprehension skills in early childhood education.

### **Future research**

- 1) Future research should include additional factors like classroom observation, assessments and reading records.
- 2) Longitudinal research is recommended to test teaching strategies over a period of time
- 3) Sample should include, government schools, rural areas and diverse samples
- 4) Mixed method could be used.

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