

# Survey of Reading Interest of Elementary School Students Towards Picture Story Books: Recommend the Role of School Libraries in Providing Book Collections

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## Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan minat baca siswa sekolah dasar terhadap buku cerita bergambar dan peran perpustakaan sekolah dalam menyediakan bahan bacaan yang sesuai dengan minat anak. Lokasi penelitian berada di Kabupaten Kuningan, Jawa Barat, Indonesia. Metode penelitian menggunakan survei dengan pendekatan kuantitatif. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan angket yang dibagikan kepada 135 siswa sekolah dasar yang dilengkapi dengan wawancara. Analisis data menggunakan analisis statistik deskriptif kuantitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa minat membaca siswa SD terhadap buku cerita bergambar termasuk tinggi (80%). Dari enam subvariabel minat membaca teridentifikasi perasaan senang membaca tinggi (8%), keseriusan membaca tinggi (73%), kemampuan memahami isi bacaan tinggi (74%), keterlibatan emosional dengan alur cerita tinggi (75%), upaya mendapatkan buku cerita bergambar sedang (63%), penerapan setelah membaca cerita tinggi (70%). Upaya mendapatkan buku bergambar berada pada kategori sedang dari keenam subvariabel. Berdasarkan hasil wawancara, siswa jarang mengunjungi perpustakaan karena bahan bacaan utamanya adalah buku pelajaran dan buku pelajaran. Disarankan agar sekolah menetapkan kebijakan literasi membaca dan menyediakan koleksi buku bacaan yang diminati siswa.

**Kata Kunci:** *Minat Baca, Buku Cerita Bergambar, Sekolah Dasar, Perpustakaan Sekolah.*

## Abstract

This study aims to describe elementary school students' reading interest in picture story books and the role of school libraries in providing reading materials that follow children's interests. The research location is in Kuningan Regency, West Java, Indonesia. The research method applies a survey with a quantitative approach. The data collection technique used questionnaires distributed to 135 elementary school students supplemented by interviews. Data analysis applies quantitative descriptive statistical analysis. The results showed that elementary school students reading interest in picture storybooks was high (80%). Of the six sub-variables of reading interest, it was identified that feelings of reading pleasure were high (8%), reading seriousness was high (73%), the ability to understand reading content was high (74%), emotional involvement with the storyline was high (75%), effort to get a medium picture story book (63%), application after reading the story was high (70%). The effort to get a picture book is in the medium category of the six sub-variables. Based on the interview results, students rarely visit the library because the reading materials are primarily textbooks and textbooks. It is recommended that schools establish reading literacy policies and provide a collection of reading books that students are interested.

**Keyword:** *Reading Interest, Picture Storybook, Elementary School, School Library.*

## INTRODUCTION

Reading is one thing that cannot be separated from the world of education. The pleasure of reading is a fundamental tool for learning, whether at school, at home, or outside of school. The practice of reading books plays a vital role for students. Reading books can help foster students' thinking skills, adaptability, and creativity in the face of sustainable development (Tran et al., 2019). Someone who likes to read little by little will increase curiosity. If curiosity gets a strong impulse in the mind, interest in reading begins to arise. The step to foster interest in reading is to optimize the quality of education and increase student achievement to compete at the international level (Marmoah & Poerwanti; Suharno, 2022). Fostering an

interest in reading is more strategic and prospective when starting when the child is at the elementary school level.

The stage of thinking development of elementary school students is at the concrete operational stage. At this stage, students are at the stage of thinking about natural objects and specific examples rather than abstract concepts. To be able to make conclusions about what is studied or what is read requires concrete illustrations. Therefore picture books are part of their lives at home and school (Niland, 2023). In picture books, there is a creative combination of words and visual images to attract attention, stimulate imagination, and support the development of thinking to make meaning to the content of reading. It can be said that through picture books, it is possible to cultivate the love of elementary school students to read books. Reading picture books can encourage the development of early literacy skills and a joyous love of reading. The use of picture storybooks in classroom learning that focuses on text comprehension helps generate motivation and interest in reading in elementary school children (Marín et al., 2022). However, is this theory proven that elementary school students are interested in picture storybooks? This question will be the focus of the study in this article.

Students' reading interests cannot be separated from factors influencing or inhibiting them. In addition to internal or personal factors of students, external factors are also external factors, namely the learning process at school. Interest in reading must be processed, cannot grow without encouragement, and needs a learning process. Therefore, it takes much effort from teachers to apply approaches, strategies, or methods that can motivate students always to be happy and interested in reading to fulfill their curiosity. Many methods have been proven to increase students' reading interest, including the scaffolding method in reading learning (D. Yang, 2021), the narrative dialogical approach (Grolig et al., 2020), (Sarimanah et al., 2019)(Oo & Habók, 2022)(Grolig et al., 2020)(Oo & Habók, 2022)

Many methods have been proven to increase students' interest in reading, including the scaffolding method in reading learning (D. Yang, 2021), Preview, Question, Read, Reflect, Recite, Review method (PQ4R) (Sarimanah et al., 2019), narrative dialogical approach (Grolig et al., 2020), reflection-based questioning approach (Oo & Habók, 2022).

The learning process taken by teachers is not enough without support from school facilities. School libraries are essential in encouraging reading interest and student engagement to enjoy reading (Merga, 2021a; Zhou & Adkins, 2016). A library is a place and resource that contributes to the pleasure of reading if the services and reading rooms available in the library are pleasant (Garnar & Tonyan, 2021). The management of the school library not only collects and stores library materials but has a mission to promote interest in reading to students. Therefore, in school libraries, a substantial collection of books and several adequate reading rooms are needed (Nakai Takayuki et al., 2023). School libraries can help foster conditions for academic and social well-being, aiming to increase student satisfaction, success, and retention in reading (Eshbach, 2020). In the current condition known as the digital era, the presence of school libraries is still necessary. In the context of smartphone-mediated info-communication, it reflects new demands that school libraries need to adapt to (Fonseca & Mealha, 2022). Collaboration between libraries and teachers helps create a supportive learning environment and increases students' reading interest.

However, it is still found that students rarely visit the library, or visit the library only limited to doing academic tasks given by the teacher. The problem that is the focus of research is how to make elementary school students have a high interest in reading and supported by the role of libraries in providing services to provide reading materials that follow reading interests. The purpose of the study was to survey elementary school students' reading interest in picture story books whose results can be used as recommendations to the school library to provide reading materials that align with the interests of elementary school students.

## Literature Review

The literature review examines the importance of reading skills in human life and the importance of fostering reading interest in elementary school students. In fostering interest in reading, in addition to the need to take approaches and strategies for learning to read by teachers, teachers also need to consider choosing reading materials following the cognitive development characteristics of elementary school students. They need illustrations or pictures to make it easier to understand the content of the reading. In fostering interest in reading, it cannot be separated from the critical role of school libraries in facilitating reading materials following student interests and adequate reading rooms.

## Research Questions

The general research question of this study is How is the reading interest of elementary school students towards picture story books? To obtain answers to these common questions, the research questions are detailed into six questions as follows.

1. How do students feel when reading picture storybooks?
2. How serious are students in reading picture story books?
3. How is the ability of students to understand the content of the story from the picture storybook?
4. How do students' emotions engage the storyline?
5. How do students attempt to get picture storybooks?
6. What follow-up do students do after reading the picture storybook?

### Reading Interest

Reading is an essential skill for every individual to have because reading plays a vital role in human life. Through reading, one can expand knowledge and information from various sources, in other words, reading is a gateway to knowledge. Extensive knowledge and information from various sources can improve thinking, vocabulary, and writing skills. The results prove reading impacts other academic domain skills (Koyuncu & Firat, 2020). Reading activities can enhance students' reading experience and allow them to more effective communication and meaningful learning (Rou & Yunus, 2020). Reading is one aspect of the assessment on the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) platform, and the assessment results show that in Indonesia only 30% of students achieve Level 2 proficiency in reading. At the same time, the average of OECD countries: reaches 77% (Avvisati et al., 2018). The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) data shows that people's interest in reading in Indonesia is much lower, around 0.01 percent. This means that out of 10,000 children in Indonesia, only one student enjoys reading (Netra et al., 2023). This fact is a challenge for Indonesia, so the Government established the School Literacy Movement policy through the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 23 of 2015. The results of Kartikasari & Nuryasana's (2022) research on the school literacy movement concluded that the school literacy movement in elementary schools is thoughtfully implemented. However, its success cannot be separated from supporting and inhibiting factors. One of the inhibiting factors is the low number of books available in the school library so that students cannot choose reading books that suit their interests.

So critical reading skills, the interest in reading needs to be fostered since elementary school-age children impact higher education. The reading interest that students already have in lower grades is positively correlated with students' reading interest when they are in higher grades. As the results of the research of Käsper et al.(2020), interest in reading in the first grade of elementary school has an impact on better reading interest when students are in the third grade of elementary school. Nurturing a love of reading in children can encourage the development of early literacy skills and foster an interest in reading. The study by Pehlivan et al. in Turkey (2010) found that many prospective teachers' reading interests are average, and they do not have enough reading habits. It is unfortunate if prospective teachers do not have a high interest in reading, while the teacher's job is to nurture students to be interested in reading. The study results can be suspected that the interest in reading prospective teachers has not been fostered since childhood and at the previous level of education.

Various studies on reading learning strategies and methods were piloted to increase students' interest in reading. Yang (2021) found a scaffolding teaching model in reading teaching to increase students' reading interest and reading skills. Mangasi (2019) applies the Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review (SQ3R) strategy to the reading comprehension of elementary school students, proving that students' reading interest increases. The reading comprehension skills that students already have become the basis of skills to arouse interest in reading. The findings of Oo & Habók (2022) research revealed that teaching with a reflection-based questioning approach (RBQA) significantly positively affects students' reading comprehension.

Speaking of fostering interest in reading, getting used to it from the age of children is essential. Especially for elementary school students, there is an aspect to consider, namely the stage of cognitive development of elementary school students. Judging from the stage of cognitive development, elementary school students are at a concrete operational stage, the third stage in Piaget's theory of cognitive development. This period lasts about seven to eleven years, characterized by organized and rational thought development. Children at this stage think about natural (concrete) objects and specific examples rather than abstract concepts (Mcleod & June 2023). At this stage of development, elementary school students can generally draw logical conclusions if there are concrete examples. Thus, elementary school students need to choose the type of reading that contains illustrations or pictures to foster reading interest.

Research on the benefits of picture books has been conducted by several researchers who concluded that children explore images and can understand the content of reading to the maximum by integrating narrative and images (MARIČIĆ & STAKIĆ, 2023; Takacs & Bus, 2018; L. et al., 2023). To check whether elementary school students are interested in reading picture story books, the research conducted

is to survey elementary school students' reading interest in picture story books to recommend the role of school libraries in providing book collections.

### The Role Of School Libraries In Increasing Interest In Reading

Reading is one of the focuses of assessment in the PISA platform, which shows that reading is an essential skill that nations must possess. All countries are currently focused on improving reading literacy, including Indonesia, which established the School Literacy Movement policy. However, the challenge faced by Indonesia is low reading literacy as per PISA 2019 and UNESCO data (Netra et al., 2023). The results of Kartikasari & Nuryasana's obstacles to the success of the School Literacy Movement are the limited reading materials that follow the reading interests of elementary school students. This problem is suspected that the school library has not optimally provided reading materials that suit children's interests. School libraries have an essential role in increasing students' reading interest if they provide access according to readers' needs (Zhou & Adkins, 2016), create new library services, and expand service content (see also Zhang, 2022). In the school library, a substantial collection of magazines and general books according to students' interests is needed, and a comfortable reading room for students to read in the library is also needed (Soulen & Tedrow, 2022)

## METHOD RESEARCH

### Population and Sample Research

The research applies survey methods with a quantitative approach. The study was conducted in June 2022. The research location is in Cigandamekar District, Kuningan Regency, West Java Province, Indonesia. Sampling applies proportional random sampling. The study subjects were public elementary school students in the Cigandamekar sub-district, Kuningan Regency. Population and Research Sample as shown in the following table.

**Table 1. Population & Sample Research**

No	Elementary School Name	Students Population	Proportional Sampling (10%)
1	SD Negeri 1 Cibuntu	148	15
2	SD Negeri 1 Koreak	140	14
3	SD Negeri 2 Cibuntu	76	8
4	SD Negeri 2 Karangmuncang	206	21
5	SD Negeri 2 Koreak	109	11
6	SD Negeri 2 Panawuan	73	7
7	SDN Sangkanmulya	68	7
8	SDN Sangkanurip	233	25
9	SDN Timbang	265	27
Total		1.318	135

### Instruments

Instrument using questionnaires and interviews. Interviews are used to complete the acquisition of data not missed in the questionnaire and function as a member check. The questionnaire instrument is developed in the form of a closed questionnaire. The subjects of the study were asked to choose alternative answers in the form of a scale of four, as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. Score Each Answer Choice on the Questionnaire**

Score	Answer Options
4	Very happy/ Very frequent/ Very interested/ Always/ Very understanding/ Very capable
3	Happy/ Often/ Interested/ Understand/ Able
2	Less happy/ Sometimes/ Less interested/ Less understanding/ Less Capable
1	Unhappy/ Never/ Not interested/Do not understand/ Unable

To measure the reading interest of elementary school students towards picture story books developed in aspects and indicators as shown in Table 3. The formulated indicators become the basis for formulating questions in the questionnaire.

**Table 3. Aspects and Indicators of Reading Interest and Distribution of Question Numbers**

No	Measure Aspects	Indicators	Question Number in the Questionnaire
1	Feeling pleasure to read	Feel good about reading picture storybooks	1
2	Reading Seriousness	Reading frequency	2
		Interested in reading picture storybooks	3
		Reading in your spare time	4
		Passion for reading picture storybooks	5
3	Ability to understand the content of the story	Read picture storybooks to the end	6
		Can understand the content of the story from the picture storybook	7
		Can infer the content of the picture storybook story	8
		Can judge the content of the story	9
4.	Emotional involvement with the storyline	Express joy	10
		Expressing sadness	11
		Expressing dislike	12
		Visit the school library	13
5	Attempts to get picture storybooks	Stay in reading in the library reading room	14
		Borrowed a book from the school library and took it home	15
		Apply a story body massage	16
		Retelling the story to others	17

### Procedure

Permit the principal of the elementary school of the research location to distribute questionnaires to students and interview students if data is still needed to complete the data from the questionnaire.

### Data Analysis

The data obtained in the study were the results of filling out questionnaires and the results of interviews with elementary school students. Interview data is used as supporting data. Data analysis of questionnaire results begins with data tabulation. After tabulating the data, it is analyzed using percentage calculations with the following formula.

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

P = Percent of respondents' answers

F = Scores obtained

N = Max scores

The percent calculation results are categorized to map elementary school students' reading interest in picture story books. The categorization formula is used for calculation as follows.

Most miniature Scores = smallest score x number of questions x number of respondents

Most significant Scores = most significant score x number of questions x number of respondents

$$\text{Mean Teoretik}(\mu) = \frac{\text{Largest Score} - \text{Smallest Score}}{6}$$

Range = most significant score – most miniature score

$$\text{Standard Deviation}(\sigma) = \frac{\text{Range}}{6}$$

The score categories are formulated in the following table.

**Table 4. Score Categorization**

Score Interval	Category
$X \leq M - 1,5SD$	Very low
$M - 1,5SD < X \leq M - 0,5SD$	Low
$M - 0,5SD < X \leq M + 0,5SD$	medium
$M + 0,5SD < X \leq M + 1,5SD$	High
$M + 1,5SD < X$	Very high

M = Mean Teoritik

SD = Standard Deviation

Based on this categorization, after knowing the minimum score, maximum score, Range, Theoretical Mean (M), and Standard Deviation (SD), an interpretation of the reading interest score of elementary school students is formulated with the following formula.

Smallest Score = 2.295

Largest Score = 9.180

Range = 6.885

Theoretical Mean = 5.737,5

Standar Deviation = 1.147,5

The categorization of the percentage of variables of reading interest of elementary school students towards picture story books is formulated as the following table.

**Table 5. Percentage Categorization**

Score Interval	Percentage	Category
$X \leq 4016,25$	$X \leq 44\%$	Very low
$4016,25 < X \leq 5163,75$	$44\% < X \leq 56\%$	Low
$5163,75 < X \leq 6311,25$	$56\% < X \leq 69\%$	Medium
$6311,25 < X \leq 7458,75$	$69\% < X \leq 81\%$	High
$7458,75 < X$	$81\% < X$	Very high

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of questionnaire data analysis based on sub-sub-variables and indicators of elementary school students' reading interest in picture story books are as follows.

### The Feeling of Pleasure in Reading

Feelings of pleasure in reading consist of two indicators: feeling happy reading picture books and reading frequency. The results of the questionnaire answer analysis appear in the following figure.

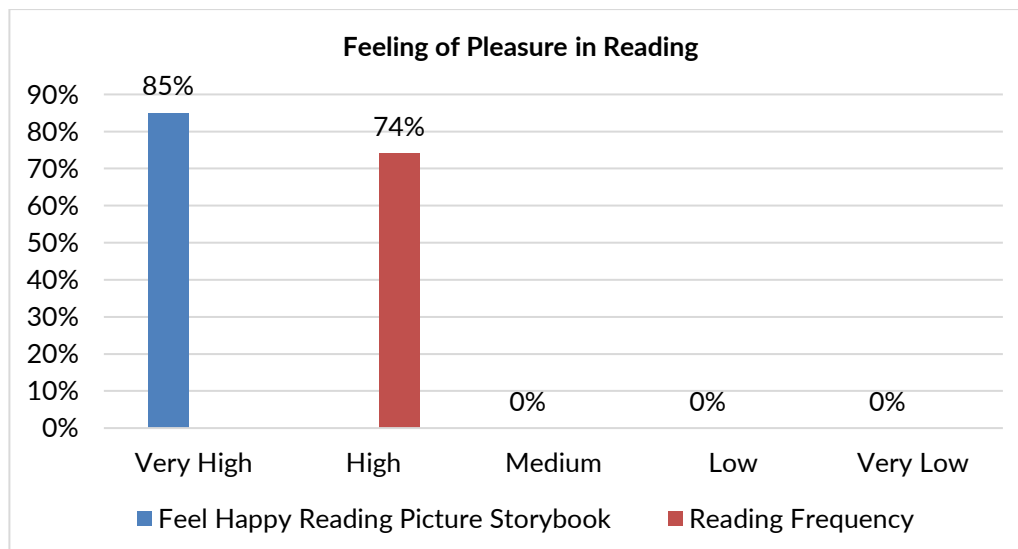
**Figure 1. Percentage Graph of Reading Pleasure Sub-Variables**



Figure 1 illustrates that elementary school students are highly interested in reading picture storybooks. It was identified that the indicator of pleasure in reading picture books was very high (85%) and that pleasure had an impact on high reading frequency (74%). The indicator of reading pleasure balanced with reading frequency is a driver for children to become lifelong readers (Merga, 2016). The feeling of pleasure in reading picture storybooks can be used as the primary capital for developing "book love." Books are "icons"; with the love of books, students can communicate many messages or get ideas that can be realized in everyday life (Thumala Olave, 2020). Teachers have an essential role in fostering and maintaining students who love reading. Teachers can do this by developing teaching materials that foster interest in reading (Latifah et al., 2023). In addition to teachers developing teaching materials, they can also apply questioning strategies (Oo & Habók, 2022). Learning strategies positively correlate with students' reading and reading interests at the primary school level. Students with good reading skills and a high interest in reading impact reading text comprehension and vocabulary (Käsper et al., 2020). The reading skills of elementary school students need to be trained continuously to form their interest in reading (Acevedo & Gómez, 2021). Elementary school students' interest in reading cannot grow alone but requires guidance from parents and teachers to grow it according to student development (Netra et al., 2023).

### Reading Seriousness

The sub-variable of reading seriousness consists of four indicators: interest in reading picture story books, reading in spare time, enthusiasm to read picture story books, and reading picture story books to completion. The results of the analysis of questionnaire data from each indicator on this sub-variable are shown in the following table.

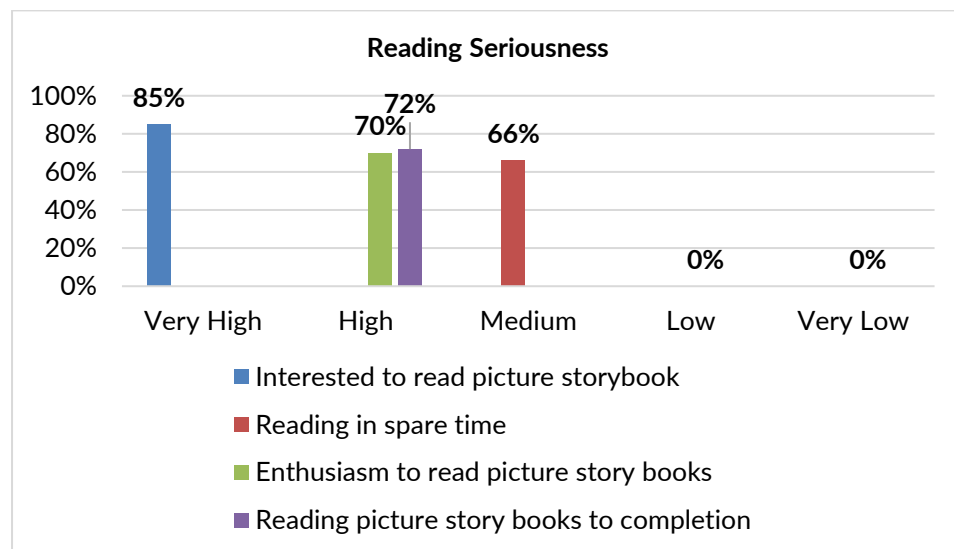


Figure 2. Percentage Graph of Reading Seriousness Sub-Variables

Reading seriousness indicates reading interest because everyone with a high interest and interest in reading encourages serious reading. In addition, the seriousness of reading can be identified when someone fills his free time by reading and is eager to read the story to completion. The results of data analysis and Graph 2 showed the seriousness of students reading high-picture storybooks (73%). Four indicators of reading seriousness also showed high categories. Indicators of interest in reading picture books in the very high category (85%), enthusiasm to read stories in the high category picture books (70%), and reading stories to the end of the high category (72%), although the tendency to read to fill leisure time in the medium category (66%). The sub-variable of reading seriousness contributes to interest in reading picture books because being driven by a strong interest in reading can keep away various reasons for not reading. The results of Soulen's research support the findings of this study that in the conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic and school libraries are closed; it still does not reduce the seriousness of reading for students who have a high interest in reading (Soulen & Tedrow, 2022). This suggests that serious book reading is driven by a strong interest (Al-Buraiki, 2022; Arrizabalaga et al., 2023). The findings of this study are the basis for consideration for teachers and schools to establish policies that can increase students' reading interest. Students who spent more time reading books correlated with higher reading interest (see Tran et al., 2019).

### Ability to Understand the Content of the Story

The sub-variable ability to understand the story's content consists of three indicators, namely being able to understand the story's content from the picture storybook, infer the content of the picture storybook, and assess the content of the story. The percentage of sub-variables of students' ability to understand the content of the story against the picture storybook is shown in the following diagram.

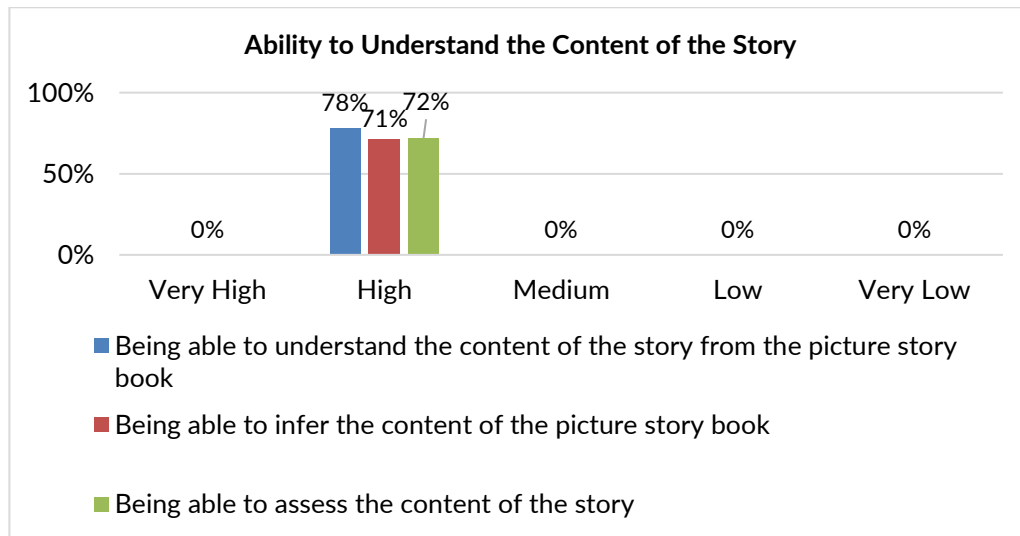


Figure 2. Sub Variable Diagram The Ability to Understand the Content of the Story

Figure 3 illustrates the sub-variables of students' ability to understand the story's content from the results of reading picture story books. Three indicators showing students understanding the story's content were identified as high (78%, 71%, 72%). This finding can be said that pictures can make it easier for elementary school students to understand the content of reading; in other words, pictures in storybooks help students imagine connecting images with the story's narrative. High interest in reading affects students' competence in analyzing discourse (Aprilia et al., 2020). The findings of this study were also found by Takacs & Bus (2018) (see also Li & Bus, 2023). Similarly, storybooks with pictures as examples can be used to teach science concepts. With image examples, students become easily abstract relational information by comparing analogical examples in picture books and leading them to understand transferable concepts more abstractly (Strouse & Ganea, 2021).

### Emotional Involvement in the Storyline of the Reading

The sub-variable of emotional involvement in the reading storyline consists of three indicators expressed by students when reading picture story books. Three indicators include joy, sadness, and dislike. The results of the data analysis are shown in Figure 4 below.

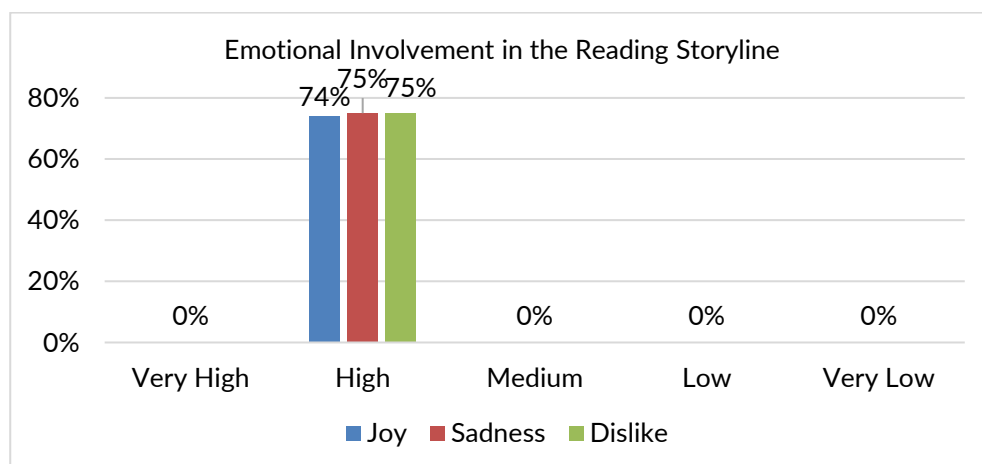


Figure 4. Percentage of Emotional Involvement in the Storyline of the Reading Sub-Variables

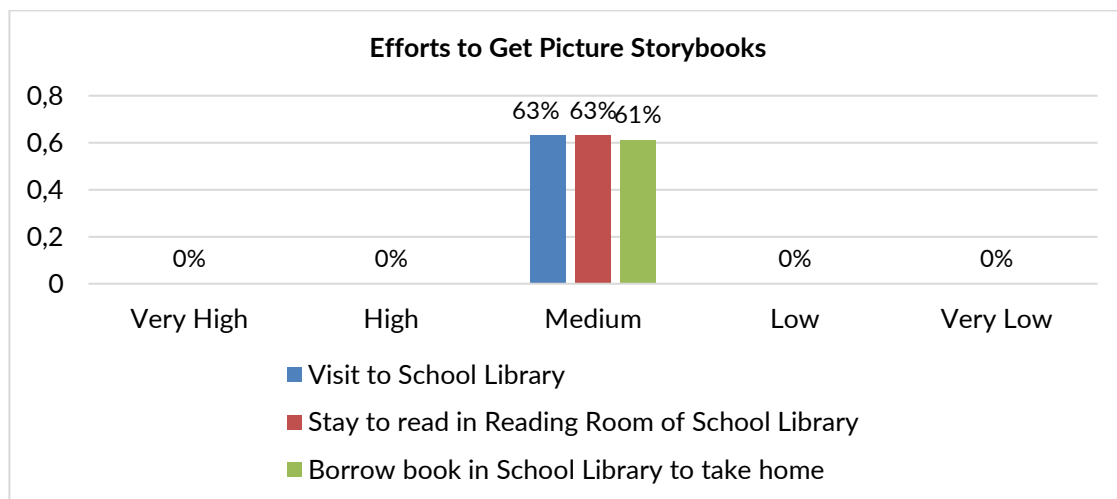
This sub-variable wants to know the emotional involvement of students when reading picture book stories, whether emotions are happy, sad, or dislike the storyline read. It can be seen in Figure 4 that three



indicators show a high category (75%) of students' emotional involvement with the storyline. The data analysis results show that students with high interest, seriousness in reading, and high comprehension also have a high emotional involvement in the storyline. This finding is supported by Kucirkova & Kamola's (2022) research that living children's stories involves the senses actively. It is also proven that to help children overcome sadness, they can use storybook media (Martínez-Caballero et al., 2023), and Bilandzic et al. (2020) found that stories often arouse children's emotions. Thus, the sub-variable of students' emotional involvement in the storyline when reading picture storybooks proves that reading's high interest and high seriousness impact emotional engagement. This finding is also supported by Mori's research (2019) and (see also Russell & Cain, 2022).

### Efforts to Get Picture Storybooks

The sub-variables of trying to get a picture storybook consist of three indicators that you want to map, visiting the school library, reading in the library reading room, and borrowing books in the school library to take home. Students' reading interest in picture storybooks was high (see Figure 1). Related to these findings, this study also wants to know whether students try to get picture storybooks to meet their interest in reading. Action sub-variables to get picture story books detailed in three indicators, visit the school library, stay in to read in the reading room in the school library, and borrow picture story books in the school library to take home. Figure 5 illustrates the results of the questionnaire data analysis of elementary school students.



**Figure 3. Percentage of Efforts to Get Picture Storybook Sub-Variables**

Figure 5 illustrates that students have not made much effort to get reading materials according to their interests. It is suspected that the reading materials available in the school library have not attracted students' interest. The results of the questionnaire answers for the sub-variables were completed with interviews with students. The interview results were obtained, most of the students gave the same answer that getting picture storybooks in the school library is limited. According to information obtained from student interviews, it is stated that the collection of books in the school library is more textbooks than picture story books that are in demand.

The findings of this study are supported by the opinion that elementary school students who already have a high interest in reading tend to visit bookstores or libraries (Simanová & Babiaková, 2022) in reading picture story books is manifested by the tendency to try to find reading books that are of interest. The more enthusiastic the reading, the more intense students use the time or space to read voluntarily. Enthusiastic reading can be used as a basis for the promotion of reading literacy (Akhmetova et al., 2022). In this case, it is necessary to distinguish between reading interest and reading enthusiasm. Interest in reading is long-term, if enthusiasm for reading is associated with a strong sense of pleasure. Nevertheless, both reading interest and reading enthusiasm are added values of reading literacy (see also Simanová & Babiaková, 2022).

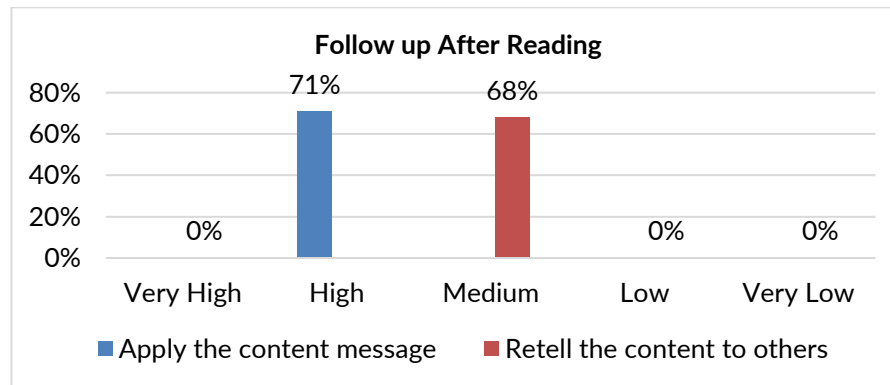
When students' efforts to obtain reading materials that are of interest have not been maximized, it needs to be the object of further research. An important consideration for school libraries is to provide reading books according to students' interests and adequate reading rooms, because the lack of reading books that suit children's interests and inadequate reading spaces affect students' reading habits and interests (Nakai Takayuki et al., 2023). In addition to the availability of collections of reading materials

according to student interests and library infrastructure, librarians are also needed who are open to providing reading services (Wojciechowska, 2022).

### Follow up after Reading

The application sub-variable after reading consists of two indicators, namely. The results of filling out questionnaires from each indicator on the application sub-variables after reading are seen in figure 6 below.

Apply the content message and retell the content to others

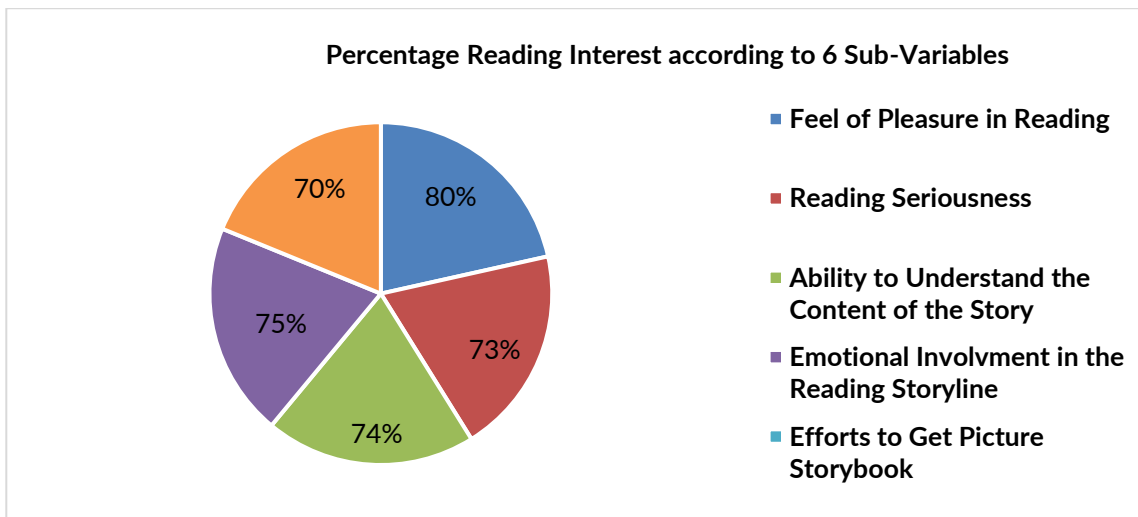


**Figure 6. Percentage of Follow up After Reading Picture Storybook Sub-Variables**

Figure 6 shows that after reading from a picture storybook, students admitted to applying the message of the story they read (71%), but did not express themselves to tell others (68%). Based on the results of the interview, the reason students do not tell others either to friends or family members is that it is difficult to tell stories verbally. This problem is taken into consideration by teachers to train students to retell the content of the story read as the development of communication skills. Practicing oral communication skills since elementary school is important because it equips them to communicate ideas to others, more than that they are trained to be able to convince others according to their views. In school settings, spoken language appears on all sorts of occasions (Dupont & Grandaty, 2020; Wiertz et al., 2022). It is used as a pedagogical tool, for example, during question and answer time with students, or when they are asked to share their point of view. Teachers also invite students to express themselves orally during more specific school activities. There are many opportunities to practice oral communication skills in schools, not only in language learning but also in other learning, including mathematics (see also Tong et al., 2021)

It has been proven that oral communication skills can be trained as early as elementary school-age children, as Colognesi et al (2020). Oral communication skills can be developed through teaching by applying pedagogical approaches that address oral genres and peer assessment. In the process, it can be allowed his friends to give feedback or suggestions verbally (Colognesi et al., 2020) and the next research in 2023 carried out research on the use of video to practice oral communication skills with the result that video is useful for teaching oral communication skills, but only for one component of oral skills verbal and non-verbal dimensions, and only for televisual (see also Colognesi et al., 2023).

The six sub-variables of elementary school students' reading interest in picture story books can be illustrated as shown below.



**Figure 7. Percentage of Reading Interest according to 6 Sub-Variables**

It appears in the figure that the sub-variables of reading interest that indicate that students' reading interest is high are feelings of reading pleasure (80%), reading seriousness (73%), ability to understand reading content (74%), emotional involvement with the reading storyline (75%), and application after reading (70%). While efforts to get picture storybooks show a medium category (63%). The reading pleasure sub-variable is the sub-variable with the highest percentage compared to other sub-variables.

As explained earlier, students' efforts to find reading materials in the medium category are suspected that the collection of available reading books is not fully following the type of reading that students are interested in. Students can get it outside the library along with the recent development of many e-books, digital comics, which are easily accessible online. This finding is an important recommendation for schools to facilitate reading materials that are suitable for student's interests. In this case, school libraries play an important role in promoting interest in reading through the provision of storybook collections that are in great demand by children (Soulen & Tedrow, 2022; Takacs & Bus, 2018). School libraries should act as centers of student interaction with reading materials (see also Merga, 2021; see also Shintia et al., 2021; Soulen & Tedrow, 2022) and as a source of information needed by students.

## CONCLUSION

The survey of reading interest of elementary school students towards picture story books was broken down into six sub-variables including feelings of pleasure in reading, seriousness of reading, ability to understand the content of the story, emotional involvement in the storyline, efforts to get picture story books, follow-up after reading. Each sub-variable is detailed in indicators (see Table 3) to be developed in the questionnaire.

Based on the analysis of questionnaire data, the survey findings concluded that students' reading interest in picture storybooks was high (80%). Of the six sub-variables of students' reading interest in picture storybooks, the percentage of obtaining high scores was a feeling of reading pleasure (80%), reading seriousness (73%), the ability to understand reading content (74%), emotional involvement with the reading storyline (75%), and application after reading (70%). While the effort to get a picture storybook shows a medium category (63%). The reading pleasure sub-variable is the sub-variable with the highest percentage compared to other sub-variables (see Figure 7).

The high reading interest of elementary school students needs coaching so that it can be improved and directed to other types of reading books so that on an ongoing basis reading interest is not limited to picture story books. Interest in reading that has grown in elementary school students if they get continuous coaching will have an impact when students take a higher level of education (middle school). Fostering and cultivating interest in reading is the task of teachers, therefore when teachers develop teaching materials, it is important to apply approaches to be able to foster students' interest in reading (Latifah et al., 2023). A well-developed reading interest of students becomes a basic pillar of reading literacy (Simanová & Babiaková, 2022). Therefore, schools need to establish reading literacy policies and provide a collection of reading books that students are interested in in the school library. Teachers also do not forget to give students continuous assignments to make reports on the results of reading books both orally (*oral communication*) and in writing from fiction story books and non-fiction books. To keep students' interest in reading stable and become the basis for the development of reading literacy, it is necessary to develop continuously through cooperation between the principal as a leader, teacher, and school librarian

### Research Limitations and Further Research Recommendations

This study has limitations that need to be improved in future studies. The research location only covers one sub-district so it is necessary to carry out further research with a wider area coverage in one district. By expanding the area, the survey results will be more meaningful for the application of developing the reading interest of elementary school students.

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