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# Reading in The Digital Era: How Parent's Academic Background and Self-Efficacy **Influence Children's Reading Habits**

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the relationship between parental educational background, self-efficacy, and children's reading habits in the digital era. Using a correlational quantitative research method, the study involved 408 parents in West Jawa with children aged 4–8 years. The sampling technique used was multistage random sampling. Data were collected through an online Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using ordinal logistic regression. The findings indicate that parental self-efficacy significantly influences children's reading habits (B = 0.247; p < 0.001), while parental educational background does not have a direct significant effect (p > 0.05). The model's Nagelkerke R2 value of 0.494 suggests that 49.4% of the variance in children's reading habits can be explained by parental self-efficacy and educational background. These results highlight the importance of parental confidence in supporting children's literacy, which can be enhanced through family literacy intervention programs. Thus, this study contributes new insights into the psychological and environmental factors affecting children's reading habits.

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# Introduction

The 2022 Profile of Indonesian Children report shows that in 2021, as many as 75.03% of children aged 7–17 years have accessed the internet, a sharp increase from 55.07% in 2020 and 35.28% in 2017. This increase shows that technology not only brings benefits but is also a major factor in shifting traditional reading habits. Research by Hassan Mohammed et al. (2019) supports these findings, where the internet significantly influences Malaysian people's reading interest, making them spend more time on the Internet than reading. WHO recommends limiting screen time for children, namely a maximum of one hour for ages 2-4 years and two hours for older children, while children under two years should not be exposed to screens at all (Sartika, 2020). With the high rate of internet use among children, there needs to be a real effort to ensure that reading literacy remains an important part of their lives.

To overcome this challenge, the role of parents and educators is very important in creating positive reading habits (Amalia & AH, 2019; Fikriyah et al., 2020; Masud & Silaji, 2023). One way that can be done is to build a literacy environment at home, such as providing books that are interesting and appropriate to the child's age and becoming role models for reading (Lin et al., 2019; Niklas et al., 2020). Apart from creating a supportive environment, a consistent reading routine also plays a big role in forming children's literacy habits. Providing special time to read together, such as reading stories before bed or discussing the contents of a book, can help children develop a better understanding of texts (Ece Demir-Lira et al., 2019; Niklas et al., 2020). Reading regularly for 15 minutes every day

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has been proven to be effective in improving literacy skills, enriching vocabulary, and forming a positive attitude toward reading (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2021).

Empirical data shows that many parents have not played an active role in cultivating their children's reading culture at home (Napitupulu, 2024; Usman, 2021). A preliminary study at three elementary schools in Bogor City revealed that most parents rarely accompany their children to read, citing busy work, household matters, and trust in teachers at school. Generally, their involvement is limited to reading books before bed or helping with schoolwork, which is not done regularly.

Based on the initial data review, some parents also expressed the view that their role in facilitating reading for their children is influenced by a lack of confidence related to their educational background. Indeed, in several research studies, the relationship between parental educational background and children's reading habits has not been extensively analyzed. However, in the context of school selection and learning, Yanti et al. (2024) noted that parental educational background has a significant influence on learning styles. This is because parents with higher educational backgrounds are typically more selective in choosing schools and more disciplined in monitoring and supervising their children's learning, both at home and at school (Dumont et al., 2012).

Chiu & Ko (2008), in a report by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, highlighted that maternal educational background plays an essential role in children's reading habits. Regarding parental awareness in encouraging and fostering reading activities at home, it appears that higher maternal education correlates positively with awareness and reading habits. This is due to more varied and active communication in selecting and providing reading materials. The influence of parental education significantly and positively accommodates children's reading habits and materials (Bracken & Fischel, 2008; Secim & Gonen, 2022). Therefore, in this study, researchers specifically re-analyzed whether there is a significant relationship between parental educational background and children's reading habits at home, particularly in the city of Bogor.

Furthermore, another factor considered to influence reading habits at home is parental self-efficacy. Many feel they lack the knowledge and skills to choose appropriate books, explain the content of reading, or make reading interesting. Self-efficacy, namely a person's belief in their ability to achieve goals, plays an important role in parental involvement in children's literacy (Correa-Rojas et al., 2024; Sadewi et al., 2012). Parents with low self-efficacy tend to lack confidence in guiding their children to read (Kusuma et al., 2022). Apart from that, parents' low reading habits can prevent them from being role models for their children, ultimately decreasing their interest in reading. Support and training are needed so that parents are more confident and active in accompanying their children to read at home. Therefore, parents need to build more consistent reading habits so that they are more confident and involved in supporting children's literacy at home.

In the process of children's reading literacy, parental self-efficacy is an important factor in determining the extent to which parents have the confidence to be involved in supporting their child's reading skills. Parents who have self-efficacy and those high in literacy assistance are more active in reading books, creating a rich literacy environment, and implementing strategies that support the development of children's reading skills (Sonnenschein et al., 2021). In contrast, parents with self-efficacy low levels may feel less confident in their abilities, so they are less involved in children's literacy activities (Goodall, 2017, 2018). Thus, understanding and improving parenting self-efficacy is an important step in developing a more effective literacy assistance program for parents and children. PSE is

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generally measured through self-report measures (a self-report-based measure), which allows parents to assess their own confidence in carrying out parenting tasks. This method is considered appropriate because PSE is related to an individual's perception and belief in their own abilities (Wittkowski et al., 2017).

This study aims to analyze the relationship between parental educational background, self-efficacy, and children's reading habits in the digital era. The novelty of this research lies in the approach that links parents' reading habits with self-efficacy in supporting children's literacy, which is still rarely discussed in previous research. This study not only highlights how parents' reading habits contribute to their ability to guide their children, but also how it strengthens their confidence in creating a supportive literacy environment. In addition, this research explores more deeply the relationship between parents' reading habits and their impact on their involvement in children's literacy, which has the potential to have a direct impact on the development of children's reading interests and literacy skills. Thus, this research offers a new contribution by linking psychological aspects (self-efficacy) and parents' reading habits, to enrich understanding of the role of parents in children's literacy education.

### **Research Method**

This research uses a quantitative approach with a survey method to analyze the relationship between parental educational background and self-efficacy in reading habits at home. The sampling technique was a multistage sampling method, which involves selecting samples through a step-by-step process from larger to smaller clusters until the final sample units are obtained. In the first stage, large clusters are grouped based on administrative regions, specifically cities and regencies within West Java Province. The samples were randomly selected from various communities and schools in the area. The target population consists of 408 parents who reside and are settled in West Java and have children aged 4 to 8 years old. The second stage involves a random selection of smaller clusters, such as subdistricts and villages or neighborhoods within the previously selected cities and regencies. Finally, in the third stage, the final sample units are selected from among parents who meet the criteria and are located within the chosen smaller clusters. This technique is particularly effective for reaching large and geographically dispersed populations, allowing for a systematic and representative sampling process. The instruments used in this research include a questionnaire to measure the educational background of parents and parental self-efficacy in children's reading habits, which includes the frequency, type, and duration of their reading activities. Data was collected by filling out an online questionnaire in the form of a Likert scale with a choice of scores between 1 and 5.

The data was analyzed using a correlational quantitative approach, aiming to examine the relationship between parental educational background, self-efficacy, to fostering children's reading habits. To analyze the data relationship between the three variables, the researchers used ordinal logistic regression analysis. The consideration for using this analysis is that the data in the dependent variable is ordinal data, and the data analysis results are intended to see how changes in the independent variables affect the likelihood of someone being in a specific category of the ordinal dependent variable (Susilaningrum & Megahardiyani, 2009).

In the instrument used, each item of the instrument has passed validity and reliability tests. Thus, the instrument is declared suitable for use as a research instrument.

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### **Table 1. Instrument Indicators**

No	Variable	Instrument Indicator	Category
1	Parental education level	Parent's education background	1: SD/Primary
	(independent variable)	degree	2: SMP/Secondary
			3: SMA/High School
			4: Bachelor
			5: Master
			6: Doctoral
2	Parental Self-Efficacy	Literacy Achievement Efficacy	Very Low
	Level (independent	Literacy Resilience and Consistency	Low
	variable)	Literacy Enthusiasm and Enjoyment	Moderately Low
		Literacy Experience and Parenting	Medium
		Patterns	Moderately High
		Literacy Social Support and	High Very High
		Collaboration	
		Emotion Regulation in Literacy	
		Mentoring	
		Literacy Modeling and Inspiration	
3	Children's Reading	Reading Frequency	Very Low
	Habits (Dependent	Variety of Reading Materials	Low
	Variable)	Access to Reading Materials	Moderately Low
		Reading Behavior	Medium
			Moderately High
			High Very High

## **Results and Discussion**

Parallel Lines Test

Prior to interpreting the coefficients of the ordinal logistic regression model, it is imperative to assess the proportional odds assumption. This assumption posits that the effects of the predictor variables on the log odds of the dependent variable (children's reading habits) are consistent across all categories of the dependent variable.

The results of the parallel lines test are presented in the following table:

**Table 2. Test of Parallel Lines** 

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.			
Null Hypothesis	409.971						
General	327.292	82.679	18	.001			

Based on the parallel lines test results above, the Chi-Square value is 82.679 and the p-value is 0.001. The parallel lines test results indicate that the proportional odds assumption in the ordinal logistic regression model is not met (Chi-Square = 82.679, df = 18, p < .005), with the compared significance level being 0.005. This indicates that the effects of the predictor variables (parental educational background and parental self-efficacy) on the log odds of children's reading habits are not consistent across all levels of reading habits. In other words, the effects of the predictor variables vary depending on the level of children's reading habits. Therefore, the interpretation of the ordinal logistic regression model coefficients must be done with caution, and alternative models that do not require the proportional odds assumption may need to be considered for further analysis.

Simultaneous Effect Test

Having examined the proportional odds assumption and evaluated the partial effects of each predictor variable, the next step is to assess the simultaneous effect of parental education level (X1) and parental self-efficacy (X2) on children's reading habits (Y). This

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simultaneous test aims to determine whether the overall ordinal logistic regression model significantly predicts children's reading habits, considering both predictor variables concurrently.

**Table 3. Simultaneous Test (Model Fitting Information Table)** 

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	663.423			_
Final	409.971	253.453	6	.001

Based on the results of the simultaneous test calculation above, the Chi-Square value is 253.453 and the p-value is 0.000. The Model Fitting Information test results indicate that the ordinal logistic regression model, which includes self-efficacy and parental education variables, significantly predicts children's reading habits (Chi-Square = 253.453, df = 6, p < .005). The compared significance level is 0.005. The comparison between the model using only the constant (intercept-only model) and the model including predictor variables (final model) shows a significant improvement in model fit. This indicates that the self-efficacy and parental education variables, together, have a significant influence on children's reading habits. In other words, the model that includes predictor variables provides a better prediction than the baseline model that relies solely on the average of the response variable.

## Model Fit Test

After assessing the overall significance of the ordinal logistic regression model through the simultaneous test, it is crucial to evaluate the model's goodness of fit. This evaluation determines how well the model aligns with the observed data. Specifically, we aim to examine whether the model, which incorporates parental education level (X1) and parental self-efficacy (X2) as predictors, adequately describes the variability in children's reading habits (Y). The goodness of fit test provides insights into the model's ability to accurately predict the observed outcomes, thereby validating its applicability for further interpretation and inference.

Table 4. Goodness of Fit Model Test						
1	Chi-Square	df	Sig.			
Deviance	261.946	306	.968			

Based on the data test results above, it was found that the Deviance Chi-Square value for the ordinal logistic regression model predicting children's reading habits based on parental self-efficacy and parental education is not significant (Chi-Square = 261.946, df = 306, p = 0.968). This finding indicates that the constructed model has a good fit with the observed data. In other words, there is no significant difference between the observed frequency of children's reading habits and the frequency predicted by the model. Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that the proportional odds assumption in this model is not met, as indicated by the previous parallel lines test, so the interpretation of these research results should be done with caution.

## Ordinal Logistic Regression Model (Pseudo R-Square)

After evaluating the model fit using the Goodness of Fit test, the next step is to measure how well the ordinal logistic regression model can explain the variation in the dependent variable, namely children's reading habits (Y). In the context of ordinal logistic regression, the coefficient of determination is not measured with R-squared as in linear regression, but using pseudo R-squared. This pseudo R-squared test aims to determine how much proportion of the variation in children's reading habits can be explained by parental education level (X1) and parental self-efficacy (X2). The results of the pseudo R-squared test will provide insight into the predictive power of the model and how well the model can predict children's reading habits based on the predictor variables included.

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## Table 5. Pseudo R-Square

Cox and Snell .463 Nagelkerke .494 McFadden .225

To evaluate the explanatory power of the ordinal logistic regression model that predicts children's reading habits based on parental self-efficacy and parental education, the Pseudo R-Square value was calculated. Among the three types of Pseudo R-Square produced, the Nagelkerke R-Square coefficient shows a value of 0.494. This value indicates that the constructed ordinal logistic regression model is able to explain approximately 49.4% of the variance in children's reading habits. In other words, this model has a reasonably good predictive capacity in explaining the variation of children's reading habits based on parental self-efficacy and parental education variables.

Partial Test

After evaluating the overall model fit, the next step is to test the partial significance of each predictor variable, namely parental education level (X1) and parental self-efficacy (X2). This partial test aims to determine whether each predictor variable has a significant individual effect on children's reading habits (Y), after controlling for the effects of other predictor variables. In other words, the partial test will help us understand the unique contribution of each predictor variable in explaining the variation in children's reading habits.

Tab	le 6.	Par	tial	Test
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Parameter Estimates								
							95% Confidence Interval	
			Std.				Lower	Upper
		Estimate	Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Bound	Bound
Threshold	[Y = 2,00]	15.760	1.566	101.317	1	.000	12.691	18.829
	[Y = 3,00]	18.222	1.628	125.338	1	.000	15.032	21.412
	[Y = 4,00]	20.341	1.688	145.276	1	.000	17.033	23.648
	[Y = 5,00]	24.341	1.815	179.788	1	.000	20.783	27.898
Location	X2	.247	.018	190.582	1	.000	.212	.283
	[X1=SD]	131	.935	.020	1	.889	-1.964	1.702
	[X1=SMP]	009	.862	.000	1	.992	-1.699	1.681
	[X1=SMA]	117	.866	.018	1	.892	-1.814	1.579
	[X1=Sarjana]	.108	.976	.012	1	.912	-1.804	2.020
	[X1=Master]	822	1.048	.615	1	.433	-2.876	1.232
	[X1=Doctor]	$0^{a}$			0			

The partial test results indicate that the parental education level variable (X1) does not have a statistically significant effect on children's reading habits (Y). Specifically, after comparing each level of parental education with the Doctoral level (X1=6) as the reference category, no significant differences were found. The Elementary School level (X1=1) has a regression coefficient of -.131 with p = .889, Junior High School (X1=2) has a coefficient of -.009 with p = .992, High School (X1=3) has a coefficient of -.117 with p = .892, Bachelor's Degree (X1=4) has a coefficient of .108 with p = .912, and Master's Degree (X1=5) has a coefficient of -.822 with p = .433. All of these p-values are greater than 0.05, indicating that no level of parental education significantly predicts children's reading habits in this model, after controlling for the effect of the self-efficacy variable. The 95% confidence interval range for each level of parental education also includes the value zero, which reinforces this finding.

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Furthermore, the partial test results indicate that the self-efficacy variable (X2) has a statistically significant effect on children's reading habits (Y), with a regression coefficient of .247 and a p-value < .001. This positive regression coefficient indicates that there is a positive relationship between self-efficacy and children's reading habits. In other words, each one-unit increase in self-efficacy is associated with a .247 increase in the cumulative log odds of children's reading habits at higher levels, after controlling for the effect of parental education level. The p-value < .001 shows that this relationship is highly statistically significant, with a very small probability that this result occurred by chance. Additionally, the 95% confidence interval for the self-efficacy regression coefficient is [.212, .283], which does not include the value zero. This further reinforces the finding that self-efficacy has a significant and positive effect on children's reading habits in this ordinal logistic regression model.

## Final Fit Model

After analyzing the partial significance of each predictor variable, the next step is to construct the final model that best explains the relationship between parental education level (X1), parental self-efficacy (X2), and children's reading habits (Y). This model construction involves selecting predictor variables that are statistically significant and theoretically relevant, as well as adjusting the model to ensure its fit and validity. This final model will serve as the basis for further interpretation and drawing conclusions regarding the influence of predictor variables on children's reading habits.

The partial test results indicate that parental self-efficacy (X2) has a statistically significant effect on children's reading habits (Y), with a regression coefficient of .247 and a p-value < .001. This indicates that the higher the level of parental self-efficacy, the higher the tendency for their children to have reading habits at a higher level, after controlling for the effect of parental education level. Conversely, the parental education level variable (X1) did not show a significant effect on children's reading habits (Y). No parental education level, from Elementary School to Master's Degree, was significantly different from the Doctoral level as the reference category (p > 0.05). Therefore, in this model, parental self-efficacy emerges as a stronger predictor of children's reading habits compared to parental education level. Mathematically, the resulting ordinal logistic regression model can be formulated as follows:

- For X1 = 1 (Primary School):  $logit[P(Y \le j)] = \alpha_j 0.131 * X1 + 0.247 * X2$
- For X1 = 2 (Secondary School):  $logit[P(Y \le j)] = \alpha \ j 0.009 * X1 + 0.247 * X2$
- For X1 = 3 (High School):  $logit[P(Y \le j)] = \alpha \ j 0.117 * X1 + 0.247 * X2$
- For X1 = 4 (Bachelor's Degree):  $logit[P(Y \le j)] = \alpha j + 0.108 * X1 + 0.247 * X2$
- For X1 = 5 (Master's Degree):  $logit[P(Y \le j)] = \alpha \ j 0.822 * X1 + 0.247 * X2$
- For X1 = 6 (Doctoral Degree):  $logit[P(Y \le j)] = \alpha_j + 0.247 * X2$ Where  $\alpha_j$  represents the threshold for the corresponding Y (children's reading habits) category, and j represents categories 2, 3, 4, or 5."

## Discussion

# Parent's Academic Background Regarding Children's Reading Behaviour

In the context of this study, the finding that parental education level (X1) does not have a significant influence on children's reading habits (Y) shows a difference from several previous studies that generally found a positive correlation. This finding contrasts with Chen et al. (2018), which found that family socioeconomic status (SES), including parental education level, significantly predicts children's reading ability. This discrepancy may be attributed to several factors. First, this study focuses on 'reading habits,' which is a different

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construct from 'reading ability' examined in those studies. Reading habits focus more on the frequency and interest in reading, while reading ability focuses on reading comprehension skills. Hartas (2011) also found in their research that socioeconomic factors, including maternal education, have a strong influence on children's language/literacy. The difference between this study and that conducted by Hartas (2011) lies in the focus on children's overall literacy achievement and success, whereas this study specifically focuses on children's reading habits.

Furthermore, there are factors predicted to be additional variables influencing reading habits, such as genetic factors. Scarr & Weinberg (1978), who found a strong genetic influence on intellectual achievement, suggest that genetic factors not measured in this study may also play a role in children's reading habits. Therefore, further research considering mediating and moderating variables, as well as genetic factors, is needed to understand the complexity of the relationship between parental education and children's reading habits.

However, in Davis-Kean's (2005) research, it was found that the effect of parental education on children's reading achievement can change over time. Parental education can be explicit or implicit, and its influence can even change in the improvement and achievement of children's reading. In some stages of child development, the effect may not be significant. This is because there are other factors such as time, parental selection of reading materials, parental closeness to the child, and stimulation built by parents in the home environment related to children's reading ability and learning achievement. These factors were not examined in this study.

# Parental Self-Efficacy Regarding Children's Reading Behaviour

The ordinal logistic regression analysis results show that parental self-efficacy (X2) has a significant and positive influence on children's reading habits (Y). The regression coefficient of .247, with a p-value < .001, indicates that the higher the level of parental self-efficacy, the greater the tendency for their children to have better reading habits. This finding is consistent with self-efficacy theory, which states that an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in a task or situation affects their behavior and outcomes. In this context, parents who have high confidence in their ability to support their children's literacy development may be more actively involved in shared reading activities, provide access to reading materials, and create an environment that supports children's reading habits. This suggests that interventions aimed at increasing parental self-efficacy in supporting their children's literacy may be effective in improving children's reading habits.

These findings are in line with previous research which shows that parental self-efficacy plays an important role in shaping children's reading habits. For example, research by Bandura (2001) emphasizes that individuals with high self-efficacy tend to be more persistent in providing support for tasks that are considered important, including supporting their children in reading activities. In addition, research by Črnčec et al. (2008) revealed that parental involvement in reading activities at home is positively correlated with children's literacy development, especially when parents have high confidence in their role in supporting literacy.

In addition, research conducted by (Glatz & Buchanan, 2023; Sonnenschein et al., 2021) also found that parents who have high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to create a rich literacy environment, provide books, and be actively involved in reading with their children. Thus, the results of this study further strengthen the idea that parents who are confident in their ability to guide their children in reading will have a positive impact on their children's reading habits.

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However, even though the average reading habits of children in this study are quite high, there is still the possibility that other factors, such as access to reading materials, school support, and peer influence, also contribute to children's reading habits. Therefore, further research can explore how these external factors interact with parental self-efficacy in forming children's reading habits in more depth. The interpretation of these results is that the higher the parents' self-efficacy in supporting children's literacy, the higher the children's reading habits. This strong relationship indicates that parents' self-confidence in supporting their children plays a major role in shaping their literacy habits.

These findings support Bandura's (1997) Social Cognitive Theory, which emphasizes that self-efficacy influences how a person acts and survives in certain situations. In this context, parents with high self-efficacy are more likely to help their children develop reading habits, for example by providing reading materials, reading stories, or encouraging children to engage in other literacy activities. Previous studies also support these findings. For example, research by Sonnenschein et al. (2021) shows that when parents are actively involved in literacy activities at home, their children have better reading development. Additionally, research by Glatz & Buchanan (2023) emphasized that parents' involvement in children's learning, including building reading habits, is greatly influenced by their perception of their abilities (self-efficacy).

This study has both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, it supports Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory by highlighting that parental self-efficacy—parents' belief in their ability to support their children's literacy—has a stronger influence on children's reading habits than parental educational background. This finding challenges traditional assumptions and emphasizes the importance of psychological factors in literacy development. Practically, the results suggest that efforts to improve children's reading habits should focus on empowering parents through interventions that build their confidence, regardless of their education level. Schools, communities, and literacy programs should provide accessible resources and training that enhance parents' involvement in shared reading, book selection, and the creation of supportive home literacy environments. By prioritizing self-efficacy, these initiatives can foster more effective parental engagement and contribute to stronger reading habits among children.

### Conclusion

This study reveals a significant positive relationship between parental self-efficacy and children's reading habits, indicating that parents who believe in their ability to support their children's literacy are more likely to foster better reading habits in their children. Conversely, parental education level did not show a significant direct influence on children's reading habits in this model, a finding that diverges from some previous research. This discrepancy may be attributed to the study's focus on reading habits, which emphasizes frequency and interest, rather than reading ability, which focuses on comprehension. Furthermore, the model's limitations, including the violation of the proportional odds assumption and the exclusion of other potentially influential factors like genetics and home environment stimulation, suggest the need for cautious interpretation and further research."

The findings emphasize the importance of parental self-efficacy in promoting children's reading habits, highlighting the potential effectiveness of interventions aimed at enhancing parents' confidence in supporting their children's literacy development. The model, while demonstrating a good overall fit and explaining a substantial portion of the variance in children's reading habits, also underscores the complexity of factors influencing reading habits.

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## Recommendation

Practically, these findings emphasize the importance of training or intervention programs that can increase parents' self-efficacy in assisting children to read. In this way, children can gain a richer literacy environment, ultimately improving children's reading skills and habits. Consequently, we propose the following recommendations for various stakeholders. We recommend that parents actively participate in literacy programs and cultivate supportive home reading environments while communicating with schools. Schools should implement programs to enhance parental self-efficacy, build strong parent partnerships, and provide accessible literacy resources. Future studies should explore the roles of mediating and moderating variables, as well as other unmeasured factors, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between parental involvement and children's literacy development. The model explained 49.4% of the variance in children's reading habits.

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