

## Exploring the Relationship Between Physical Care (Hair and Nails) and Reading Ability in Elementary School Children

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to explore the relationship between reading skills and physical appearance of elementary school students, especially hair and nail conditions. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, this study involved 50 male elementary school students who were selected purposively from various backgrounds. The variables observed included reading skill level (low, medium, high) as well as hair condition (long or short, clean or dirty) and nails (well-groomed or unkempt). The results of the analysis showed a significant correlation between reading skills and students' physical appearance. Children with well-groomed hair and nails tend to have higher reading skills compared to children whose physical hygiene is less considered. This finding underlines the importance of non-academic factors, such as personal hygiene, in supporting students' cognitive development and academic achievement. Therefore, schools and parents are advised to be more active in paying attention to aspects of physical hygiene as an integral part of the strategy to improve the quality of learning, especially in developing reading skills.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Appearance stature is Wrong One aspect Which often time ignored in the connection with show academic students. Study This focus on connection between neatness stature, in particular in the affairs maintenance hair And nail, with ability read student school base (SD). Although Topics maintenance self generally under review in the context cleanliness And health, There is indication That neatness stature Can influential to discipline show academic in reading. In this case how physical responses can enhance language learning <sup>1</sup>. There is a significant relationship between motor skills and reading ability, especially for children with lower grades <sup>2</sup>.

There is a relationship between motor skills and academic performance in reading <sup>3</sup>. Study This consider That routine maintenance self Can reflect discipline And values personal Which Then influential on interest And ability Study, specifically in the read. Neatness hair And maintenance nail Which in accordance standard NO only

<sup>1</sup> Rong Xie, 'The Effectiveness of Total Physical Response (Tpr) in Teaching English to Young Learners', *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 12.2 (2021), pp. 293–303, doi:10.17507/jltr.1202.11.

<sup>2</sup> W. W. Harrison and W. H. Wadlin, 'Magnesium Spinel Interference in Air-Acetylene Flames vs. Nitrous Oxide-Acetylene Flames in Atomic Absorption Spectrometry', *Analytical Chemistry*, 41.2 (1969), pp. 374–76, doi:10.1021/ac60271a039.

<sup>3</sup> KA Macdonald, 'Physical Activity and Motor Skills in the Context of Primary School Children's Learning: Relationships with Academic Achievement', 2021 <[https://research.bond.edu.au/files/125737901/Kirstin\\_Macdonald\\_Thesis.pdf](https://research.bond.edu.au/files/125737901/Kirstin_Macdonald_Thesis.pdf)>.

reflect picture self But Also donate to environment Study Which conducive <sup>4</sup>. With background behind That, Study This aiming For dig in a certain way in perception Teacher, person old, And student about influence routine maintenance self to ability read, and also researching whether discipline in the aspect neatness stature colleague positive with show read.

Physical appearance, especially in terms of neat hair and nails, is often considered a reflection of a child's discipline and parenting style <sup>5</sup>. In the context of elementary education, children who are well-groomed tend to be considered more organized and able to manage schoolwork well <sup>6</sup>. Meanwhile, reading skills are basic skills that are important to support the teaching and learning process at the next level of education <sup>7</sup>. The relevance between physical and academic factors is interesting to study further. The reality shows that elementary school students' reading skills are still relatively low in various regions <sup>8</sup>.

Many students have not achieved basic literacy standards despite having enjoyed several years of formal education <sup>9</sup>. Lack of attention to non-academic factors, such as cleanliness and physical appearance, is thought to be one of the reasons why this has not been given enough attention <sup>10</sup>. Reading ability is one of the basic skills that is the basis for mastering other sciences in <sup>11</sup>formal education. This skill not only determines students' academic success in today's world, but is also an important predictor of long-term educational success <sup>12</sup>.

On the other hand, many external factors can influence reading skills, including the learning environment, family support, and also personal aspects such as physical appearance and personal hygiene. A neat physical appearance, such as well-groomed hair and nails, can have a positive impact. to perception self child , comfort in social interaction, and the ability to focus in the learning process <sup>13</sup>. Unfortunately, this aspect is often underestimated in the context of basic education. In fact, several studies show that neatness self correlated with discipline , responsibility personal answers , and self-confidence, all of which are supporting factors in learning.<sup>14</sup>

Various studies have examined the relationship between healthy living habits and academic achievement. However, very few have specifically examined aspects of physical appearance such as neatness of hair and nails with children's reading skills. In fact, this can be an indicator of discipline and order that may have an impact on student learning outcomes. This study focuses on the relationship between students' physical appearance and their reading ability. The aim is to explore how perceptions of physical appearance correlate with reading performance, and to understand the external factors that influence both. The results of this study are expected to be a reference in more holistic education development policies.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

Physical appearance is defined as the way an individual presents himself visually to others, including: cleanliness , neatness , and style of dress. In the context of children, physical appearance is greatly influenced by parents or guardians. Children with good personal hygiene are more easily accepted in social environments and tend to show more behavior discipline <sup>15</sup>. Reading skills are the ability to understand, interpret, and evaluate written texts. Reading skills include word recognition, understanding meaning, and the ability to reflect on the content of the reading.

These skills are very important in supporting strabismus learning <sup>16</sup>. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to deeply understand the perceptions of teachers, parents, and students regarding the

<sup>4</sup> Indri Yolanda, 'The Role of Teachers in Implementing Personal Hygiene Independence in Slow Learning Children at Slb Negeri 1 Kepahing', 2022, pp. 50–51.

<sup>5</sup> Nurdiana Jojoh and Cicuh Sunarsih, 'Continuing Professional Development Module for Play Theory in Early Childhood Education', 2017.

<sup>6</sup> Hasan Argadinata et al., 'Development of Student Management System to Improve Implementation of School Organizational Culture', *National Seminar on Strategic Management of Pancasila Student Profile Development in PAUD and Elementary Education* , 1.1 (2022).

<sup>7</sup> Cahyo Hasanudin, 'Early Reading Learning Using the Smart Reading Application Media Bamboomedia Bmgames as an Effort to Form the Character of Elementary School Students Facing the MEA', *Pedagogia: Journal of Education* , 5.1 (2015), pp. 1–12, doi:10.21070/pedagogia.v5i1.84.

<sup>8</sup> Hasanudin, 'Early Reading Learning Using the Smart Reading Application Media Bamboomedia Bmgames as an Effort to Form the Character of Elementary School Students Facing the MEA'.

<sup>9</sup> Uswatun Hasanah and Mirdat Silitonga, *Implementation of School Literacy Movement in Elementary Schools*. Jakarta: Center for Policy Research, Research and Development, and Book Agency, Ministry of Education and Culture , WWW.Quipperblog.Com , 2020.

<sup>10</sup> Abdul Rahmat, Mardia Bin Smith, and Maryam Rahim, 'Healthy Lifestyle Behavior and Elementary School Students' Learning Achievement', *Psychopathic: Scientific Journal of Psychology* , 2.2 (2016), pp. 113–22, doi:10.15575/psy.v2i2.452.

<sup>11</sup> M Soenardi Djiwandono, 'Language Test Guide for Language Teachers', Jakarta: PT Macanan Jaya Cemerlang , 2008.

<sup>12</sup> Anne E Cunningham and Keith E Stanovich, 'What Reading Does for the Mind', *Journal of Direct Instruction* , 1.2 (2001), pp. 137–49.

<sup>13</sup> Beatriks Novianti Kiling and Indra Yohanes Kiling, 'Review of Self-Concept and its Dimensions in Early Childhood', *Journal of Educational Psychology & Counseling* , 1.2 (2015).

<sup>14</sup> Jennifer A Mangels et al., 'Why Do Beliefs about Intelligence Affect Learning Success? A Social Cognitive Neuroscience Model', *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience* , 1.2 (2006), pp. 75–86.

<sup>15</sup> John W Santrock, *Educational Psychology* (McGraw-Hill, 2011).

<sup>16</sup> Richard C Anderson and others, 'Becoming a Nation of Readers: National Academy of Education, National Institute of Education, and Center for the Study of Reading', 1985.

relationship between physical appearance and reading skills. The study was conducted through semi-structured interviews and direct observation at school. Although this study is qualitative in nature, the researchers hypothesize that students with a neat physical appearance tend to have better reading skills. This hypothesis is based on the assumption that children with fit physical habits tend to have routines and patterns. positive behavior to activity learning .

Reading success in childhood has a major impact on their future academic achievement <sup>17</sup>. Positive self-perception and self-discipline, including hygiene habits, greatly influence motivation and learning achievement <sup>18</sup>. Education about personal hygiene in elementary schools can increase children's awareness of the importance of maintaining their bodies as a form of self-respect <sup>19</sup>. Students who have hygiene habits, including cutting their nails and hair regularly, have better social interaction skills and academic participation compared to students who do not pay attention to these aspects. Ezomike et al. (2021), stated that skin and nail infections often occur in children with poor hygiene, which can lead to absenteeism from school.

Thus, the hygiene aspect not only affects learning achievement indirectly, but also indirectly through student attendance and health <sup>20</sup>. Review literature in the Study This covering many kinds of Study about influence environment House, pattern to care for, And culture school in the support development character And show academic students. English: Matvichuk (2015) researching role environment House And behavior person old in the to form interest read child, although NO find connection important between expectation person old with interest read directly <sup>21</sup>.

Study about school Healthy And culture school Also emphasize importance implementation values cleanliness And discipline Which play a role big in the make atmosphere Study Which conducive. Activity like supervision to neatness self And implementation behavior life clean and also Healthy is part integral from program school Healthy, Which in a certain way NO direct support show academic students. Although literature Which There is Not yet in a certain way explicit to associate neatness stature (hair And nails) with reading ability, a number of findings indicate that physical and behavior cleanliness correlated with discipline self and also condition mentally Which optimal to improve learning abilities.

Framework theoretical Study This made from a number of approach And theory Which relevant with connection between maintenance self, discipline, And show academic, in particular in the reading. Theory formation character country That behavior discipline NO only affected by factor internal individual But Also by influence environment like family And school. In the Study previously, pattern to care for And expectation person old own proven influence formation character child so that impact on show their <sup>22</sup>academics . Draft self-regulation refers to on ability individual For arrange behavior And thought for the sake of reach objective Certain <sup>23</sup>.

In the side other, theory cognitive load show That disturbance or confusion consequence irregularity Can increase burden cognitive thus affecting learning abilities, including reading <sup>24</sup>. Thus, appearance stature Which neat Can under consideration as part from environment Which normal Which help reduce disturbance cognitive And increase concentration moment read <sup>25</sup>. Follow diagram channel conceptual Which describe connection between variables:

<sup>17</sup> Cunningham and Stanovich, 'What Reading Does for the Mind'.

<sup>18</sup> Jonathan R Hargis, Beth Willman, and Annika HG Peter, 'Too Many, Too Few, or Just Right? The Predicted Number and Distribution of Milky Way Dwarf Galaxies', *The Astrophysical Journal Letters* , 795.1 (2014), p. L13.

<sup>19</sup> Nina Rini Suprobo et al., 'Personal Hygiene Education for Children to Improve Children's Personal Hygiene', *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Nusantara* , 2.1 (2022), pp. 25–32, doi:10.29407/dimastara.v2i1.19288.

<sup>20</sup> Nkeiruka Elsie Ezomike and others, 'Epidemiology and Pattern of Superficial Fungal Infections among Primary School Children in Enugu, South-Eastern Nigeria', *Malawi Medical Journal* , 33.1 (2021), pp. 21–27, doi:10.4314/mmj.v33i1.4.

<sup>21</sup> Tammy Matvichuk, "'The Influence of Parental Expectations, Home Literacy Environment, and Parental Behavior on Children's Reading Interests', *Senior Honors Thesis* , 2015.

<sup>22</sup> Nova Dwi Nur Fauziah and Nanang Khoiril Umam, 'Parental Parenting Patterns Towards Student Discipline in Learning', *Indonesian Journal of Elementary Education (IJOEE)* , 5.1 (2023), p. 71, doi:10.31000/ijoe.v5i1.8678.

<sup>23</sup> Roy F. Baumeister and Kathleen D. Vohs, 'Self-Regulation, Ego Depletion, and Motivation', *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* , 1.1 (2007), pp. 115–28, doi:10.1111/j.1751-9004.2007.00001.x.

<sup>24</sup> Julie Grandgirard and others, 'Costs of Secondary Parasitism in the Facultative Hyperparasitoid *Pachycrepoideus Dubius*: Does Host Size Matter?', *Entomologia Experimentalis et Applicata* , 103.3 (2002), pp. 239–48, doi:10.1023/A.

<sup>25</sup> Hwan Hee Choi, Jeroen JG van Merriënboer, and Fred Paas, 'The Impact of the Physical Environment on Cognitive Load and Learning: Towards a New Model of Cognitive Load', *Educational Psychology Review* , 26.2 (2014), pp. 225–44, doi:10.1007/s10648-014-9262-6.

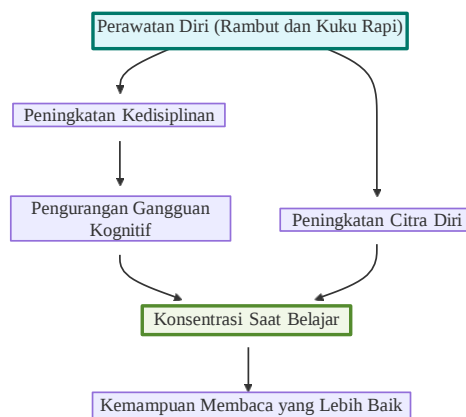


Figure 1.

Diagram That show that optimal self-care can:

1. Increase discipline And order orderly student (indicator behavior positive).
2. Reduce disturbance cognitive Which originate from chaos visual And condition NO arranged.
3. Build to believe self Which impact positive to interest And ability read.

This matter allow student For Again focus And concentrate moment Study read. Study This use approach For get understand wide about connection between neatness stature (hair And nail) And ability read student SD. Design Study This natural descriptive analytical, in the Where data collected through measurement objective to neatness stature And evaluation ability read, and also through interview in And observation For to obtain perception Teacher, person old, And students.

Participants consisted of 50 students from grades 3 to 5 of SD Negeri 2 Kotayasa Regency Banyumas, which was selected purposively. The selection was based on variations in the level of reading skills and personal hygiene conditions of students. In addition, it also includes teachers and parents. As key information. The selection of participants was carried out purposively to ensure diversity background background and environment school. Based on integration data, Can conclude That neatness stature functioning as indicator beginning from discipline self Which Again wide.

#### Instrument Collection Data

1. Questionnaire, divided become two part. Part First focus on observation direct to condition neatness stature (hair And nail) students. Part Second size ability read through test standard Which own tested its validity.
2. Interview In-depth, conducted with teachers and parents to deepen their perceptions about influence neatness stature to behavior Study And interest read child.
3. Observation Field, finished in the environment school For take notes habit maintenance self students, as well as the implementation of disciplinary regulations regarding appearance.

Results Study describe relatedness Which important between neatness stature, in particular in terms of hair and nails, with reading ability elementary school students.

The following is findings main from Study This:

The results of in-depth interviews and observations show that most teachers and person old consider appearance stature as indicator base from discipline And not enough answer self. Teacher report That student with appearance neat tend Again focus And own habit Study Which systematic. In the side other, person old emphasize importance maintenance self as part from formation character And effort prepare child For environment Study Which competitive

A number of to quote from information obtained is as follow:

A Teacher country, "When student come to the stage neat, they clear show That they understand rule school And own seriousness in the Study, specifically in the read."<sup>26</sup>

One parent added, "Self-care habits, such as combing your hair, and trimming nails regularly, creates a positive mood and increase flavor believe self child."<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> CHAPTER II, Theoretical Review and Basic Concepts of the Method, '8 7 10 6', 2021, pp. 6–29.

<sup>27</sup> Rozana Salma, Wulan Anjas Dwi Septi, and Rini Hayati, *EARLY CHILDHOOD COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT Teo (1)*, 2020.

As part of the analysis, here is a visual illustration that depicts the relationship conceptual between neatness stature And ability read:



Figure 1.

Visualization That emphasize That environment Which normal And habit maintenance self Can increase readiness mentally For Study read.<sup>28</sup>

Discussion Study This results data qualitative For interpret How neatness stature influence ability read student SD through a number of mechanism as follow:

Results Study show That maintenance self Which consistent reflect level discipline students. Discipline self This NO only limited on behavior non-academic, But Also reflected in the pattern Study And concentration moment read. Student Which see appearance tend own structure routine Which Again strict, Which on its turn help reduce burden cognitive Which Because by disturbance visual And sensory.

Perception Teacher And person old about appearance stature is factor important Which influence motivation students. From interview Which Finished, found That Teacher often give to praise to student Which come to the stage neat, so that build self-confidence that increases interest in reading. Parents, as primary role models, also give example direct with apply habit maintenance self Which Good so that child copy And make affairs That as part from identity self.

Environment school Which apply standard neatness stature in a certain way consistent make culture discipline Which strong. Program school Healthy And strengthening education character, like Which own outlined in the Study culture school, help plant sign- net worth and commands that also support show academic. Factors This synergize in the make atmosphere Study Which conducive, so that ability read student increase in a certain way important.

Based on findings And discussion, There is a number of implications And recommendation practical For development education in the level school base and also For For person old:

1. School Can arrange standard appearance Which covering rule about neatness hair And cleanliness nail, so that student expect take pattern maintenance self Which discipline. Policy This NO only potential increase aesthetics environment school But Also impact positive on concentration And show read students.
2. Integration program school Healthy with education character must covering aspect maintenance self as Wrong One indicator discipline. Training And workshop For Teacher and also socialization to person old about importance maintenance self Can made into part from strengthening character school .
3. Person old must give example Which Good in the maintenance self. Habituation tidy up hair And cut nail in a certain way routine should taught since earlier For internalize discipline through example. Affairs This expect Can impact on children's academic achievement, especially in developing reading skills .
4. Communication Which effective between person old And Teacher very required For ensure That standard maintenance self fulfilled. Program meeting routine between person old And Teacher Can made into forum For share information about profit maintenance self to show Study.

<sup>28</sup> Kholid A. Harras, 'The Nature of Reading', *Reading 1* , 2011, pp. 7–8.

5. Teacher Can integrate values maintenance self to in the material lesson with method to associate discipline, cleanliness, And not enough answer personal with success academic. Activity like "day maintenance self" Can made into part from activity learning For grow awareness will importance appearance.
6. Stage discussion class about importance maintenance self And How affairs That influence concentration Study Can grow awareness students. Teacher Can give example real with show off technique tidy up hair or give awards to students who show high discipline in maintaining cleanliness personal.
7. Study moreover recommended For to learn variable addition like influence maintenance self on aspect other from show academic (For example, ability calculation, creativity, And skills social).

For give information Again wide about Factor Which influence ability read based on neatness stature, follow is table comparison factor:

Table 1. Comparison Table of Factors Affecting Reading and Writing Ability Maintenance Self

| NO | Key Factors                    | Measurement Indicators      | Impact on Reading Ability                  |
|----|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1  | Hair neatness                  | Cleanliness, neatness, cut  | Improve concentration, reduce distractions |
| 2  | Nail hygiene                   | Clean and neatly cut nails  | Minimize visual distractions               |
| 3  | Discipline Self                | Routine maintenance daily   | Increase motivation and focus              |
| 4  | Teacher and Parent Perceptions | Praise, support, assessment | Encourages interest and self-confidence    |

Table 1 describe That every factor Which related with maintenance self own impact positive to ability read students, specifically When integration sign discipline And support environment school guarded with Good. Article This expect Can give understand Which wide about How aspect stature simple like neatness hair And cleanliness nail Can influential important on show academic, in particular ability read student SD. With integrate perspective theoretical, data empirical, And view practical, findings in the Study This Can made into base For policy education And program development character Which Again holistic. With thus, effort For increase standard maintenance self No only question appearance solely, But Wrong One strategy important in the increase quality education child in the era modern.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

From the results of observations and interviews, it was found that:

1. Students with neat hair and nails show enthusiasm and active participation in reading activities.
2. Teachers say that neat children are generally more focused and less easily distracted.
3. Parents admitted that morning routines including combing hair and cutting nails were part of forming learning habits at home.

However, there are also unique cases: some students with untidy appearances actually show above average reading skills. After further investigation, it was found that they received high stimulation from their parents at home (reading books every day) even though their personal hygiene was not sufficiently taken care of. These findings suggest that physical appearance is certainly correlated with reading skills in the case of Lots, but it is not the only determining factor. Discipline instilled through habits of maintaining cleanliness can reflect regularity in learning patterns. However, home environmental factors, such as the habit of parents reading stories or providing reading books, have a great influence on children's reading skills. Therefore That important for educators and policy makers to not only focus on appearance, but also pay attention to conditions that support learning at home.

### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Follow is summary findings main in the to form points :

1. Neatness stature Which consistent correlated positive with presence And focus in the process Study read.
2. Students who are well-groomed show increased self-confidence. influence involvement active in the activity read.
3. A school environment that consistently implements self-care policies donate on improvement quality learning And show Study.

With thus, Study This conclude That maintenance self Which Good, Which seen through neatness hair And cleanliness nail, is Wrong One aspect important in the support ability read student SD. Implementation from findings This expect Can increase quality education with emphasize importance discipline And maintenance self as part integral from development character And show academic.

This study revealed that physical appearance such as neatness of hair and nails is related to elementary school students' reading skills, but it is not the only factor that influences it. Parental attention, home learning culture, and teacher support also play a very important role. The implication of this study is the need for a holistic educational approach, which includes the formation of healthy living habits while strengthening children's environmental literacy at home and school.

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