

# Periodic Research

## Faculty in Response to Reading Interest: A Study of Pre-service Teachers



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### Abstract

Based on reviews, it is assumed that teachers' teaching and learning is highly influenced and affected by faculty to which one belongs. That was why, differences between humanities, science and language teachers' were observed. Based on collective reviews, construct of reading interest was identified which includes dimensions like; background knowledge, selectivity, sequence order and fluency in reading. To investigate the construct of indicators associated to reading interest and the degree to which they vary belonging to different faculties. The questionnaire was prepared by the researchers themselves to conduct the study. 300 pre-service teachers from 17 colleges of education of Punjab participated in the current study. As a result of research, meaningful differences were observed narrating that science pre-service teachers' scored significantly higher on the perceived indicators of reading interest viz; background knowledge and selectivity as compared to humanities and language pre-service teachers. It was further seen that humanities pre-service teachers have scored significantly higher on sequence order and fluency in reading than pre-service teachers from faculty of sciences.

**Keywords:** Background Knowledge, Faculty, Fluency In Reading, Pre-Service Teachers, Reading Interest, Selectivity, Sequence Order.

### Introduction

There has been a great amount of literature indicating that reading interest has a significant influence on professionals and students [Schank(1979); Asher(1979,1980); Kintsch (1980); Anderson(1982); Renninger and Woznaiak(1985); Wineburg (1991); Krashen(1993); Panigrahi and Panda (1996); Goldman (1997); Cottrell (1999); McDaniel, Waddill, Finstad, Bourg (2000); Eyre (2005); Mokatsi (2005)]. The above researchers found that reading interest effect the performance of an individual by affecting knowledge and structures and thus increasing the power to recall main ideas and higher degree of cognitive ability. On the other hand, researchers like; [Biancarosa and Snow (2006); Kamil, Borman, Dole, Kral, Salinger and Torgesen (2008); Willingham (2009); Ebbers (2011); Schroeder (2013)] reported that reading interest act as a motivation for teachers to improve their quality and efficiency in the process of teaching and learning. Their studies further concluded that reading interest act as a jumpstart for the struggling readers- in any subject but once they become interested, they gradually become attentive and focused. This inturn becomes a strategy to yield qualitative depth which is followed when one read with an interest. According to Nespor (1987); reading interest is closely related to one's concepts, views, attitudes toward learning and conceptions of teachers' role in teaching practices which improves their professional preparation and teaching effectiveness. Based on these findings, Kane, Sandretto and Heath (2002) expanded their views and proposed that teaching at higher level is incomplete without examining teachers' beliefs, attitudes about reading theories and strategies. Hidi (2006) summarized reading interest as a unique motivational variable, as well as a psychological state that occurs during interactions between persons and their objects of interest and is characterized by increased attention, concentration and affect. Taboada, Tonks, Wigfield and Guthrie (2009) professed reading interest as an internal motivation based on self-efficacy, deep thinking about text content and frequency. Dai (2013) conceived reading interest as awareness, attention and curiosity towards certain subject, activity, pursuit, people, idea or place.

Hidayat and Aisah (2013) understood reading interest as a skill which can be fertilized, build and developed as a result of information, skill and knowledge served by reading the matter.

The above researchers emphasized reading interest as a way of influencing and motivating positive experiences and knowledge associated to their research. Keeping these in view, the present study was planned to investigate the construct of reading interest among pre-service teachers studying in different colleges of education, Punjab to explore how faculty as an independent variable influence the beliefs and attitudes associated to their reading interest. Going through the research work conducted by the above said researchers, different indicators of reading interest were viewed and researched that how reading interest influence teachers as; pre-service teachers. Going by the collected reviews, it was perceived that reading interest among teachers can be determined by knowing their opinions on the basis of indicators such as; background knowledge, selectivity, sequence order and fluency in reading.

### **Rationale of The Paper**

Reading interest one can lead towards reading development and then slowly and gradually develop the literacy attitude. This means reading interest as a motivational force helps the individual to learn and improve his knowledge according to one's requirements and needs (National Reading Panel; 2000). Further, owing to the cumulative nature of learning and teaching a teacher has to make continuous inputs by reading but this process can be redeemed effectively if the relationship between reader and interest is positive and significant. Taking this in account, the present study was planned to study the reading interest of pre-service teachers where faculty is taken as an independent variable and reading interest as a dependent variable. In addition to this, undertaken study will trigger the involvement of pre-service teachers by involving themselves with reading according to the indicators assumed for the present study. Further, this process will extend their excellence in assuming and performing the role of teacher, so that they become significant influenced by the ongoing changes of society.

Besides this, one of the main aims of investigation was to measure pre-service teachers on account of four identified indicators of reading interest viz; background knowledge, selectivity, sequence order and fluency in reading.

### **Aim of The Paper**

To examine the influence of faculty on reading interest by including faculty as a factor for four identified indicators of reading interest viz; background knowledge, selectivity, sequence order and fluency in reading.

### **Operational Definitions Of The Terms Used In The Paper**

#### **Faculty**

Faculty is a division or comprehensive branch of learning at a college level. It constitutes members of a particular profession regarding as a body, a group of persons entrusted with the government and in a college.

Three faculties are available in colleges of education viz; Humanities (social studies, history, political science, economics, commerce, physical

education, home science, public administration, music and fine arts); Languages (Punjabi, Hindi and English) and Sciences (science, life science, physical science, mathematics and computer science).

#### **Reading Interest**

It is conceived as motivational variable which enhance the potential of pre-service teacher by focusing on dimensions such as background knowledge, selectivity, sequence order and fluency in reading.

#### **Pre-Service Teachers**

They are referred as would be teachers pursuing professional courses under teacher education programs.

#### **Contents of Reading Interest**

Remembering the research work conducted by Kintsch (1980); Anderson, Tollefson and Gilbert (1985); Munandar (1986); Krapp, Hidi and Anderson (1992); Tobias (1994); Grant (1996); Kintsch (1998); Guthrie et al (1999); Krapp (1999); Cullinan (2000); Hidi and Harackiewicz (2000); Ryan and Deci (2000); Hidi (2001); Ainley, Hidi and Berndorf (2002); Holden (2004); Croston (2005); Biancarosa and Snow (2006); Hidi and Renninger (2006); McKool (2007); Scholastic and Yankelovich (2008); Lee (2009); Mills (2010); Kirby, Ball, Geier, Parrila and Wade-Woolley (2011); Dai (2013); Schroeder (2013) and Ziolkowski and McDowell (2015) reading interest of pre-service teachers can be determined by;

1. Background knowledge
2. Selectivity
3. Sequence Order
4. Fluency In Reading

#### **Background Knowledge**

Background knowledge and experience is perceived as a connection between new experiences and knowledge that sustain interest in reading. Vygotsky (1978) stated that science teachers needed background knowledge most; so as to fit content and its elements in an arranged manner because it helps individuals to bypass the need to learn continuously by monitoring and critical reflection of experiences. Supporting these views; Eil, Hill and Grudnoff (2012) recognized background knowledge as a key feature of student's work, which enables him to promote learning in classrooms.

#### **Selectivity**

It is an approach associated to various sources of information in form of documents, newspapers, text-books, magazines, storybooks, journals, novels etc. It depends on learner feelings and it is affected by motivational variables like; choice, discussions and enjoyment. It is affected by age, gender and subject areas. (Ebbers; 2011)

#### **Sequence Order**

To make inferences accurately in disciplines like; history, science and literature connectedness sequential order is required. It means sequence order enhances level of understanding by acquiring mastery of facts. (Wineburg;1991). It is believed that sequence order help teachers to focus on observations, empathy, establish co-operative relationships, by

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being realistic, establishing direction, attaining confidence, expressing enthusiasm. (Borich; 2003) According to Macalister (2011); selectivity in context of students enhances understanding and recognition by accumulated efforts.

#### Fluency in Reading

It is a constructive activity which one gains with continuous engagement (Barr; 2001). It is based on trends and issues. It is affected by inconsistency and weak effects of reading interest (Kirby, Ball and Kelly; 2011)

#### Review Related To Reading Interest and Faculty

Crew (1994); Liu (1998) and Carrier (2003) worked on student teacher teaching language. Their study revealed that students' as teachers improve proficiency in language which they eventually teach because of their visits to school and teaching methodology courses.

Mayer-Smith, Moon and Wideen (1994) worked on pre-service teachers and found that pre-service teachers dealing in humanities and sciences were quite different from each other.

Grauer (1995) conducted research on pre-service teachers and highlighted that their reading is associated to the subject they are associated with and they read in light of subject and theories which are part of the field.

Abefrathna and Zainab (2004) experimented on reading interest of 300 students of Sri Lanka. The study observed that there exist difference between reading purpose and academic streams and revealed that about 45% of the respondents from arts stream as compared to 40% from science stream indicated reading from general knowledge.

Pearson, Roehler, Dole and Duffy (2005) undertook a research on expert and novice readers and found that expert readers are usually engaged with certain telling behaviors, such as comparing background knowledge with information in the text,

# Periodic Research

asking questions, inferring information not provided in the text and summarizing.

Bilgin (2006) conducted research on science teachers and found that teachers who are not familiar with science concepts do not have reading interest in that subject. His findings further narrated reading interest effects prior knowledge and conceptual knowledge of science teachers.

Lorry (2006) experimented on 215 secondary science teachers' attitudes towards science reading and science text-books. His study revealed that cognitive and meta-cognitive skills are required by readers to learn from science text and this approach of teacher towards science reading, he referred whether teacher is doing with interest, concentrating on it or so on.

Moje, Overby, Tysvaer, and Morris (2008) found that reading interest among teachers promotes academic success by providing more reading practice which leads to increase vocabulary, understanding and motivation to read more.

Vysal (2008) conducted a research study on science teachers and found that females work harder than males to prove themselves at work.

Clinton (2011) experimented on 60 undergraduate participants belonging to the faculty of science. The findings of the study suggested that background knowledge and topic interest comes prior to reading.

#### Population of The Study

The population of the present study comprises of all graduate and post-graduate pre-service teachers who were studying in the colleges of education of Punjab to become teachers as professionals. Thus the investigators selected 300 pre-service teachers from 17 Colleges of Education of Punjab through stratified sampling technique. The detailed distribution is given in the Table 1 and Table 2.

**Table-1**  
**Sample Description for Pre-Service Teachers Belonging to Various Colleges of Education**

S. No.	Name of The Colleges of Education	Number of Pre-service Teachers
1	Rayat and Bahra College of Education, Sahoran, Distt. Kharar	23
2	Rayat College of Education, Railmajra, SBS Nagar	15
3	D.A.V. College of Education, Hoshiarpur	18
4	Chandigarh College of Education, Landran, Mohali	12
5	Doaba College of Education, Kharar	12
6	B.C.M. College of Education, Ludhiana	27
7	Guru Nanak Dev College of Education, Majatri, Tehsil Kharar, Distt. Mohali	22
8	Indo Global College of Education, Abhipur, Ropar	15
9	Guru Gobind Singh College of Education, Kamalpura, Jagraon	17
10	Mehar Chand College of Education, Bhanupali, Nangal, Ropar	21
11	Shivalik Institute of Education and Research, Mohali	09
12	Govt. College of Education, Jalandhar	11
13	RIMT College of Education, MandiGobindgarh	14
14	Malwa Central College of Education for Women, Ludhiana	13
15	Shivalik Hills College of Education, Patti (Nangal)	25
16	M.B.B.G.D.R.G.C. College of Education for Girls, Mansowal, Distt. Hoshiarpur	17
17	Khalsa College of Education, Mahilpur	29
	<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>

Table-2

Sample Description for Pre-Service Teachers Belonging to Different Faculties

Dimensions/Indicators	Faculty to Which One Belongs	No. of Pre-Service Teachers
background knowledge, selectivity, sequence order and fluency in reading	Humanities	104
	Sciences	97
	Languages	99
	<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>

**Variables of The Study**

The researcher categorized the variables of the study as;

**Independent Variable**

Faculty (humanities, sciences and languages)

**Dependent Variable**

Reading Interest and its contents

1. background knowledge
2. Selectivity
3. Sequence Order
4. Fluency In Reading

It is expected that characteristics of faculty have an impact on the various dimensions of reading interest.

**Tools and Techniques Used for The Study**

A self made questionnaire on reading interest was developed by the researchers which initially consisted of 32 questions under various dimensions viz; background knowledge, selectivity,

sequence order and fluency in reading. The data was collected on a 5- level Likert type scale ranging from 1- (St. Disagree) to 5- (St. Agree). Reliability coefficient of the scale was determined before collecting the data. It was 0.891 by Cronbach Alpha Method. The tool was validated by 10 experts of Panjab University of Chandigarh. All possible care was taken to establish the validity of the tool. Thus, the final questionnaire consists of two parts; A) a personal information Data Sheet, B) Reading interest scale. It consists of 20 statements under the four identified contents. Each identified content comprises of five statements.

**Analysis, Results and Discussion**

The data collected through questionnaire was analyzed by using ANOVA to find the results in relation to framed objective. Thus, the mean, standard deviation, t-values and level of significance were obtained for different indicators of reading interest and are presented in table-3 to table-9.

Table- 3 ANOVA for Background Knowledge of Reading Interest

Indicator	Stream	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value
Background Knowledge	Humanities	104	13.31	4.931	20.127	10.063	0.394
	Languages	99	13.56	5.511	7589.670	25.554	
	Sciences	97	13.94	4.688	7609.797	26.310	

Table-3 shows no significant differences between pre-service teachers of humanities, languages and sciences on background knowledge indicator of reading interest.

The results of the study are in line with the research work of Abd-El-Khalick and Akerson (2004); who observed that background knowledge is needed

most for science teachers, so as to fit content and its elements in an arranged manner. The results are in agreement with the research study of Bilgin (2006) who stated that reading interest is affected by prior knowledge and conceptual knowledge of science teachers.

Table-4 ANOVA for Selectivity of Reading Interest

Indicator	Stream	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value
Selectivity	Humanities	104	13.79	4.564	7.887	3.943	2.160*
	Languages	99	14.60	5.473	7403.030	24.589	
	Sciences	97	14.76	4.794	7310.917	24.894	

Table-4 yielded significant differences for teachers belonging to faculty of languages and sciences. The F-value was come out to be 2.160 which was significant at 0.05 level of confidence. It inferred that language teachers give emphasis to language while reading with interest. The result of the study fall in line with the research work of; Mayer-

Smith, Moon and Wideen (1993) who found that teachers read only those subjects with interest which are alike to their beliefs and attitudes to which they are not aware. They further revealed that this in-turn, influence their learning and behaviour in regard to their subject.

Table -5 t-ratios for Variable of Faculty (F)

Symbols	N	Mean	SD	SE <sub>M</sub>	Treatment Levels	t-ratio	Level of Sign.
F1	104	13.79	4.564	0.461	F1-F2	0.089	-
F2	99	14.60	5.473	0.426	F2-F3	0.974	-
F3	97	14.76	4.794	0.483	F1-F3	4.003*	0.01

Table shows that difference between the means for (F1-F3) significant at 0.01 level. Thus, it can be inferred that teachers from humanities have scored significantly higher on selectivity than teachers from science faculty. The research finding goes in

hand with Webster (2001) research work at United States to determine selectivity as an indicator of academic quality. He classified it into seven broad categories viz; academic reputation, student selectivity, faculty resources, student retention,

financial resources, alumni giving and graduation rate performance. He further visualized that selectivity of reading interest enhances with quality of teaching and learning. This led us to interpret that seeking

admission in colleges of education was competitive based. Pre-service teachers' to excel more in their teaching-learning have to read more and more books.

**Table-6 ANOVA for Sequence Order of Reading Interest**

Indicator	Stream	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value
Sequence Order	Humanities	104	14.37	4.611	195.007	97.503	<b>4.662**</b>
	Languages	99	12.43	4.262	6211.980	20.916	
	Sciences	97	13.72	4.829	6406.987	22.918	

**\*\* Significant at 0.01 Level of Confidence**

Table-6 shows that sciences teachers have yielded the highest score on sequence order. The F-value came out to be **4.662\*\*** which was found to be significant at 0.01 level of confidence. It inferred that there exist significant differences among pre-service teachers on the basis of their faculties to which they belong.

The results of the study were supported by research work undertaken by Niles (1975); who found that linguistic teachers need sequence to assess the relevancy of the text. She further stressed that relevancy of text motivates the learner to deal with ideas or situations and ultimately improves student interests in reading. The results get support by the

research work of Mayer-Smith, Moon and Wideen (1994); who found that pre-service teachers belonging to humanities and sciences differ from each other. They further stressed that they varied from each other on the basis of beliefs about subjects which were part of their subject culture and world view and reading with interest.

The result of the study was supported by the work of Mokhtari and Sheorey (1994); who concluded that the type of reading with interest and without interest add the amount of time devoted to each type of reading and is association to create a difference among students.

**Table-7 t-ratios for Variable of Faculty (F)**

Symbols	N	Mean	SD	SE <sub>M</sub>	Treatment Levels	t-ratio	Level of Sign.
F1	104	14.37	4.611	0.461	F1-F2	3.089**	0.01
F2	99	12.43	4.262	0.426	F2-F3	0.974	-
F3	97	13.72	4.829	0.483	F1-F3	2.003*	0.05

Table shows that difference between the means of (F1-F2) levels is significant at 0.01 level and for (F1-F3) significant at 0.05 level. Thus, it can be

inferred that teachers from humanities have scored significantly higher on sequence order than teachers from language and science faculty.

**Table-8 ANOVA for Fluency in Reading of Reading Interest**

Indicator	Stream	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-value
Fluency Reading	Humanities	100	14.87	5.414	186.860	93.430	<b>3.548*</b>
	Languages	100	14.32	4.915	7820.060	26.330	
	Sciences	100	12.99	5.052	8006.920	28.421	

**\* Significant at 0.05 Level of Confidence**

Table-8 shows that mean value of pre-service teachers of humanities, languages and sciences on indicator fluency in reading of reading interest was 14.87, 14.32 and 12.99 respectively. The mean scores of humanities teachers were highest among the mean scores of two other faculties of teachers. S.D. For humanities, languages and sciences teachers were 5.414, 4.915 and 5.052 respectively. The result indicated that humanities teachers have yielded the most fluency in reading. The F-value came out to be **3.548\*** which were found to be significant at 0.05 level of confidence. It inferred that there exist significant difference between pre-

service teachers of humanities, languages and sciences on fluency in reading.

The result of the study was supported by the work of Ozturk (2008); who revealed that novice teachers differ significantly from each other in relation to age, subject area, faculty, practice teaching, amount of in-service training and love for teaching and learning. The results are also in line with the findings of Alkharusi, Kazem and Al-Musawai (2011); who inferred that their high level of skills and attitudes help them to sustain knowledge for longer duration and use it wisely; so as to become better teachers.

**Table-9 t-ratios for Variable of Faculty (F)**

Symbols	N	Mean	SD	SE <sub>M</sub>	Treatment Levels	t-ratio	Level of Sig.
F1	100	14.87	5.414	0.541	F1-F2	0.752	-
F2	100	14.32	4.915	0.492	F2-F3	1.887	-
F3	98	12.99	5.052	0.505	F1-F3	2.539**	0.01

The above table shows t-ratios for differences between the means of F1-F3 are statistically significant at 0.01 level. The results show that humanities teachers have scored significantly

higher on fluency in reading than pre-service teachers from faculty of sciences.

### Conclusion

Towards better understanding of reading interest with its dimensions viz; background knowledge, selectivity, sequence order and fluency in reading. So, what can be taken from this study is characterized by different results; context that must be taken into account.

The research questions whether faculty is associated with dimensions like; background knowledge, selectivity, sequence order and fluency in reading. The results claimed that pre-service teachers significantly vary on selectivity, sequence order and fluency in reading as compared to their background knowledge.

It is hoped that the present study research findings would encapsulate pre-service teachers to develop their reading interest by laying emphasis on indicators such as; background knowledge, selectivity, sequence order, fluency in reading which will definitely provide them with a better understanding.

The results of the present study suggest that faculty for a teacher is of great utilitarian value to improve his skills and abilities related to the subject he teach and learn. This in-turn enables him to work and plan his learning and reading interest in a way that matches with his subject knowledge.

It is further believed that the findings and integrity of research could contribute teachers' with ideas and practices by focusing on literature and keeping in mind the indicators which promote and influence various aspects of reading interest. The current trends of learning show that reading interest is no longer able to cope; because knowledge gets doubled after every three to four years. The present research study shows us the way to integrate learning with reading interest in a way, that teachers can assume their responsibilities to educate new generation of teachers and students. The results of the study will pave a long way to help teachers to gain insight of reading interest which will bring changes and gradually lead towards improvement and empowerment.

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