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Impact of Using Folklore in ESL Classroom for Teaching English Reading Skills in RYK

Human Tu Zahra ¹ Waheed Shahzad ² Muhammad Anwar Farooq ³ Tariq Ali ⁴ Noor ul Ain ⁵

Abstract: *The goal of this study was to look into the impact of using folklore in ESL classrooms to teach English reading skills. Because English is a second language in Pakistan, the researcher employed the term ESL in this study. This study used a quantitative experimental research method. The results of the pre-and post-tests showed that folklore had a positive effect on the experimental group students as their results improved. The results of the control group showed no significant difference. The questionnaire completed by teachers produced a positive response. The majority of teachers agreed that folklore can help students expand their vocabulary and read more fluently. Most teachers agreed that incorporating folklore into an educational program motivates students to read more. Overall, the research findings were positive.*

Key Words: Folklore, ESL Classroom, Reading Skills

Introduction

Learning material is an important part of teaching English. Selecting appropriate teaching materials aids in the improvement of students' learning abilities. The majority of learning is done through textbooks. Textbooks are used as teaching materials in schools and colleges. The syllabus is based solely on textbook content. Students must learn everything from books, which makes learning monotonous and tiresome. To improve our reading skills, we need to implement a variety of strategies. The students have been taught English since they were in elementary school. Actually, the majority of them still think English is extremely difficult. It is difficult to learn English. They occasionally experience difficulties while studying it. To become fluent in the language, English learners must master four basic skills: speaking, writing, listening, and reading. Four of them are essential for anyone teaching or learning English to master, as they are required to communicate with people worldwide. In this study, the researcher wants to see how using folklore in the ESL classroom affects teaching English reading skills.

Folklore refers to cultural heritage, which includes folk stories, folktales, folk poetry, folk art, fairy tales, myths, and other cultural elements. Folklore contains cultures, subcultures, and oral traditions such as fairy tales, proverbs, admonitions, and jokes (Hegde, 2009; Yassif, 2009). Folklore is preserved by people and passed down from generation to generation, most likely orally or through short stories and tales. Children are naturally drawn to stories. When they hear stories about heroic characters, they become excited. Their curiosity is piqued by stories, and they attempt to read more on their own. This enhances children's cognitive capacities and has an impact on their reading abilities. The potential of folklore in language instruction has not been fully utilized and has not received adequate attention (Prasetyo, A., 2016). For this reason, the researcher decided to use folklore to help students become better readers because it can benefit the students.

¹ M.Phil. Scholar, Institute of Humanities and Arts, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology, Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan.

² Lecturer in English, Institute of Humanities and Arts, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology, Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan.

³ HOD, Institute of Humanities and Arts, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology, Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan.

⁴ Lecturer, Institute of Humanities and Arts, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology, Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan.

⁵ Lecturer, Institute of Humanities and Arts, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology, Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan.

▪ **Corresponding Author:** Waheed Shahzad (waheed.shahzad@kfueit.edu.pk)

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Folktales are regarded as one of the literary genres that can be utilized in reading classrooms to improve students' language proficiency, inspire them, and broaden their understanding of culture (Mantra, IBN, 2017) (Nyoman & Gana, 2018).

Among the four components of English is reading. Reading is the process of deciphering the meaning or significance of letters, symbols, etc., especially through touch or sight. English is used as a second language and is used throughout life in Pakistan, where it is sometimes used for academic purposes, other times for professional purposes, and for international communication. For students, reading in a language they do not speak on a daily basis can be challenging. Reading is a challenging activity in and of itself since it requires knowledge of word pronunciation, meaning, and comprehension of the text. The goal of this study is to ascertain how well class 10 students at Sheikh Zaid Public School RYK respond to reading instruction based on folklore.

Significance of the Study

Shaw asserts that "reading is thinking with the author, absorbing his ideas." In order to instruct students in reading skills, teachers must be aware of the areas in which their students are weak and require assistance. To address the issue of students' poor reading ability, it is necessary to examine many of the teaching strategies that educators employ when teaching reading to their students. The goal of this study is to figure out how well class 10 students at Sheikh Zaid Public School RYK respond to reading instruction based on folklore. Reading is one of the four fundamental skills of learning: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The author's goal in conducting this research is to identify the problem that students face when doing comprehension. By using folklore, researchers hope to capture students' interest and determine its impact on them. Folklore is used to spark students' interest and motivate them to improve their vocabulary and pronunciation. Reading a text that fascinates students and inspires them to read more will naturally improve their reading fluency because they have already heard that folktale. This allows them to mentally decode and sketch the characters they are reading. In this manner, as they work on comprehension, they can comprehend questions and provide more appropriate answers. According to Roog (2001), telling stories aloud to kids helps them comprehend print, story structure, and other textual elements while also giving them a wealth of knowledge about the uses and functions of written language. Children's literacy skills are developed via folktales. Reading aloud to children is the single most important activity for acquiring the knowledge needed for eventual success in reading (Anderson 1985).

Research Objectives

The objectives of the research were

- To find out the impact of folklore on enhancing students' reading comprehension.
- To explore the impact of folklore on students' motivation, enthusiasm, and interest in the learning process of reading comprehension.

Background of the Study

This study examined a variety of topics, including the ESL classroom, folklore, reading skills, and teaching. As we know, ESL means English as a second language. Like Pakistan, English has been used as a second language in many other countries, such as Indonesia, India, and many others. Many researchers in their country try to explore the impact of folklore on improving students' English reading skills. Different research has been done by different researchers. Every researcher uses folktales from their own culture and tries to check their impact on their students. Folklore can be used to enhance vocabulary, strengthen reading abilities, increase fluency in reading, develop cognitive skills, decode new words, and keep students interested in reading exercises.

Researcher Komal Salman (2021) from Pakistan did research on this. *Exploring Pakistani Folklore, the Need for and Problems with Documentation*. In her research, she discusses the importance of storytelling. She is determined to preserve Pakistan's cultural heritage through storytelling. She also wants to demonstrate the connection between Pakistani folk stories and Muslim culture, as well as how stories can help us develop future Islamic art. The study examines some notable global efforts in folklore that could be modified to meet Pakistan's specific requirements. The significance of folk literature is discussed, as well

as the arguments for why this pressing issue must be addressed immediately. She also discusses the problems that the country faces with documentation. Another aim of this paper was to shed light on the significance of folklore and its domain. Due to the lockdown during Covid 19, this research was conducted using secondary sources such as journals and articles. The author wishes to convey that we can only combat the intangible threat of information onslaughts by preserving the intangible aspects of our heritage. In a context-specific to Pakistan, the researcher attempted to investigate the what, how, and why of the previously mentioned. Researchers emphasize the importance of preserving and recording Pakistani folklore for domestic and international audiences. It is a wonderful aspect of the country's intangible heritage, providing a fascinating glimpse into its history, culture, and society.

In December 2021, an Indonesian researcher conducted a systematic literature review titled "Folklore and its Effect on student's ability in reading narrative text" (Suryani et al., 2021). The purpose of this study was to use folklore to improve readers' comprehension of narrative texts. This study employed a syntactic literature review methodology. Conduct searches on Google Scholar, Science Direct.com, and JSTOR over the next ten years (2011-2021). Following selection, observation revealed that ten articles were suitable for examination. The findings revealed that folklore could significantly improve students' comprehension of narrative texts. The researcher employed the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology. To perform a systematic literature review, one must locate, examine, evaluate, and interpret all of the available research. The researcher's findings indicated that ten publications support the idea that teaching folklore to students can improve their understanding of narrative texts. Folklore has the power to inspire students' motivation, excitement, and interest in the process of learning reading comprehension. Folklore not only sparks conversation but also gives students confidence and motivates them to take an active role in their education. Pupils are quick to identify mistakes in the text. The fact that so many articles were looked at makes it likely that the results will differ. Consequently, more research encompassing a greater number of articles will be needed.

The "impact of teachers' use of folk tales on the performance of pupils in reading comprehension in primary schools in Kaduna state, Nigeria," was the subject of a study conducted by Dr. Hanna Onyi Yusuf, (2015). another researcher from Nigeria. The study's goal was to determine how well Kaduna, Nigerian primary school pupils, performed in reading comprehension when their teachers told them folktales. The study's sample consisted of forty (40) primary four pupils from two Kaduna North Local Government Area primary schools that were selected at random and named "A" and "B." It was determined that School "B" would serve as the control group and School "A" as the experimental group. Both groups received instruction in reading comprehension for eight weeks. Pre-test, post-test, and comparable groups were used in an experimental design. The students were evaluated using a reading comprehension test called the "retelling test." Results showed that the experimental group performed better than the control group. This suggests that teaching students about folktales through reading comprehension exercises could have a major positive impact on their ability to read. All of these studies showed how effective it is to use folktales to help students develop their language and reading comprehension skills. They also found that there are some educational benefits to reading children's folktales aloud. The experimental group's students' comprehension was significantly better. Using folktales, the instructor caught the students' interest in the reading material. It boosted students' self-esteem and generated dialogue. Even the least enthusiastic readers were drawn into the lesson. It gave them an opportunity to demonstrate their abilities. It was only an experiment, but the way it was designed made it impossible to control every factor. Without a doubt, the study yielded notable results that highlighted the significance of the intervention.

Researchers from Indonesia conducted a study in 2020 titled "*The Effect of Indonesian Folktales on Fourth-Grade Students' Reading Comprehension and Motivation.*" The researchers who conducted this study were identified as (Istiq'faroh et al., 2020). Poor reading comprehension skills in fourth grade have an impact on the motivation of elementary school students to learn. This project had two goals: to create picture books based on indigenous folktales and to investigate how Indonesian folktales affect students' motivation to learn and comprehension of what they read. A quasi-experimental design was used as a research methodology. The researchers in this study examined four authentic Indonesian folktales to create picture books: Asal Mula Kota Jambi (the origins of Jambi), Asal Mula Kota Cirebon (the origins of Cianjur), Danau Toba (Lake Toba), and Batu Menangis (The Crying Stone). The researcher's methodology was a non-equivalent comparison-group design. This was one of the most effective quasi-experimental



research designs (Johnson and Christensen, 2014). The researchers administered pre- and post-tests to both the experimental and control groups of students in this study. The researchers compared the two groups' pre- and post-treatment conditions following the procedure. Learning motivation and reading comprehension were the dependent variables. The study included 49 fourth-grade students (aged 8 to 9 years) from two public elementary schools in Surabaya, Indonesia (27 boys and 22 girls). The experimental group consisted of 26 Perak Elementary School students (14 males and 12 females), whereas the control group consisted of 23 Bubutan Elementary School students (13 males and ten females). The experimental group was taught using picture books based on folktales, while the control group was taught using traditional textbooks. The two schools were Surabaya's top performers. Each student had comparable educational and socioeconomic backgrounds. They were instructed by two female teachers, both thirty-five years old. Every teacher had a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) degree from a nearby university and at least ten years of teaching experience. This study's instruments included the motivation to learn scale (MLS) and reading comprehension assessments. In conclusion, this study found that using picture books with folktales can improve elementary school students' motivation to learn. However, there is no significant difference in the mean post-test scores for reading comprehension and motivation among students in the control group. Traditional textbooks are ineffective in improving students' reading comprehension and motivation to learn from picture books because they cannot pique their interest. To summarize, this study found that using picture books increased the reading comprehension and motivation scores of the experimental group of students when compared to the control group.

Reason for Choosing this Topic

There are a few reasons behind choosing this topic.

1. Reading is an essential component of any educational program. Students who lack good reading skills will be unable to write or speak English. Researchers wanted to see how folklore affected students' reading skills.
2. Students become bored reading text from books. The researcher wants to investigate the effectiveness of folklore on students, specifically whether or not students are motivated and enthusiastic when reading stories about their culture.
3. Examining whether or not folklore stimulates students' interest in reading will enhance their vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension of sentences is another goal of this research.

Research Methodology

The research design for this study is quantitative. The researcher uses an experimental method for this study. It is an action research study conducted in the classroom. Kurt Lewin, an MIT professor, used the term for the first time in 1944. The goal of action research is to investigate and solve a problem at the same time. In other words, action research combines research and action. Throughout the experiment, the researcher uses this method to observe how folklore motivates and sparks the students' interest. Experimental research is the process of collecting data and information about a subject through observation in controlled environments. If you understand the benefits of experimental research design, you can apply it more effectively in your professional career. Experimental research is conducted under closely monitored conditions. This gives you a great deal of control over the variables in the experiment you carry out. You can experiment and personalize it to find what best suits your needs and your professional objectives. Experimental research is a useful tool for understanding cause-and-effect relationships. It allows us to manipulate the variables and monitor the outcomes, which is crucial for understanding how different factors influence a study's conclusion.

Sampling

Two groups of Sheikh Zaid Public School RYK class 10 students were used for the sampling process. Local folktales were included in the reading material for one group, which served as an experimental group; the other group was under control. Data was incorporated into the lesson plan through a reading exercise.

Research Design

Since this is a quantitative study, data is collected by splitting the 10th graders into two groups: the experimental group and the control group. There are twenty-five students in the class. Experimental

groups are test samples or groups that take part in an experimental procedure. This group is shown modifications to the independent variable that is being tested. The values of the independent variable and their effect on the dependent variable are recorded. In order to ensure that the results of the test of the independent variable are unaffected, a control group is one that remains apart from the other groups in the experiment. In this study, folklore serves as the independent variable that will affect the dependent variable. The researcher's dependent variable in this study is the students' reading proficiency, which she is observing.

Data Design

Data was gathered during the research by administering pre- and post-tests, as well as a questionnaire with closed-ended questions about the impact of folklore. Students were given 20 minutes to complete their tests. The pretest is an assessment used by teachers to determine each student's level of understanding and competency in the subject. Pretests, when used at the beginning of a course, allow teachers to assess student understanding, prepare them for upcoming material, and eventually observe their development. A post-test, on the other hand, is an assessment that students take after receiving instructions on a topic in order to determine what changed between, before, and after the instructions. The researcher administered a reading comprehension pretest to both groups shortly before the start of the experiment, and the same test with a different comprehension passage from the pretest was administered again immediately following the treatment. The pre-test consisted of a comprehension passage from the textbook, and both groups were given the same sample. The students in both groups must complete the test within 20 minutes. Following the test, the experimental group was provided with folklore-related materials. The teacher explained what folklore is and introduced students to famous Pakistani cultural folk stories such as Heer Ranjha, Sassi Punnu, Sohni Mahiwal, and others. The teacher questioned students about their thoughts on the stories and what they expected from folklore. Students also asked the teacher several questions about their material. The entire process took a week. During this process, researchers observe students' reactions to folk stories, their level of interest, and how eager they were to learn about their cultural heritage. The control group's students were not exposed to folktales during instruction. A post-test is conducted after the material and instructions have been provided. In the post-test, both the experimental and control groups were given comprehension passages with closed-ended questions. Both groups were given the same reading passage and a time limit of 20 minutes. The students are asked to read each reading passage clearly and circle the appropriate response to the questions.

Data Collection

For data collection, researchers use an objective method with multiple-choice questions. The comprehension passage consists of 18 questions with four choices. The researcher selects the comprehension passages, which are then checked by the teachers. The students found the passage easy to comprehend and understand. In the pre-test, a passage was taken from a random text, and after the text, there were questions related to the text with four choices; students had to select one correct choice. To increase students' interest in reading, the researcher collects material from various Pakistani folk stories. The experimental group's teacher was then asked to read the stories and assign them to students to read in class. As a result, students become more motivated to read, and reading any text more fluently will aid in this endeavor. By reading a small portion of a story, they understand what is going on in the story, who the characters are, and what the plot is, such as who the main hero is. They also try to understand and decode the difficult words in their minds. It also helps them to improve their cognitive abilities while reading. For the post-test, the researcher again selected a random passage for both groups. A questionnaire is created based on the observations made. The questionnaire is in the form of a table. The teachers were asked to complete a questionnaire about their views on the use of folklore as reading and teaching material. Questions in the questionnaire have five options: agree, strongly agree, not sure, disagree, and strongly disagree. Teachers must respond based on their observations during class. In addition to the class teachers, the researcher collects questionnaires + of folklore in the classroom.

Data Analysis

The researcher compared the pre- and post-test results. After that, the researcher sent a questionnaire with 12 questions about the folklore to the teachers. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS-23, a



statistical program designed for social sciences. The significance of demographic factors on student and teacher assessments of the effect of folklore on teaching reading skills was hypothesized to be examined using an independent sample t-test. The frequency and percentage were then used to determine the overall results of the teacher questionnaires. Every response was interpreted using an Excel sheet, which was then used to calculate the frequency and percentage of each response.

Results of the pretest and post-tests are presented in the form of a table below.

Table 1

Pre test

Group_type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	Sig.
Control Group	12	10.75	4.53	1.31	.170	.866
Experimental Group	13	10.46	3.86	1.072		

Note: Only the values that are used most frequently are mentioned in the interpretation.

Table 2

Post-test

Group_type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	Sig.
Control Group	12	10.58	2.93	.84	-3.193	.004
Experimental Group	13	14.07	2.53	.70		

Note: Only the values that are used most frequently are mentioned in the interpretation.

Table 3

Control group

Test_type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	Sig.
Pre-test	12	10.75	4.53	1.30	.107	.916
Post-test	12	10.58	2.93	.84		

Note: Only the values that are used most frequently are mentioned in the interpretation.

Table 4

Experimental group

Test_type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	Sig.
Pre-test	13	10.46	3.86	1.07	-2.821	0.10
Post-test	13	14.07	2.53	.70		

Note: Only the values that are used most frequently are mentioned in the interpretation.

Questionnaire data are analyzed one by one in the tables below.

Table 5

Q. No	Statement	Level of Agreement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Folktales make it easier for students to understand a text or paragraph.	Frequency	7	4	0.0	0.0	0.0
		%	63.6	36.4	0.0	0.0	0.0

Note: Only the values that are used most frequently are mentioned in the interpretation.

Table 6

Q. No	Statement	Level of Agreement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2.	Folklore helps students read text fluently.	Frequency	3	6	2	0.0	0.0
		%	27.3	54.5	18.2	0.0	0.0

Note: Only the values that are used most frequently are mentioned in the interpretation.

Table 7

Q. No	Statement	Level of Agreement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3.	Folk stories help students in identifying synonyms of words in the text.	Frequency	3	6	2	0.0	0.0
		%	27.3	54.5	18.2	0.0	0.0

Note: Only the values that are used most frequently are mentioned in the interpretation.

Table 8

Q. No	Statement	Level of Agreement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4.	Folklore improves the focus of students towards studies	Frequency	2	7	1	1	0.0
		%	18.2	63.6	9.1	9.1	0.0

Note: Only the values that are used most frequently are mentioned in the interpretation.

Table 9

Q. No	Statement	Level of Agreement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5.	Folklore helps students enhance their vocabulary.	Frequency	0.0	11	0.0	0.0	0.0
		%	0.0	100	0.0	0.0	0.0

Note: Only the values that are used most frequently are mentioned in the interpretation.

Table 10

Q. No	Statement	Level of Agreement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6.	Folklore can increase the cognitive abilities of students.	Frequency	2	6	3	0.0	0.0
		%	18.2	54.5	27.3	0.0	0.0

Note: Only the values that are used most frequently are mentioned in the interpretation.

Table 11

Q. No	Statement	Level of Agreement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7.	Folktales help students scan the text in minimal time.	Frequency	1	8	1	1	0.0
		%	9.1	72.7	9.1	9.1	0.0

Note: Only the values that are used most frequently are mentioned in the interpretation.

Table 12

Q. No	Statement	Level of Agreement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8.	Folktales help students to decode the meaning of new words.	Frequency	2	6	3	0.0	0.0
		%	18.2	4.5	27.3	0.0	0.0

Note: Only the values that are used most frequently are mentioned in the interpretation.



Table 13

Q. No	Statement	Level of Agreement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9.	Folklore helps teacher motivate their students.	Frequency	4	6	1	0.0	0.0
		%	36.4	54.5	9.1	0.0	0.0

Note: Only the values that are used most frequently are mentioned in the interpretation.

Table 14

Q. No	Statement	Level of Agreement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10.	The folklore text influences the students' growing interest in the narrative.	Frequency	3	7	1	0.0	0.0
		%	27.3	63.6	9.1	0.0	0.0

Note: Only the values that are used most frequently are mentioned in the interpretation.

Table 15

Q. No	Statement	Level of Agreement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11.	Students can evaluate folklore on the basis of characters, plots, values, and conflicts given in the text.	Frequency	1	7	2	1	0.0
		%	9.1	63.6	18.2	9.1	0.0

Note: Only the values that are used most frequently are mentioned in the interpretation.

Table 16

Q. No	Statement	Level of Agreement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12.	Folklore should be part of the educational program.	Frequency	6	5	0.0	0.0	0.0
		%	54.5	45.5	0.0	0.0	0.0

Note: Only the values that are used most frequently are mentioned in the interpretation.

Findings

The author has drawn conclusions from all of the data regarding the value of folklore in ESL classrooms for teaching English reading skills after completing the data analysis and discussion. Folklore has a significant influence on Sheikh Zaid Public School students in grade 10, according to the data analysis and discussion of the findings. Based on the findings, the experimental group that received a treatment involving folklore from Pakistani cultural folktales received a higher score than the control group, which received no special treatment. The experimental group scored 14.07, while the control group received a score of 10.58. This demonstrated how the experimental group's reading abilities had improved. According to the results of the questionnaire, the majority of teachers supported the use of folklore to help students understand sentences, characters, and plots, as well as to increase their vocabulary, motivation, and interest in reading. Every instructor was in favor of including folklore in the curriculum. Testing indicates that teaching students about folklore has a positive impact on their learning.

Research Limitations

The researcher acknowledges that the study's potential has not been fully realized. There were many restrictions and difficulties throughout the research process. The following are a few research limitations:

- The researcher still lacked experience and knowledge in teaching and learning. It made the implementation process more difficult for this researcher. However, the researcher did everything possible to finish this investigation.
- The researcher at Sheikh Zaid Public School collaborated with a small group of students. If the same research was conducted at a different school, results could still differ.

In light of all those limitations, further research is needed regarding the use of folklore in English reading instruction. in order to attain the greatest results feasible.

Suggestion

The results of this study imply that using materials based on folklore to teach English reading skills has a beneficial effect. Here are some suggestions for instructing and learning English:

The first recommendation is that English teachers would benefit from learning about interesting and relevant teaching resources that target the needs of their students. English teachers need to use innovative teaching methods in order to effectively impart English knowledge to their students.

The second recommendation is for educational institutions. The author expresses the hope that the educational system will help the teacher create interesting, entertaining, and thought-provoking reading comprehension lessons. Folklore benefits students, so schools ought to incorporate more folktales into their curricula.

Finally, here are some suggestions for the upcoming researchers. When they carry out further research in the same field, they can use this study as a model. The author expresses the hope that a different researcher will be able to investigate this further and make all the necessary preparations for research. The author also hopes that by using more students, the next researcher will be able to conduct more accurate research.

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