

# Interpretation of Literary Art in Preschool Education from the Preschool Educators' Perspective

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**Abstract** – The research explores the use of literary art in preschools from the perspective of preschool educators. A questionnaire, developed by the authors, served as the research tool, with responses collected from 366 preschool educators. The findings indicate that the current utilisation of literary art in preschools was characterised as better than average. However, the extent to which preschool educators are able to gain knowledge of literary art during their pre-service training or lifelong learning were lower than average. Additionally, the educators' attitude to literary art was assessed as lower than average. The research findings show that the extent to which preschool educators are able to gain knowledge of literary art significantly predict the strength of preschool educators' attitude with it. Furthermore, this attitude significantly predicts the extent to which literary art is employed in preschool education.

**Keywords** – Literary arts, literature, preschool educator, preschool education.

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## 1. Introduction

Literary art is one of the oldest and most established forms of artistic expression. In the context of this research, which focuses on preschool children and preschool educators, the emphasis is placed on children's literature, specifically as perceived by preschool educators. The relationship between children and books has long been recognised, with books initially serving as a source of visual stimulation and gradually becoming a medium for developing reading experiences [1].

The findings of numerous researches confirm that reading books has a meaningful and positive effect on the mental development of children. However, the interest in reading tends to decline as children grow older, accompanied by a decrease in reading competencies. This trend has led to what can be described as a global "reading crisis", as reflected in below-average performances in international reading literacy assessments [2], [3], [4].

The European Council, in collaboration with the European Parliament, has developed a set of competencies essential for functioning in a knowledge-based society, among which is the ability to communicate in one's native language—one of the eight key competencies. This competency encompasses reading skills as a fundamental component.

Experts in the field [2], building on professional studies [5], [6], [7], argue that the acquisition of reading competencies should not solely focus on the development of reading skills, but also on fostering an interest in reading, cultivating reading as a valued activity, and promoting positive self-assessment in reading. The reading process should be primarily guided by the child's personal beliefs and interests.

Reading is not an isolated activity, as shown by [8], [9]. On the contrary, the development of a stable readership relies on supportive social and communicative contexts, particularly through personal relationships. In childhood, such contexts are primarily provided by the family and through the child's experience of mediated learning. Numerous studies [10], [11], [12], [13] highlight two critical phases in the development of a "reader," during which motivation to read significantly increases. Supportive interventions are essential during these stages.

It is recommended to cultivate a relationship with reading in preschool children. Preschools play a crucial role in this process, as many children at this age spend the majority of their day in such educational settings.

Preschools provide children with various opportunities to engage with literature. At preschool age, a child's personality is still developing, making it essential to select books that align with their developmental stage and individual needs. These books should offer educationally appropriate and stimulating content while also meeting aesthetic standards. Preschool educators, drawing on their previous studies, should be able to differentiate genuine artistic literature for children from commercially produced mass culture of questionable quality. Educators typically acquire these skills through secondary or higher education, as well as through ongoing professional development, such as conferences, seminars, courses, workshops, and similar activities. Additionally, blogs promoting reading—often authored by professionals—offer reviews of contemporary children's literature and serve as valuable resources.

### **1.1. Researched Issue**

In this research, the term "literary art" refers to works that utilise language as their medium—artistic texts created with aesthetic intent. A preschool is an institution that provides preschool education or early childhood education and care, classified as ISCED level 0.

Preschool educators specialise in instructing children typically aged between 2 and 5 or 6 years, prior to their entry into formal schooling. Their focus is on promoting the development of whole personality of a child. They work in preschools, nursery schools, early childhood education centres, or other types of preschool institutions. These educators are mainly concerned about providing a stimulating and nurturing environment where children can learn through play, social interaction, and structured activities.

The attitudes of preschool educators towards the literary arts are of paramount importance. They play a crucial role in shaping children's perceptions of literary art, including books, stories, and creative expression.

The attitudes and approaches of these educators significantly influence children's early experiences with literature, which can have lasting effects on their literacy development, language acquisition, cognitive growth, social and emotional development, cultural awareness and appreciation of diversity, as well as creativity and imagination.

Preschool educators should possess competencies in both pedagogical and artistic domains, enabling them to implement activities aimed at the interpretation of literary art. Consequently, one may inquire whether preschool educators feel sufficiently experts in this regard [14], [15] and to what possible extent they incorporate literary art and expression into educational activities within preschools. Thus, the research issue has evolved into an exploration of preschool educators' perspectives on the utilisation of literary art in preschool education.

### **1.2. The Aim, Research Questions and Hypotheses**

The primary aim was to find out the views of preschool educators on the utilisation of literary arts in preschools. The aim has been reflected into research questions:

1. What is the view of preschool educators on the status and frequency of the utilisation of literary art in preschools?
2. What were the possibilities of preschool educators to acquire knowledge from literary art in their pre-gradual preparation and lifelong learning?
3. What is an attitude of preschool educators to literary art?

Based on experiences from the terrain and empirical experiences, the hypotheses have been stated:

1. Possibilities to acquire knowledge from literary art of preschool educators predict a level of their attitude to literary art.
2. A level of the attitude of preschool educators to literary art predicts the utilisation of literary art in preschools.

## **2. Methodology**

A large-scale project at a country-wide level aimed at exploring the current state of arts utilisation by preschool educators. The main project topic was the issue of interpretation of art in preschool education, (not only literary, but also dramatic, visual and music). The project aimed on the design and validation of methodological materials for preschool educators focusing on the interpretation of artwork and their implementation in practice by organising professional seminars, competitive shows of children's creativity and the creation of a continuing education programme for teachers.

The empirical level of the project consisted in exploring the relationship between preschool educators' possibilities to obtain knowledge of art theory and history, their attitude to art, and the use of art interpretation in their own teaching practice. The results were evaluated separately for dramatic arts [14], musical arts [15], visual arts, and literary arts (this research).

**2.1. Instruments and Procedures**

A questionnaire developed by the authors consisted of 11 questions with a maximum overall score 29 points. Educators provided their responses regarding separate kinds of art. The focus of this research is specifically on the literary art domain.

Individual questions were scored. Responses to the first two questions allowed for addressing the initial research question (Table 1). In the 1<sup>st</sup> section, the first question asked was whether preschool educators utilise any artworks or their reproductions in preschool education. They could select from the options: paintings and sculptures, pieces of music, theatrical performances, literary artworks, and others. For each response indicating "literary work of art," respondents could earn a point.

In the second question preschool educators reported how frequently literary art was incorporated into their educational activities. They selected from the following options, which also determined their score: every day, few times a week, once a week, once a month, seldom, not at all, or other responses.

*Table 1. The 1<sup>st</sup> section - scoring for individual questions related to the status and frequency of the utilisation of literary art in preschools*

| Questions  | Maximum score |
|--|---------------|
| 1. Utilisation of a literary artwork                             | 1             |
| 2. Frequency of the utilisation of literary artwork in education | 5             |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>6</b>      |

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> section, which focused on the possibilities for educators to gain knowledge from literary art, they could earn a maximum of 12 points (Table 2). A higher score indicated greater possibilities for education in literary art, theory and history.

The first question, which involved selecting a response, focused on educators' self-reflection regarding their possibilities to gain knowledge from literary art at the secondary or university education. The educators chose from the options: excellent, good, satisfactory, poor, and insufficient.

In the second question, educators answered whether they recalled any specific courses and subjects they had absolved at the secondary or university education that related to literary art.

They selected from the following options, which were also scored: yes, at the secondary education; yes, at the university education; no; or cannot remember.

The third question aimed to determine whether educators had gained knowledge of the literary art theory and history following their pre-service training, specifically through lifelong learning or various courses, workshops, and conferences. They chose of the following options: yes, in the form of lifelong learning; yes, in the form courses and workshops; yes, in the form of spontaneously acquired knowledge; no, or other (where respondents were instructed to specify their answer, and this was scored individually).

In the subsequent question, preschool educators answered whether they had completed any courses and workshops focused on familiarisation with literary art or hands-on artistic activities (e.g., literary expression or production). The following question required educators to specify whether they had attended courses and workshops that addressed theoretical, methodical, or hands-on topics related to implementing activities in preschools, specifically concerning familiarisation with literary works of art.

*Table 2. The 2<sup>nd</sup> section - scoring for questions related to possibilities of preschool educators to obtain knowledge from literary art and in their pre-gradual education and lifelong learning*

| Questions   | Maximum score |
|---|---------------|
| 1. Possibilities to obtain knowledge from literary art  | 4             |
| 2. Courses and subjects at the pre-service training   | 2             |
| 3. The obtaining of knowledge in the form of lifelong learning  | 4             |
| 4. The graduating courses and workshops focused on an acquaintance with literary art, hands-on skills   | 1             |
| 5. The graduating courses and workshops focused on theoretical, methodical or hands-on activities for the utilisation of literary art in preschools | 1             |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>12</b>     |

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> section, which focused on the attitudes of preschool educators to literary art, they could earn 19 points (Table 3). A higher score indicated greater significance attributed to literary art by the respondent. This, in turn, reflected a more active engagement with literary art and expression, not only as a passive recipient but also as an active participant.

In the first question, preschool educators answered whether they consider literary art to be significant in their lives. The educators selected from the options: very significant, significant, moderately significant, slightly significant, and insignificant.

In the second question the educators answered how frequently they attend various institutions and events (e.g., literary coffee houses). They selected from options that scored their responses as follows: at least once per week, at least once per month, several times per year, seldom, and never.

In the third question, preschool educators were instructed to indicate which comments best described them. One of the statements included for scoring reads as follows: "I have artistic literature in my library".

The fourth question asked whether respondents actively dedicate time to aesthetic production, with each question requiring them to select one option. For the question "Do you write poetry or prose?", respondents were allocated points based on their answers.

Table 3 The 3<sup>rd</sup> section - scoring for individual questions related to an attitude of educators to literary art

| Questions   | Maximum score |
|---|---------------|
| 1. Significance of literary art in the life of educators        | 4             |
| 2. Attending of institutions or events – literary coffee houses | 4             |
| 3. Ownership of books – artistic literature                     | 1             |
| 4. Aesthetic activity of educators                              | 2             |
| Total   | 11            |

The questionnaire was designed primarily to describe the phenomenon, therefore monitoring its validity and reliability is not strictly necessary. Based on a pre-survey, question analysis was conducted to assess the quality of the questions, and minimal adjustments were suggested.

To identify the underlying structure of the constructs, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted. The analysis supported a single-factor solution for each of the constructs. Internal consistency coefficients were found to be  $\alpha = 0.679$  for the variable "status and frequency of the literary art utilisation in preschools,"  $\alpha = 0.551$  for the variable "possibilities of preschool educators to obtain knowledge from literary art and their pre-service training and lifelong learning," and  $\alpha = 0.577$  for the variable "attitude of educators to literary art."

## 2.2. Sample Selection

The target population for this research comprised all preschool educators in Slovakia. There was a total of 16,290 preschool educators in Slovakia, including those employed in state, private, and church institutions. Teachers who agreed to participate in the research were selected by available sampling. 366 questionnaires from preschool educators, that was representative sample, were evaluated (365 women and one man, reflecting the gender composition of the overall population).

The average age of the respondents was 42.75 years (min 20, max 64 years). The average years of practice in preschools was 19.64 years (min 0, max 46 years). The research sample included a balanced representation of preschool educators from across Slovakia. Specifically, it consisted of 57.9% from municipal preschools, 36.3% from rural preschools, while 5.7% of preschool educators did not answer on the preschool type. The preschool educators were employed in state preschools (91.3%), 2.2% in private institutions, 1.6% in church institutions, and 4.9% of preschool educators did not answer.

## 2.3. Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the statistical software Jamovi 2.3.2. Descriptive statistics were employed, including absolute and relative frequencies, mean, median, mode, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum values. Exploratory factor analysis was performed to identify the underlying structure of the created variables. The internal consistency of the measures was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. For hypothesis testing, linear regression analysis was selected.

## 3. Results

The research results were first presented in a variable-by-variable manner: The utilisation of literary art and expression in preschool education (3.1), possibilities of preschool educators to obtain literary art knowledge in their pre-gradual preparation and lifelong learning (3.2), and attitude of preschool educators to literary art (3.3). Subsequently, the research hypotheses were tested (3.4, 3.5).

### 3.1. The Utilisation of Literary Art and Expression in Preschool Education

Responses concerning the utilisation of literary art were provided by 81.7% of the teachers surveyed. Notably, 18.3% of respondents did not express any views on the use of literary artworks, which, from the perspective of preschool education theory, may be considered unacceptable. The only exception might be if these respondents did not regard certain literary works as suitable for children.

Additionally, the preschool educators expressed the frequency of engaging with literary artworks within preschool education (Table 4). According to their self-reflections, the most common frequency of utilisation was at least once per week, as reported by 45.1% of teachers.

Table 4. Frequency of the utilisation of the work with a literary artwork

|   | Each day | At least once per week | At least once per month | At least once per half year | At least once per year | At all |
|---|----------|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|--------|
| n | 114      | 165                    | 53                      | 9                           | 2                      | 4      |
| % | 31.1%    | 45.1%                  | 14.5%                   | 2.5%                        | 0.5%                   | 1.1%   |

failed to respond - 9 of teachers (both men and women) (5.2%)

The current status of the utilisation of literary art, as indicated was quantified into a single variable.

On average, teachers utilise literary artwork at a level exceeding the midpoint of the scale (Table 5).

Table 5. The current status of the utilisation of literary art by preschool educators

| n   | M    | Md | SD   | min | max |
|-----|------|----|------|-----|-----|
| 366 | 4.66 | 5  | 1.47 | 0   | 6   |

### 3.2. Possibilities of Preschool Educators to Obtain Literary Art Knowledge in Their Pre-Gradual Preparation and Lifelong Learning

Preschool educators were supposed to evaluate in the first question, on the scale, their possibilities to obtain knowledge from literary art (Table 6).

Table 6. The evaluation of possibilities to obtain knowledge from the literary art theory and history by preschool educators

|   | Excellent | Very good | Good  | Sufficient | Insufficient |
|---|-----------|-----------|-------|------------|--------------|
| n | 61        | 128       | 94    | 34         | 15           |
| % | 16.7%     | 35%       | 25.7% | 9.3%       | 4.1%         |

failed to respond - 34 of teachers (men and women) (9.3%)

The possibilities to obtain knowledge from literary art were evaluated by more than one third of educators (35%) by the credit, very good and less than one third of educators (25.7%) deemed them good.

The preschool educators answered if they remembered, within the framework secondary school and university, certain specific courses or subjects focused on literary art (Table 7). This related to a question with the option of a multiply response.

Table 7. Positions of preschool educators in respect to completed courses and subjects within the framework of literary art at the study

|   | Yes, at the secondary education | Yes, at the university education | No   | I cannot remember |
|---|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|------|-------------------|
| n | 158                             | 107                              | 25   | 53                |
| % | 43.2%                           | 29.2%                            | 6.8% | 14.5%             |

failed to respond - 67 of educators (17.5%)

Courses and subjects in respect to literary art were completed by less than a half of preschool educators at the secondary school study (43.2%) and less than one third (29.2%) at the university education.

The preschool educators gave positions whether they obtained knowledge from literary art also upon completing a pre-gradual preparation in lifelong learning. This related to a question with the option of a multiple responses (Table 8).

Table 8. Positions of the preschool educators to the obtaining of knowledge from literary art in the form of lifelong learning, courses, workshops, and spontaneously acquired knowledge

|   | Yes, in lifelong learning | Yes, through courses, workshops, etc. | Yes, through spontaneously acquired knowledge | No    |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|-------|
| n | 29                        | 47                                    | 80  | 146   |
| % | 7.9%                      | 12.8%                                 | 21.9%   | 39.9% |

failed to respond - 78 of educators (21.3%)

The obtaining of experiences upon the completion of a pre-gradual preparation was either in the form of lifelong learning (7.9%), or workshops, courses, seminars (12.8%) and in particular spontaneously acquired knowledge (21.9%).

The respondents have specified whether they completed certain courses and workshops with an acquaintance with literary art or hands-on literary artistic activities (Table 9).

Table 9. Courses and workshops focused on an acquaintance with literary art or hands-on aesthetic activities mentioned by the preschool educators

| multitudes |     |       | relative multitudes % |       |       |
|------------|-----|-------|-----------------------|-------|-------|
| Yes        | N   | Total | Yes                   | No    | Total |
| 25         | 136 | 161   | 6.8%                  | 37.2% | 44%   |

Please note that as per positions from the respondents, they attended courses and workshops focused on an acquaintance with literary art or hands-on aesthetic activities to a very low extent.

Further, the respondents have stated whether they attended also certain courses and workshops focused on theoretical, methodical and hands-on topics, how to work with children in a preschool with the focus on literary expression (Table 10).

Table 10. Courses and workshops focused on theoretical, methodical or hands-on topics, how to work with children in a preschool with the focus on literary expression

| multitudes |     |       | relative multitudes % |       |       |
|------------|-----|-------|-----------------------|-------|-------|
| yes        | no  | total | yes                   | no    | total |
| 34         | 131 | 165   | 9.3%                  | 35.8% | 45.1% |

Please note that in an aggregate variable possibility of preschool educators to obtain knowledge from literary art in their pre-gradual preparation and lifelong learning (Table 2, Table 11) that it is lower than the average.

Table 11. The possibilities of preschool educators to obtain knowledge from literary art

| n   | M    | Md | SD   | min | max |
|-----|------|----|------|-----|-----|
| 366 | 3.66 | 4  | 2.02 | 0   | 10  |

### 3.3. Attitude of Preschool Educators to Literary Art

The respondents evaluated the level of significance of literary art in their life (Table 12). This related to a closed question with an option of the selection of a response.

Table 12. Attitude of preschool educators to literary art

|   | Very significant | Significant | Partly significant | Mostly insignificant | Insignificant at all |
|---|------------------|-------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| n | 135              | 155         | 34                 | 9                    | -                    |
| % | 36.9%            | 42.3%       | 9.3%               | 2.5%                 | -                    |

failed to respond - 33 (9%) of teachers

Less than a half of the preschool educators (42.3%) considered literary art in their life significant and more than one third of them (36.9%) considered the same very significant.

In further question the respondents gave positions to the fact how often they attend institutions or performances – within the framework of evaluation of the field of literary art taken into account were deliberations of a literary coffee house (Table 13). This related to a closed question with an option of the selection of a response.

Table 13. Positions from the preschool educators to the frequency of the attendance of literary coffee houses

| Attend to literary coffee house | At least once per week | At least once per month | At least once per half year | At least once per year | Never |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-------|
| n                               | 4                      | 19                      | 41                          | 59                     | 174   |
| %                               | 1.1%                   | 5.2%                    | 11.2%                       | 16.1%                  | 47.5% |

failed to respond - 69 (18,9%) of educators

Almost a half of the preschool educators (47.5%) never attend a literary coffee house and only 16.1% attends them at least once per year. The option “literary coffee house” was marked in the questionnaire by the preschool educators very little, in comparison with other institutions or performances (e.g., theatrical performance, galleries and museums).

The respondents marked which statements pertaining to the ownership of things related to art. Of all respondents, 56% said they owned artistic literature in their library.

In the conclusion the respondents stated whether they actively devote time to artistic or aesthetic production. More than a half of the educators (51.4%) has stated that it never produces literary and only 22.9% of educators devotes time to it seldom. However; this relates to aesthetic production, not artistic one.

Please note that in an aggregate variable, an attitude of preschool educators to literary art (Table 3, Table 14) is lower than the average.

Table 14. Description of an attitude of preschool educators to literary art

| n   | M    | Md | SD   | min | max |
|-----|------|----|------|-----|-----|
| 366 | 4.42 | 4  | 2.11 | 0   | 11  |

### 3.4. Verification of the Hypothesis H<sub>1</sub>

A simple regress analysis was used for the calculation of predicting an attitude to literary art by the possibilities of preschool educators to obtain knowledge from literary art.

It was ascertained a statistically significant effect ( $F(1, 364) = 15, p < .001$ ) s  $R^2 = 0,0395$ .

Possibilities to obtain knowledge from literary art predict attitudes of preschool educators towards such art ( $t = 3,87, p < .001$ ). The hypothesis  $H_1$  was confirmed. If the possibilities to obtain knowledge from literary art were increased by 1 point, then also an attitude would increase by 0,208 point.

Table 15. Regress analysis for the possibilities to obtain knowledge as the prediction of an attitude of preschool educators to literary art

| Predictor                         | B     | SE     | $\beta$ | t     | p      |
|-----------------------------------|-------|--------|---------|-------|--------|
| Intercept                         | 3.656 | 0.2246 |         | 16.28 | < .001 |
| Possibilities to obtain knowledge | 0.208 | 0.0537 | 0.199   | 3.87  | < .001 |

### 3.5. Verification of the Hypothesis $H_2$

To be able to predict the utilisation of literary art in preschool education through the level of an attitude of preschool educators to literary art, a simple regress analysis was applied. A statistically significant effect ( $F(1, 364) = 51,3, p < .001$ ) s  $R^2 = 0,123$  was ascertained.

An attitude of preschool educators to literary art predicts the utilisation of literary art in preschool education ( $t = 7.16, p < .001$ ). The hypothesis  $H_2$  was confirmed.

If an attitude to literary art was increased by one unit, then the utilisation of literary art in preschool facility would also be increased by 0,245 point.

Table 16. Regress analysis for an attitude of preschool educators to literary art as a predictor of the utilisation of literary art in preschool education

| Predictor                         | B     | SE     | $\beta$ | t     | p      |
|-----------------------------------|-------|--------|---------|-------|--------|
| Intercept                         | 3.578 | 0.1676 |         | 21.36 | < .001 |
| Possibilities to obtain knowledge | 0.245 | 0.0242 | 0.351   | 7.16  | < .001 |

## 4. Discussion

In comparison with other art forms—such as visual, musical, and dramatic arts—the sector of literary art appears to be at a disadvantage. This decline may be attributed, in part, to the current digital era [16], [17], characterised by excessive time spent in front of television screens, computers, tablets, and smartphones, which displaces reading habits not only among parents and their children but also within the current generation of preschool educators.

Notably, research conducted by [18] indicates that children's lack of interest in books, coupled with a subsequent disinclination among students to engage in reading, significantly demotivates educators in their interpretative activities with literary works.

It is essential to recognise that children's motivations and aspirations are influenced not only by individual educators or the educational institution as a whole but also by the socio-cultural environment surrounding the child, including their unique predispositions. Factors such as school climate—shaped particularly by social relationships—play a critical role in this dynamic [18], [19], [20], [21]. Additionally, as shown by [22], which examine the use of media technologies in early education, should also be considered in this context.

Preschool educators involved in the research had opportunities to acquire vocational knowledge pertaining to the literary art theory and history within the secondary education. Notably, 41% of participants had completed a secondary pedagogical school, which includes subjects focused on literature and methodologies for aesthetic activities inspired by literary art. Furthermore, a majority of respondents (62.4%) reported having completed university education. For those who pursued higher education in preschool and elementary pedagogy—qualifications essential for preschool educators—it can be anticipated that they encountered various disciplines related to children's artistic literature during their studies. However, it remains uncertain whether their focus during this education was primarily on artistic knowledge itself or on the didactical applications and potential of art for child education.

In the research, over one-third of educators rated their opportunities to acquire vocational knowledge from literary art as "very good." Conversely, 25% of preschool educators assessed these opportunities as "good," while 9.3% rated them as "sufficient," and 4.1% deemed them "insufficient." This self-reflection indicates that many respondents acknowledged their limited competencies in this area. Ideally, considering the secondary education curricula and university curricula in preschool pedagogy, graduates should emerge with a robust understanding of literary art and a clear awareness of their competencies as reflected in their self-assessments.

The low percentage of affirmative responses regarding completed courses and workshops focused on literary art may be attributed to a lack of interest among respondents in further education in this field. It is also possible that those respondents who did not provide opinions on their participation in such courses and workshops were content with the education they received in theoretical, methodological, or hands-on topics related to literary art during their secondary school or university studies.

The limitations of this research stem from the voluntary nature of the questionnaire completion, which likely attracted predominantly preschool educators with a pre-existing affinity for art, who felt compelled to express their opinions on this topic. Consequently, the actual situation regarding the utilisation of literary art in preschool and the respondents' attitudes towards literary art may be less favourable than suggested by the findings.

Implications for further research are the interviews with preschool educators and the qualitative analysis of their activities in relation to the application of literary arts in education in preschools. The analysis of curriculum documents for kindergarten teacher preparation [23], [24] can also be used for comparison with the research results.

## 5. Conclusion

The reading crisis is a problem that needs to be addressed by introducing intervention strategies from the earliest age of children. However, this requires preschool educators who understand the issue, are passionate about it, and have sufficient competence in the field.

The findings indicate that the current utilisation of literary art in preschool education can be characterised as above average. However, the opportunities for preschool educators to acquire knowledge of literary art during their pre-service training or through lifelong learning were found to be below average. Additionally, the preschool educators' relationship with literary art was assessed as below average. The research confirms that opportunities to gain knowledge of literary art significantly and positively predict the strength of preschool educators' attitudes to it. Furthermore, this attitudes significantly and positively predicts the extent to which literary art is employed in preschool education. Stemming from the research findings, it is needed to increase opportunities for preschool educators to acquire professional knowledge in literary art.

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