

Article

Effects of Reading Behaviors on Comprehension Abilities Among Grade Three Learners

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Abstract: This study provides a thorough examination of the reading behaviors and levels of comprehension among a group of learners. An analysis of their reading habits indicates a general tendency towards reading, especially for leisure purposes, borrowing books from libraries, and appreciating works recommended by teachers. Nevertheless, there are areas that may be enhanced, such as a predilection for e-books and a proclivity for buying books instead of making use of library resources. The learners have satisfactory reading comprehension abilities, primarily falling within the "Approaching Proficiency" and "Proficient" classifications, with an average understanding level of 14.00. Interestingly, a correlation study reveals a minimal negative association between reading habits and reading comprehension, implying that there may be additional unmeasured factors that affect comprehension outcomes. Based on these findings, it is recommended that educators and politicians embrace a complete strategy for promoting literacy, which encompasses more than just reading habits. This approach aims to improve reading skills and cultivate a lifelong passion for reading in students.

Keywords: Reading Habits, Reading comprehension, Attitudes toward reading

Introduction

Reading behavior plays a crucial role in the field of education, especially among grade three learners who are in a critical phase of developing their reading skills (Ardhian et al., 2020). For instance, Samie & Ebadi (2021) emphasized that the way students engage with reading materials, allocate time for reading, and their attitudes toward reading all contribute to their overall comprehension abilities. Understanding the impact of reading behaviors on comprehension is essential for educators and researchers alike (Duke et al., 2021) and when students actively engage with materials, whether through



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annotation or discussion, they forge deeper connections with the content, fostering enhanced comprehension (Hamdi, 2020). Consistently dedicating time to reading allows them to practice and reinforce their comprehension skills, further honing their abilities (Ramzan et al., 2023).

Effective reading behavior fosters a positive reading environment for students and when learners develop a habit of reading regularly and with enthusiasm, they are more likely to engage with texts at a deeper level (Dogan et al., 2020). This engagement can lead to improved comprehension skills as learners become more familiar with various types of texts and gain exposure to new ideas and concepts. Moreover, reading behavior directly impacts a student's ability to decode words, understand vocabulary, and apply comprehension strategies (Silverman et al., 2020). Thus, learners who actively practice effective reading behaviors, such as monitoring their comprehension, making predictions, and asking questions, are better equipped to comprehend and retain information from their reading materials.

Empirical findings showed that positive reading behaviors, such as regular reading practice, have been linked to improved reading comprehension (Barber & Klauda, 2020). Engaging in regular reading practice is not just a mere exercise in fluency; it is a multifaceted process that enriches a student's linguistic repertoire and cognitive abilities (Matkarimova, 2023). Moreover, students immerse themselves in a variety of texts on a daily basis, they inadvertently expose themselves to a plethora of vocabulary, sentence structures, and ideas (Dawes et al., 2023). This exposure is crucial in building their lexicon, improving their grasp of language nuances, and developing an intuitive understanding of various writing styles and genres and this broadened perspective not only enhances their capacity to decode and understand complex materials but also fosters critical thinking and analytical skills (Matiso, 2023).

In contrast, students who exhibit poor reading habits, such as a reluctance to read or infrequent engagement with texts, often find themselves at a significant disadvantage (Osmani, 2022). Their limited exposure to varied language patterns and ideas constrains their vocabulary development and understanding of different text structures (Maamuujav et al., 2021). As a result, these students may face challenges in comprehending academic materials, interpreting nuanced texts, or engaging in sophisticated literary discussions. This lack of proficiency can have a cascading effect on their overall academic performance and intellectual growth. Therefore, cultivating a habit of regular and diverse reading from an early age is paramount in ensuring a student's academic success and lifelong learning.

Despite the existing literature on reading habits and comprehension skills, there is still a need for more research focusing specifically on grade three learners. Understanding the unique challenges and opportunities at this grade level can provide valuable

insights into how educators can better support students in developing effective reading behaviors and improving comprehension. This research aims to investigate the reading habits and comprehension skills of grade three learners at Bulacao Elementary School. By examining the current reading behaviors and comprehension levels of these students, we can develop targeted interventions to enhance their reading abilities. The primary beneficiaries of this research will be the educators at Bulacao Elementary School, who can use the findings to tailor their teaching strategies and support students in achieving better comprehension outcomes. Additionally, the broader educational community can benefit from the insights gained through this study, as they can be applied to improve reading instruction for grade three learners across various schools and settings.

Methodology

In conducting this study, a Descriptive Correlational research design was meticulously employed to thoroughly examine and delineate the reading habits of Grade 3 students at Bulacao Elementary School, located on Abores Street in the Bulacao area of Talisay City, Cebu. This design was pivotal in facilitating not only a detailed analysis of the students' reading patterns but also in exploring the potential relationship between these habits and their reading comprehension skills. The cohort of respondents consisted of a dynamic group of Grade 3 learners, carefully selected to offer a diverse and representative insight into the varied reading behaviors and comprehension levels prevalent among young learners. To effectively gauge these aspects, the study incorporated two principal research tools. The first was the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (PHIL-IRI), a well-regarded instrument in assessing reading proficiency levels among Filipino students. The second tool was the Reading Habits Survey Questionnaire, a meticulously crafted instrument designed to gather comprehensive data on the students' reading habits, preferences, and frequencies. Together, these instruments provided a robust framework for collecting and analyzing data, enabling the study to draw meaningful conclusions about the interplay between reading habits and comprehension skills among young learners in the Philippine educational context.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. Age and Gender of the Learners

Age (in years)	Female		Male		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
9	4	4.94	9	11.11	13	16.05
8	36	44.44	32	39.51	68	83.95
Total	40	49.38	41	50.62	81	100.00

Table 1 presents data on the age and gender distribution of a group of learners. The table is divided into two main categories: age (in years) and gender, with separate columns for females and males. It also provides percentages to give a better understanding of the distribution. Looking at the age groups, it's evident that there is a larger representation of 8-year-old learners compared to 9-year-olds, with 68 learners (83.95%) falling into the former category and 13 learners (16.05%) in the latter. When considering gender, there is a near-equal distribution, with 40 females (49.38%) and 41 males (50.62%). Overall, this data suggests that the group has a slightly higher number of 8-year-olds than 9-year-olds and an almost equal gender balance, which could have implications for educational strategies and program development tailored to the learners in this study.

Table 2. Parents' Highest Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment	Mother		Father	
	f	%	f	%
College Graduate	13	16.05	5	6.17
College Level	26	32.10	30	37.04
High School Graduate	30	37.04	34	41.98
High School Level	9	11.11	6	7.41
Elementary Graduate	2	2.47	5	6.17
Elementary Level	1	1.23	0	0.00
No Formal Schooling	0	0.00	1	1.23
Total	81	100.00	81	100.00

Table 2 provides insights into the highest educational attainment of the parents of the learners in the study, with data presented separately for mothers and fathers. It reveals a varied distribution of educational backgrounds among the parents. The largest percentage of mothers, 37.04%, and fathers, 41.98%, have a high school diploma as their highest educational attainment. College graduates represent 16.05% of mothers and 6.17% of fathers, indicating a relatively higher proportion of educated mothers compared to fathers. Furthermore, a significant portion of parents has education at the college level, with 32.10% of mothers and 37.04% of fathers falling into this category. It's worth noting that a small number of parents have only reached elementary education levels or even have no formal schooling. These findings suggest that the educational background of parents varies within the group, which can influence the home environment and potentially impact the educational support and aspirations for their children. Understanding these parental demographics is important for educators and policymakers to tailor educational interventions and support systems accordingly.

Table 3. Number of Siblings of the Learners

Number of Siblings	f	%
More than 4	17	20.99
3-4	32	39.51
1-2	28	34.57
None	4	4.94
Total	81	100.00

Table 3 provides information about the number of siblings that the learners have within the study group. The data illustrates a diverse range of family sizes among the learners. The largest percentage of learners, at 39.51%, have 3-4 siblings, followed closely by 34.57% with 1-2 siblings. Notably, 20.99% of the learners have more than 4 siblings, which suggests a relatively high proportion of large families within this group. A smaller percentage, 4.94%, have no siblings. Understanding the number of siblings each learner has is essential for educational and social context as it can influence their family dynamics, the level of attention and support they receive at home, and their overall experiences growing up. Educators and researchers can use this data to consider the potential impact of family size on a learner's development and well-being, which may inform targeted support strategies and policies for this group.

Table 4. Combined Family Monthly Income

Monthly Income (in pesos)	f	%
20,001-25,000	2	2.47
15,001-20,000	5	6.17
10,001-15,000	21	25.93
10,000 and below	53	65.43
Total	81	100.00

Table 4 presents data on the combined family monthly income of the learners' households, measured in pesos. This data provides insights into the economic diversity within the group. The majority of families, constituting 65.43% of the total, have a combined monthly income of 10,000 pesos or below, indicating a significant portion of families with limited financial resources. Furthermore, 25.93% of families fall into the 10,001-15,000 pesos income range. A smaller percentage of families have a higher combined income, with 6.17% falling into the 15,001-20,000 pesos range and only 2.47% in the 20,001-25,000 pesos range. This information highlights the economic disparities among the learners' families, which can have important implications for their access to resources, opportunities, and quality of life. It underscores the need for tailored support and intervention strategies to address the unique needs and challenges faced by learners from different income backgrounds, aiming to promote equitable educational outcomes.

Table 5. Level of Reading Habits of the Learners

S/N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
1	I like reading in my leisure time.	3.58	Excellent
2	I like borrowing books from the library for reading.	3.46	Excellent
3	I like reading only the recommended books from the teachers.	3.53	Excellent
4	Formal features of the book (thickness, font size, illustrations, etc.) affect my preference for reading it or not.	3.41	Excellent
5	I usually read the book in electronic version (E-books).	3.11	Very Satisfactory
6	I usually find the book I will read from the library.	2.81	Very Satisfactory
7	I usually buy the book I will read.	1.98	Less Satisfactory
8	I initially learn the book I will read if my friends read it.	3.21	Very Satisfactory
9	I think reading is an important part of life.	3.73	Excellent
10	I read a text in the internet due to its low cost.	3.31	Excellent
Aggregate Weighted Mean		3.21	Very Satisfactory

Table 5 provides insights into the level of reading habits among the learners. Overall, the learners exhibit positive reading habits, as indicated by the aggregate weighted mean of 3.21, categorized as "Very Satisfactory." Several indicators show excellent reading habits, including liking to read in leisure time, borrowing books from the library, and valuing recommended books from teachers. Learners also recognize the importance of reading in life, with a high weighted mean of 3.73. However, there are areas with less satisfactory reading habits, such as preferring electronic books (E-books) and buying books instead of borrowing them from the library. The indicator related to peer influence on book selection also falls under the "Very Satisfactory" category. This indicates that the learners generally demonstrate positive reading habits and a strong appreciation for reading, there is room for improvement in certain aspects, such as promoting the use of library resources and reducing reliance on digital texts. These insights can guide educators and policymakers in developing strategies to further nurture and encourage a love for reading among these students, potentially enhancing their overall literacy skills and academic success.

Table 6. Level of Reading Comprehension of the Learners

Level	Numerical Range	f	%
Advanced	20	0	0.00
Proficient	15-19	39	48.15
Approaching Proficiency	10-14	41	50.62
Developing	5-9	1	1.23
Beginning	0-4	0	0.00
Total		81	100.00
Mean		14.00	
St. Dev.		2.60	

Table 6 assesses the level of reading comprehension among the learners. Findings showed that majority of learners, constituting 50.62%, fall into the "Approaching Proficiency" category, suggesting that they have a reasonable understanding of the texts they read but may require further development to reach a higher level of comprehension. Another significant portion, 48.15%, falls into the "Proficient" category, indicating that they possess a good level of reading comprehension skills. There are no learners classified as "Advanced" or "Beginning," and only a single learner falls into the "Developing" category, representing the lower end of the comprehension spectrum. The mean comprehension level for the group is 14.00, with a standard deviation of 2.60, which suggests that, on average, the learners are performing at a level approaching proficiency. These findings imply that there is potential for improvement in reading comprehension skills among this group, with a focus on enhancing understanding and critical analysis of texts to move closer to the proficient and advanced levels. Educators and curriculum planners can use this data to tailor their teaching strategies and resources to better meet the learners' needs and elevate their reading comprehension abilities.

Table 7. Test of Significant Relationship between the Reading Habits and Reading Comprehension of the Learners

Variables	r-value	Strength of Correlation	p - value	Decision	Result
Reading Habits and Reading Comprehension	-0.046	Negative Negligible	0.686	Do not reject Ho	Not Significant

*significant at $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed)

Table 7 presents the results of a test assessing the relationship between the reading habits and reading comprehension of the learners. The data shows an r-value of -0.046, indicating a negative correlation. However, this correlation is described as "Negligible," suggesting that there is very little, if any, meaningful relationship between reading habits and reading comprehension. The p-value associated with this correlation is 0.686, which is significantly higher than the typical significance level of 0.05 (as indicated by the asterisk). Consequently, the decision is "Do not reject Ho," which means that there is insufficient evidence to conclude that there is a statistically significant relationship between the two variables. In other words, the data does not support the idea that a learner's reading habits have a significant impact on their reading comprehension skills in this particular context. These findings suggest that other factors not measured in this study may be more influential in determining reading comprehension levels among these learners.

Conclusion

The findings provide insightful information regarding the reading habits of the learners as well as their various degrees of reading comprehension. The characteristics of their reading habits indicate that they have a generally favorable attitude towards reading, with a weighted mean that is classified as "Very Satisfactory." Nevertheless, there are areas that may be improved, such as a preference for electronic books and a tendency to purchase materials rather than taking advantage of those offered by the library. When it comes to reading comprehension, the majority of students are classified as "Approaching Proficiency" and "Proficient," with a mean understanding level that is considered to be reasonable. Notably, the correlation study reveals that there is a minor negative association between reading habits and comprehension. This suggests that these habits are not significantly associated with the individuals' capacities to comprehend what they read. As a result, this suggests that there are variables that cannot be tested that influence comprehension. The adoption of a comprehensive approach to literacy development by educators and policymakers is recommended in order to cultivate reading proficiency as well as a love of reading that will last a lifetime.

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