READING INTERESTS AND HABITS: THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO THE READING COMPREHENSION OF GRADE 11 STUDENTS

Romel T. Maribbay, MAED
Peñablanca East National High School
romel.maribbay@deped.gov.ph

ABSTRACT

Reading remains to be an indispensable tool towards meaningful learning and discovery. One's reading comprehension skill is pivotal in performing well at school which affects his academic performance. Thus, this study aimed to determine the profile, reading interests and habits and their relationship to the students' level of reading comprehension. It employed a descriptive- correlational research design to establish relationship between the variables. It made use of Molyneux, Paul and Pam Macintyre (2017) survey questionnaire with modifications on the parts where the profile variables are to be elicited as well as a 36-item reading comprehension exercises. The study assessed the reading interests and habits and their relationship to the reading comprehension level of the respondents on finding main idea, finding word meaning through context, understanding sequence, drawing conclusion and making inferences, distinguishing between fact and opinion and summarizing. Students' reading habits and interests show that most of them enjoy reading sometimes, prefer to read by themselves, like listening to stories or being read to, choose the book themselves and borrow books from their friends, school and classroom library. Likewise, most of them are more likely to read about once a week both for personal and school reasons. The reading materials that they most read are about real life, sports, history and fantasy whereas they least read materials about humor, science and biographies. Moreover, students have a developing reading comprehension level along the six sub-skills tested which made no significant relationship to their reading interests and habits as it translated to their satisfactory academic performance.

Keywords: *academic performance, drawing conclusion, reading comprehension, reading interests and habits, word meaning in context*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is an indispensable tool towards meaningful learning and discovery. Through reading, one steps into a new and high level of understanding of the world. One's success in education is a product of reading. In school, teachers expose students to various learning opportunities in order to inculcate in them the love for reading and the importance of reading. Experts believe that the development of reading interests and habits among the youth are important features toward a literate, progressive and caring society since reading encourages learning and develops creativity among them.

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Reading habits are well-planned and deliberate pattern of study which has attained a form of consistency on the part of students toward understanding academic subjects and passing at examinations. Reading habits determine the academic achievements of students to a great extent. Both reading and academic achievements are interrelated and dependent on each other. Students often come from different environments and localities with different levels of academic achievement. Therefore, they differ in the pattern of reading habits. While some students have good reading habits, others tend to exhibit poor reading habits. Academic achievement means how much knowledge the individual has acquired from the school (Bashir & Mattoo, 2012).

A creative and pragmatic education involves the habit of personal investigation. The act of personal investigation requires self-study to be followed by self-thinking and analysis. Self-study, otherwise referred to as reading at one's own accord, requires a habit, which is known as reading habit. Reading makes way for a better understanding of one's own experiences and it can be an exciting voyage to self-discovery. "Reading habit is best formed at a young impressionable age in school, but once formed it can last one's life time (Green, 2001).

Reading and academic achievement are essential for research workers and educationists to know that every child whether he or she is gifted, average, normal or backward etc, should be educated in his or her own way but if he or she possesses good study habits, he or she can perform well in academics and in every situation. It is the reading habits which help the learner in obtaining meaningful and desirable knowledge. Good reading habits act as a strong weapon for the students to excel in life (Bashir & Mattoo, 2012).

According to Palani (2012), reading habit is an essential and important aspect for creating a literate society in this world. It shapes the personality of individuals and it helps them to develop proper thinking methods, and creates new ideas. However, the developments in the Mass Media, had continued to influence interest in reading (hard copy of literatures such as…) books, magazines and journals, among others.

Palani (2012) is of the opinion that, effective reading is important avenue of effective learning and reading is interrelated with the total educational process and hence, educational success requires successful reading habit. He believes reading is the identification of the symbols and the association of appropriate meaning with them. It requires identification and comprehension. Comprehension skills help the learner to understand the meaning of words in isolation and in context. Before the advent of the television, both the young and the old found enough time to read. Apart from teachers, other professionals used to spend their leisure time in reading both English and vernacular literature. English medium schools almost always demanded extra reading from their students. But all these have become a thing of the past. Palani (2012) further added that, nowadays, reading habit has lost its importance as both the young and the old are glued to the television. As far as educational institutions are concerned, coaching students for the examinations seems to be the be-all and end-all of our educational system.

Many researchers like Ogbodo (2002), Bhan & Gupta (2010), and Singh (2011) have done work on reading, especially how it affects the academic performance of students. However, most of these works pertain to the international community.

In order to achieve the goal of becoming highly competent 21st century learners, Response to Intervention or (RtI) has to be embraced and adopted as a sort of intervention among those who are slightly behind their peers. Behind the success in attaining high performance among the grade

students is the ability to read. The incapacity of the students to read leads expectantly to poor performance among learners. Logically, as the gap in reading grows bigger, the closer the students are to fail in their studies.

In this sense, the school has to take a course of action like the provision of early intervention program across subject areas which is believed to improve, progress, and advance in their performance in other areas as can be shown and manifested in their academic performance as an entity. Crane, et al. (2008) as cited by (Cimmiyotti, 2013) found out that the poor performance of the students on their test is attributed to their struggle in reading and comprehending the test questions that they are being confronted with.

The realities in the field of teaching are quite saddening and alarming. The researcher is aware that there is a need to address the challenges in literacy, especially so that the gaps are apparent in the community level.

In the school where the researcher is currently teaching, he has been encountering a number of students, particularly in the Senior High School Department, who seem to have very poor reading skills, and that was evident in the way they read when asked to read orally in class- their reading pace is very much like that of an elementary student reading word by word. Moreover, when introduced a certain text to read, the researcher could hardly see any excitement from them considering that they are already senior high school students and at their level, it is expected that they should have already been equipped with the necessary faculty in order to step up and level up because that is what their curriculum is expecting them. It is quite saddening that so much is expected of them but they are incapacitated because of their reading problems and lack of interest. Their lack of interests may be attributed to teachers being the sole provider of reading materials not necessarily being mindful of their individual reading interests, pacing and readiness, which may as well affect students' reading proficiency. Students' reading proficiency has to be backed up by assigning them reading activities and materials during their free time or at home as a matter of practice or habit to develop for them to improve their reading abilities.

Looking at these premises, the reading interests and habits are being singled out to determine the students' path in school and in life. As noted by the US Department of Education (2005), one who is not able to read will not be able to succeed. Such statement is supported by Khairuddin (2013) that good readers are able to expand their views, experiences and thoughts. Hence, reading is viewed as a highly valued skill in our technology- driven world today. In short, there are a lot of reading opportunities that could be availed of by the students if properly guided by their reading interests and habits. The student's poor reading interests and habits tend to pose alarm not only to teachers but to other stakeholders as well – DepEd officials, parents, community leaders other teachers and the like.

As observed, when students are assigned texts to read to enhance their reading skills - a short story, essay, article or the likes, their interests tend to bog down. It may be caused by their lack of interest or lack of exposure or poor habits in reading. It may also be caused by the texts asked of them to read do not match their reading interests. According to McKool (2007) reading interests refer to readings done when students are outside the school compound or premises. It is therefore homework or reading assignment. Further, the US Department of Education (2005) defined reading interest as whether or not students like to read in their spare time or at home or in the library.

Moreover, the reading habits of the students are no longer impressive since they tend to make use of their time for other concerns nowadays. Even if reading has a lot of benefits, students do not adopt reading habits Ariff (2010). This may be due to the presence of various forms of gadgets that consume most of their time. In fact, it is so closely observed that reading has become the least of activities that the students do.

With these, the teacher could hardly meet the desired objectives and in the quandary whether to stick to the learning competencies stipulated in the curriculum guide or just settle for less, or of what the students could just meet. All limiting factors continue to dwindle literacy and if an effort is not made to address the issue on poor reading skills of students, then the community is a fiasco.   In view of the foregoing, the researcher is motivated to conduct this study, which shall serve as a reference for lesson planning, instructional materials preparation and a basis for future programs and activities of the school and the community. Furthermore, the researcher is moved to look for more measures in developing the reading skills of the students, particularly the incoming senior high school students, by determining their reading interests and habits and their relationship to their reading comprehension.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed the descriptive – correlational research design as it described the respondents'   profile such as sex, preferred track and preferred strand and academic performance. It was also appropriate to use the design in determining the reading interests and habits of the students in terms of attitude towards reading, self-description as a reader, frequency of home reading for personal reasons and school reasons, reading material/s read, manner reading materials are chosen and manner reading materials are acquired. The correlational design was used to establish relations between the profile and reading interests and habits of the respondents as well as the academic performance and level of reading comprehension of the respondents.

The survey questionnaire used was a questionnaire adapted from Molyneux, Paul and Pam Macintyre (2017) which is a reading interests and habits survey. Observations and interviews were used to validate the data gathered through the questionnaire. Documentary analysis was used to determine the general weighted average of the students. A 36-item reading comprehension exercises was administered to determine the reading comprehension level of the respondents on finding main idea, finding word meaning through context, understanding sequence, drawing conclusion and making inferences, distinguishing between fact and opinion and summarizing.

The descriptive statistical tools used in this study were frequency counts and percentages to describe the profile and reading interests and habits of the respondents. Pearson Chi-Square was used to determine the relationship between the profile and reading interests and habits of the respondents, the relationship between the reading comprehension of the respondents and select profile variables, and the relationship between the reading comprehension level and the respondents' reading interests and habits.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After the thorough investigation of the result of the study, the following presentation, analysis and interpretation of data were derived.

Profile of the Respondents

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Table 1 shows the profile of the respondents. There were a total of 77 respondents, of which 51. 9 percent were females and 48.1 percent were males. Under the K to 12 Basic Education Program, the senior high school is composed of four (4) tracks: Academic Track, Arts and Design Track, Sports Track and Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) Track. The Academic Track has four strands: STEM, HUMMS, GAS and ABM. Both the Arts and Design Track have no strands. The TVL Track includes four strands: AFA, HE, IA and ICT. Currently, the school has two curricular offerings: Academic Track with STEM and GAS strands; and TVL Track with AFA and HE strands.

There were 64.9 percent who preferred Academic track and 35.1 percent who preferred TVL track. As to the preferred strand, both 26 percent were STEM and AFA, 20.8 percent were GAS, 18.2 percent were HUMMS, 5.2 percent were HE with 5.2 percent, IA with 2.6 percent and ICT with 1.3 percent. The figure is somehow fascinating as most of the respondents preferred STEM and AFA as strands. STEM was meant to epitomize a significant connection that occurred among science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (Bolds, 2017; Patton, 2013). STEM strand focuses on advanced concepts and topics compared to other strands. In this track, students are expected to become a pilot, an architect, an astrophysicist, a biologist, a chemist, an engineer, a dentist, a nutritionist, a nurse, a doctor, and a lot more, even the marine engineers could take this track.

In a research conducted by Chen, 2013, it revealed that STEM majors were academically prepared especially in mathematics and science test scores, were successful when it comes to GPA, and persistent in earning a STEM degree.

Interestingly, a greater number of respondents also preferred to major in AFA. Records reveal that almost all of the respondents are sons and daughters of farmers. This also brings a very good impression that despite the deteriorating number of students who venture into technical-vocational-livelihood courses, students in the school show high interest. This can be interpreted that the students have knowledge of the high employability rate of those who venture into TVL courses.

The academic performance of the respondents is based on the grading system of the Department of Education with the corresponding scale and remarks as stipulated in the Department Order 8, s.2015 dated April 1, 2015. Based on general weighted average for the school year 2019-2020, it could be gleaned from the table that 49.4 percent of the students had a satisfactory rating, 27.3 percent had a very satisfactory rating and 11.7 percent had an outstanding rating and as well 11.7 percent had a fairly satisfactory rating.

Table 1. Profile of the respondents

Variables		Frequency (n= 77)	Percent
Sex	Male	40	51.9
	Female	37	48.1
Preferred Track	ACAD	50	64.9
	TVL	27	35.1
Preferred Strand	STEM	20	26.0
	HUMMS	14	18.2
	GAS	16	20.8

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	AFA	20	26.0
	HE	4	5.2
	IA	2	2.6
	ICT	1	1.3
Academic Performance	Fairly Satisfactory	9	11.7
	Satisfactory	38	49.4
	Very Satisfactory	21	27.3
	Outstanding	9	11.7
Mean= 84.2; s.d= 4.2; Satisfactory			

READING INTERESTS AND HABITS OF THE RESPONDENTS

This study focused on determining the reading interests and habits of the respondents in terms of attitude towards reading, self-description as a reader, frequency of home reading for personal and school reasons, reading material/s read, manner reading materials are chosen and manner reading materials are acquired.

Respondents' Attitude towards Reading

Table 2 presents three statements as to the attitude towards reading of the respondents. It reveals that 50.6 percent of the respondents like reading sometimes, 48.1 percent enjoy reading a lot and 1.3 percent do not like reading. It is interesting to note that the respondents tend to have a positive attitude towards reading. Ghaith and Bouzeinedding's (2003) study indicated that students with positive attitudes towards reading are more likely to have more positive self-concepts as individuals, enjoy their school experience, and comprehend reading material better than their equals who have less positive reading attitudes.

Table 2. Respondents' attitude towards reading.

Statements	Frequency (n= 77)	Percent
I do not like reading.	1	1.3
I like reading sometimes.	39	50.6
I enjoy reading a lot.	37	48.1

Self-description of the Respondents as Readers

Table 3 presents three statements as regards the description of the respondents as readers. It shows that 63.6 percent of the respondents prefer to read by themselves, 50.6 percent like listening to stories or being read to and 22.1 percent like talking about what they have read. Based on the data, it can be inferred that a greater number of the respondents are independent readers. From the responses, a greater number as well said that they like listening to stories or being read to. This can be associated to the fact that most of the respondents are auditory learners which could be their learning style. They learn best when they listen or being read to by the teacher or the other.

Table 3. Self-description of the respondents as readers.

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Statements	Frequency (n= 77)	Percent	Rank
I like talking about what I have read.	17	22.1	3
I like listening to stories or being read to.	39	50.6	2
I prefer to read by myself.	49	63.6	1

*Multiple Responses

Frequency of Respondents' Home Reading

Table 4 shows the frequency of home reading of the respondents both for personal reasons and school reasons.

For personal reasons, the table shows that 51.9 percent of the respondents read about once a week, 31.2 percent read almost everyday, 11.7 percent read about once a month and 5.2 percent never or hardly ever read. The result could have been affected by the fact that most of the respondents do not have stock of books at home and since they are sons and daughters of farmers, they do not consider reading as a priority when at home. But still, the interest to do home reading despite the limitations is still prevalent.

For school reasons, 45.5 percent of the respondents read about once a week, 29.9 percent read almost everyday, 11.7 percent read about once a month and 2.6 percent never or hardly ever read. The results on the frequency of home reading of the respondents could have been affected by the DepEd's No-Homework Policy during weekends. However, despite the DepEd mandate, results show that a greater number of respondents still do home reading almost everyday. This implies that the respondents still have high regard in the importance of reading in their studies.

Table 4. Frequency of respondents' home reading

	Frequency (n= 77)	Percent	Rank
Personal Reasons			
Never or hardly ever	4	5.2	4
About once a month	9	11.7	3
About once a week	40	51.9	1
Almost everyday	24	31.2	2
School Reasons			
Never or hardly ever	2	2.6	4
About once a month	17	22.1	3
About once a week	35	45.5	1
Almost everyday	23	29.9	2

Reading Material/s Read by the Respondents

Table 5 shows the list of reading material/s read by the respondents, of which are Fantasy, Adventure/Mystery, Books in Series, In languages other than English, Science fiction, Horror/Suspense, Biographies, Humor, History, Sports, Real life, Hobbies, Science and others.

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The table shows that the top four mostly read materials were Real life, History, Sports and Fantasy. As evident, the respondents were fond of reading nonfiction books. The least read materials were Humor, Science, Biographies and others. Among those listed, other respondents specifically wrote Bible, Wattpad, Filipino, Romance and Comics as the materials they read. The strong preference of the respondents on nonfiction books could be associated by the fact that they enjoy reading books that they can relate with their real-life experiences. On the other hand, other listed books the respondents read denote that they have limited exposure to more in-depth reading materials which is quite saddening.

Table 5. Frequency distribution of reading material/s read by the respondents.

Materials	Frequency (n= 77)	Percent	Rank
Fantasy	30	39.0	4
Adventure/Mystery	26	33.8	5
Books in Series	16	20.8	8
In languages other than English	12	15.6	9
Science fiction	11	14.3	10
Horror/Suspense	20	26.0	6
Biographies	10	13.0	11.5
Humor	5	6.5	14
History	31	40.3	3
Sports	37	48.1	2
Real life	43	55.8	1
Hobbies	18	23.4	7
Science	10	13.0	11.5
Others	9	11.7	13

*Multiple Responses

Manner by which Reading Material are chosen by the Respondents

Table 6 presents the manner by which reading materials are chosen by the respondents. The data shows that 81.8 percent of the respondents indicated that they choose the books themselves, 28.6 percent indicated that their teachers recommend or help them and 24.7 percent indicated that they read what their friends read. The result could be related from the previous data that a greater number of respondents prefer to read by themselves. Since they are independent readers, they are more likely to choose the books themselves. Moreover, the influence of teachers and friends cannot be discounted as it greatly affects the way the respondents choose their reading materials. As cited by Cosgrove, study of young people in Britain aged between 11 and 18 years found that peer influence was the top most reason for reading books (Market & Opinion International MORI, 2004). A survey of 431 pre-kindergarten through grade eight students in the United States found that 71 percent of the students who perceived themselves as good readers had a positive attitude towards reading while none of the students who regarded themselves as poor readers enjoyed reading.

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Table 6. Frequency distribution of manner by which reading materials are chosen.

Statements	Frequency (n= 77)	Percent	Rank
I choose it myself.	63	81.8	1
I read what my friends read.	19	24.7	3
I read what my brothers and sisters recommend.	9	11.7	4
My parents recommend or help me.	8	10.4	5
My teachers recommend or help me.	22	28.6	2
Others	3	3.9	6

*Multiple Responses

Manner by which Reading Materials are acquired by the Respondents

Table 7 presents the manner by which reading materials are acquired by the respondents. It could be gleaned from the table that 54.5 percent borrow their books from friends, 51.9 percent indicated that they borrow books form the school library, 31.2 percent of them borrow from the classroom library, and 16.9 percent of them buy the books themselves.

It is noteworthy to relate to the fact that most of the respondents prefer listening to stories or being read to. This could very well be associated to their acquisition of reading materials that after listening to stories or being read to, they get interested to read the book and so they borrow the reading material from friends.

It can be inferred as well that despite the advancement in modern technology, a greater number of the respondents find the school library as the primary source of reading materials. A Malaysian study of 6th form students by Lim in 1974 on his dissertation, found that the most important motivating factor was self or personal interests and this favorable attitude was well formulated among the girls and those in the Arts stream. In Sri Lanka, the National Library and Documentation Service Board (NLDB) carried out a survey in 2002 and found the following situations; reading habits of students was poor, the condition of the school libraries was not encouraging as book collections were old and most students read "light" materials such as magazines, novels, comic books and newspapers.

Gunasekara (2002, on his journal entitled "Education in Sri Langka", studied reading problems in Sri Lankan secondary schools and found three major hindrances to the promotion of reading habits. These include preference to chat and listen to the radio; insufficient reading resources in school libraries to be borrowed and preference for television viewing. Most reading was done mainly for examination purposes.

Table 7. Frequency distribution of manner by which reading materials are acquired by the respondents.

Statements	Frequency (n= 77)	Percent	Rank
I buy it myself.	13	16.9	4
I get them as presents.	6	7.8	5.5

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I borrow them from the classroom library.	24	31.2	3
I borrow them from the school library.	40	51.9	2
I borrow them from the local library.	6	7.8	5.5
I borrow them from friends.	42	54.5	1
Others	1	1.3	7

*Multiple Responses

Reading Comprehension Level of the Respondents along the Six Sub-skills

To determine the reading comprehension level of the respondents, they were asked to read six reading texts and there were six questions that follow. Four from the reading texts were standardized and two were constructed by the researcher. The six questions/items after each reading text were subdivided along the six sub-skills such as finding main idea, finding word meaning through context, understanding sequence, drawing conclusion and making inferences, distinguishing between fact and opinion and summarizing. Needless to say, there were thirty-six (36) items answered by the respondents.

Table 8. Students' reading comprehension level along the subskills.

Subskill	Mean	Standard Deviation	Description
Finding Main Idea	2.3	1.2	Developing
Finding Word Meaning through Context	2.8	1.3	Developing
Understanding Sequence	1.9	1.2	Developing
Drawing Conclusion and Making Inferences	2.1	1.1	Developing
Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion	1.9	1.2	Developing
Summarizing	2.1	1.1	Developing

along Finding Main Idea

There were six (6) items on the given sub-skill that the respondents answered with one item in each reading comprehension exercise. Result shows, as evident in their mean score of 2.3, that a greater number of the respondents have a developing reading comprehension along finding main idea. Such result could be supported by the findings of Dwiarti (2005) on the four problems that the students are facing in finding main idea of the text such as lack of interest toward reading, lack of background knowledge, lack of vocabulary and being unaware on the parts of the paragraph.

along Finding Word Meaning Through Context

There were six (6) items on the given sub-skill that the respondents answered with one item in each reading comprehension exercise. As gleaned from the table, the reading comprehension level of the respondent along finding word meaning through context is developing as shown in their mean score of 2.8. It goes into saying that when a student seldom reads, it limits him to learn more vocabularies needed to comprehend better. Marzano (2013) explains that children who have large oral vocabularies will recognize and understand more words as they are learning to read. A

successful reader will continue to acquire words within the context while making connections to background knowledge and the world around them. Therefore, a child that lacks word knowledge may disengage with reading and struggle to build additional vocabulary skills.

along Understanding Sequence

There were six (6) items on the given sub-skill that the respondents answered with one item in each reading comprehension exercise. Results show that the reading comprehension level of the respondents along understanding sequence is developing as shown in their mean score of 1.9. It has been argued that difficulty in identifying main events is likely due to poorer recognition of causal connections between events and characters, rather than events explicit in the text (Cragg & Nation, 2006). Because all information required to complete the overall sequencing task was explicit in the text, it may therefore be argued that differences in performance are more likely to reflect variations in sequencing ability.

along Drawing Conclusion and Making Inferences

There were six (6) items on the given sub-skill that the respondents answered with one item in each reading comprehension exercise. The table shows that the reading comprehension level of the respondents along drawing conclusion and making inferences is developing as shown in their mean score of 2.1. The result could be related to the fact they still lack the ability to read between the lines.

along Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion

There were six (6) items on the given sub-skill that the respondents answered with one item in each reading comprehension exercise. The table shows that the reading comprehension level of the respondents along distinguishing between fact and opinion is developing as shown in their mean score of 1.9. This is a clear manifestation that they are more likely to be confused on distinguishing whether the statement is a fact or opinion based on the text read because they put so little attention to the details presented in the text.

along Summarizing

There were six (6) items on the given sub-skill that the respondents answered with one item in each reading comprehension exercise. The table shows that the reading comprehension level of the respondents is developing as shown in their mean score of 2.1.

Zafarani & Kabgani (2014) investigated the possible outcomes of the effectiveness of a main idea strategy, summarization strategy and the explicitness of the training on improving comprehension of English textual materials of Iranian ESP learners, and it found that the explicit instruction on summarizing strategy can effectively contribute to enhancing ability and aptitude of ESP learners in comprehending reading and can help them build up a constructive attitude toward English reading in Iranian context.

Overall Reading Comprehension Level of the Respondents

Table 9 presents the overall reading comprehension level of the respondents along the six sub-skills specifically on finding main idea, finding word meaning through context, understanding sequence, drawing conclusion and making inferences, distinguishing between fact and opinion and summarizing.

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The overall reading comprehension level of the respondents is developing as shown in their mean of score of 13.0. This finding is in consonance to their satisfactory academic performance based on their general weighted average.

Hence, this is indicative that there is a great need on the part of the teachers to instill among learners at an early stage the love for reading. Studies reveal that students who have poor reading habits at an early age are more likely to struggle at a later stage which affect their academic performance. According to Deavers (2000), children, who miss the opportunity of getting in touch with books in their early stages of life, find it hard to acquire good reading habits in their later years.

Table 9. Overall reading comprehension level of the respondents.

Level	Score Interval	Frequency (n= 77)	Percent
Beginning	0- 10	19	24.7
Developing	11- 20	55	71.4
Proficient	21- 30	3	3.9
Highly Proficient	31- 36	0	0.0
	Mean= 13.0;	s.d.= 4.0;	Developing

Relationship between the Profile and the Reading Interests and Habits of the Respondents

Table 10 shows the relationship between the reading comprehension level and the reading interests and habits of the respondents.

First, the table shows that there is a significant relationship between attitude towards reading and academic performance. It could be interpreted that those who have better academic performance tend to like and enjoy reading. This is in consonance with the studies of reading scholars like Lawal (2008), Petscher (2010) who posit that students need to be equipped with rich vocabulary which engenders good performance in reading comprehension task. These reading scholars have also established that learners who are slow at comprehension will almost possibly develop a feeling of dislike for books and this will most likely prevent them from having adequate practice in reading. This will invariably result in poor standards of reading.

Second, it shows that there is a significant relationship between self-description as a reader and preferred strand. It could be interpreted that most of the respondents, based on their self-description, are independent readers. It is true that a great number of respondents were into Science and Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) strand and Agri-Fishery Arts (AFA) strand. However, their being independent readers do not translate to them having proficient reading comprehension level since generally, regardless of their academic performance, majority of them are developing readers and this is in congruence of their frequency of home reading that majority of them read about once a week both for personal reasons and school reasons. It could be interpreted that they have a poor reading habit since it revealed that their frequency of home reading for school reasons is about once a week, the same as that for personal reasons.

Third, the table shows that there is a significant relationship between frequency of home reading both for personal reasons and school reasons and academic performance. Some of the

respondents who engage themselves in home reading for personal and school reasons are more likely to have better academic performance.

Fourth, it could be gleaned from the table that there is a significant relationship between reading materials read and sex. Female respondents are more likely to read Real Life, Sports and History and Fantasy. Martin and Kragler (2012) Correia (2011), Mohr (2006), Bozack and Salvaggio (2013) found that nonfiction is preferred at times. Nonfiction texts intrigue students because they are able to learn new information or connect with a certain personal interest. As for the greater majority who prefer to read "Real Life", this trend could be related to the fact that their generation is very much into 'true-to-life stories' and thus they prefer reading materials, such maybe in the form of current events that involve public figures such as actors and actresses and the likes, because they find it timely and relevant and that they can relate their own lives.

Fifth, it shows that there is no significant relationship between manner reading materials are chosen. While it may be true that a greater number of respondents choose the books themselves, it doesn't translate to the fact that they are proficient readers regardless of their sex, preferred track, preferred strand and academic performance.

Sixth, it shows that there is a significant relationship between manner reading materials are acquired and sex. Female respondents are more likely to buy the book themselves. In general, it could be deduced that female respondents tend to have good reading habits and interests than male respondents. This finding is coherent with earlier researches conducted by Logan & Johnston, 2009; Chiu & McBride-Chang, 2006 on gender difference that females performed better at reading comprehension.

Table 10. Relationship between the profile and reading interests and habits of the respondents.

Interests and Habits of the Respondents/ Profile of the Respondents	Sex	Preferred Track	Preferred Strand	Academic Performance
Attitude towards reading	0.117	0.794	0.874	0.008*
Self-description as a reader	0.828	0.697	0.036*	0.718
Frequency of home reading for personal reasons	0.706	0.209	0.896	0.036*
Frequency of home reading for school reasons	0.523	0.259	0.691	0.036*
Reading Material/s read	0.013*	0.326	0.093	0.472
Manner reading materials are chosen	0.278	0.962	0.354	0.387

Manner reading materials are acquired	0.037*	0.782	0.075	0.397

*Significant at α= 0.05.

Relationship between the Profile and Reading Comprehension Level of the Respondents

Table 11 shows the relationship between the profile and reading comprehension level of the respondents. Results show that there is no significant relationship between the profile and reading comprehension level the respondents. This is when the hypothesis is tested using the significance level of 0.05. Regardless of sex, whether male or female, their reading comprehension level is comparable. Across the different academic performances, strands, and tracks, the respondents generally have developing reading comprehension.

Table 11. Relationship between the profile and reading comprehension level of the respondents.

Profile of the Respondents/ Reading Comprehension Level	Probability Values	Conclusion
Sex	0.085	Not Significant
Preferred Track	0.384	Not Significant
Preferred Strand	0.561	Not Significant
Academic Performance	0.124	Not Significant

*Significant at α= 0.05.

Relationship between the Reading Comprehension Level and the Reading Interests and Habits of the Respondents

Table 12 shows the relationship between the reading comprehension level and the reading interests and habits of the respondents.

The table shows that there is no significant relationship between the reading comprehension level and the respondents' reading interests and habits. This is when the hypothesis is tested using a significance level of 0.05. In the research conducted by Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000, it revealed that reading interest has been linked and related to vocabulary development, comprehension, fluency as well as general intellectual development which contradicts the findings of the study. The finding as well disapproves that the teachers and the stakeholders should consider

the students' interest in reading. It does not support the study by Wade et al., 2006 on the theory of human reading interest that may satisfy the needs of the readers.

The result of the study may have been affected by the developing reading comprehension level of the respondents which made no relations to their reading interests and habits.

Table 12. Relationship between the reading comprehension level and the reading interests and habits of the respondents.

Interests and Habits of the Respondents/ Reading Comprehension Level	Probability Values	Conclusion
Attitude towards reading	0.946	Not Significant
Self-description as a reader	0.772	Not Significant
Frequency of home reading for personal reasons	0.143	Not Significant
Frequency of home reading for school reasons	0.635	Not Significant
Reading Material/s read	0.061	Not Significant
Manner reading materials are chosen	0.259	Not Significant
Manner reading materials are acquired	0.496	Not Significant

*Significant at α= 0.05.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study pose a great challenge to the teaching of reading among English teachers as the respondents' level of reading comprehension fall under developing which is quite alarming. Evidently, the reading interests and habits of the respondents have no significant relationship to their reading comprehension level. Their satisfactory academic performance can very well be translated to their reading comprehension level since consistently they fall under developing in all the sub-skills tested such as on finding main idea, finding word meaning through context, understanding sequence, drawing conclusion and making inferences, distinguishing between fact and opinion and summarizing.

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