



Reading Competency and Academic Performance of Students

Clarinda C. Galiza, Ph. D.

Journal for Educators, Teachers and Trainers, Vol. 13 (1)

<https://jett.labosfor.com/>

Date of reception: 17 Sep 2021

Date of revision: 17 Nov 2021

Date of acceptance: 22 Nov 2021

Clarinda C. Galiza, Ph. D.(2022). Reading Competency and Academic Performance of Students *Journal for Educators, Teachers and Trainers*, Vol. 13(1). 94–100.

¹Isabela State University, San Mariano, Isabela, Philippines



Reading Competency and Academic Performance of Students

Clarinda C. Galiza, Ph. D.

Isabela State University, San Mariano, Isabela, Philippines

Email: clarindagaliza25@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This research study was done to examine the reading competency and academic performance of 185 first year college students of ISU, San Mariano Campus for SY 2020 – 2021. It also attempted to investigate the relationship that exists between reading competency and the academic achievement of the respondents; and to develop an intervention program. Descriptive statistics was used to establish their reading competency level and in analyzing the association that exists between their reading competency and academic achievement, chi – square test for independent, t – test and one way analysis of variance were utilized. About the conclusions of this investigation, only a few numbers of the respondents earned a satisfactory academic achievement. Most of the respondents reading competency level was classed as developing. There was no significant difference between the reading competence of the respondents when categorized according to course and sex. The BSIT respondents had a considerably lower general Weighted Average (GWA) as compared to the BSED, BAT, and BSHM respondents and there was no significant difference between the grades of the male and the female respondents. The respondents with competent level of reading competency earned a considerably higher GWA than the respondents with beginning, developing and approaching proficiency levels. It is proposed that considerable mentorship on reading comprehension must be practiced by English faculty members. In addition, a monthly activity like reading and comprehension competition must be introduced in the campus to increase the reading skill of the respondents and the campus library should serve as an ideal setting where students can do volunteer reading activity.

Keywords: Reading, Competency, Academic Performance

INTRODUCTION

In the country today, higher education institutions whether operating as public or private recognize the impact of reading competency to the intellectual development of college students which can be measured through good performance of graduates in licensure examinations (Ölmez Çağlar, Mirici & Erten, 2020).

The said language skill is important in ensuring that college students survive even in the most challenging academic responsibilities. In short, reading competency of college students is directly connected to professional success. Reading can make one a better writer and speaker, hence appreciation of the importance of reading should be embraced by students. Reading competence of students is a common concern of tertiary institutions due to the strong relationship between reading competence and academic performance. Reading is considered a very crucial milestone in the academic journey of every student especially that it is an integral part of the educational process.

According to Meniado, J.C. (2016), she emphasized that “The more you read, the more things you know” and that teachers must show concern along this area. Developing the reading competency of college students seriously is the bridge between the passive readers and active readers and therefore, considered as a gateway to effective reading resulting to a rich academic, professional, and personal life. Boltzmann, M., Russeler, J., Ye, Z., & Munte, T.F. (2013) also pointed out that developing the reading competence of college students across all programs cannot be taken for granted for the reason that it has impact to the academic performance of students and it is a strong factor that determines the human capital development of an economy; and it also determines the failure and success of an academic institution.

The Isabela State University, San Mariano Campus in its present condition in relation to the operation of its instructional unit experiences academic challenges due to college students’ questionable reading competence. This challenge needs action as it affects attainment of the goals and objectives of the academic programs of the Campus. Effective solutions must be implemented immediately while the students are on the first year level as an immediate response to academic performance problem as reflected in the declining board examination performance of graduates and underemployment status of some graduates. It is fitting that reading weaknesses

of first year college students are seriously attended to ensure a very satisfying academic performance. Therefore, it can be said that academic success also lies on the reading competence level of tertiary students.

Research Objectives

This research study determined the reading competency and academic performance of first year college students of ISU, San Mariano Campus enrolled for SY 2021-2022.

Specifically, it aimed to:

1. determine the reading competency of the respondents;
2. determine the academic performance of the respondents;
3. determine the relationship that exists between reading competency and academic performance of the respondents; and
4. develop intervention program that will strengthen the reading competency of the respondents.

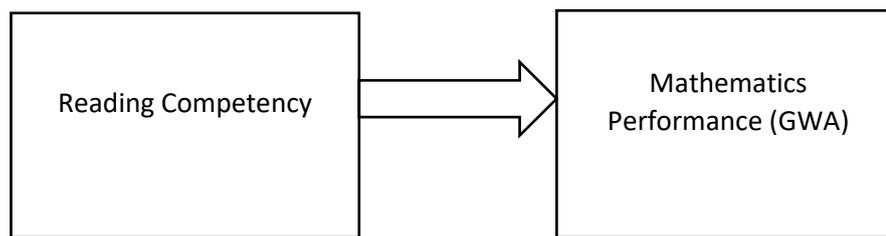


Fig.1: Theoretical Framework of the Study

Conceptual Framework

Today, higher level of education demands overcoming reading difficulties. When this is done, academic success is well assured. Bangayan- Manera (2019) stated that reading is an indispensable skill and is fundamentally interrelated with educational success.

Propounded by Julian, MCC, Malana M. & Calanoga MC.(2019), considering that being competent in reading helps college students critically and; counted as highly advantageous, this skill must be fully developed in them with primary focus on vocabulary, decoding skills, fluency, and comprehension strategies,. Applying these skills and strategies taught in the classroom, students can make connections to build up their reading competency. In this way, we can ensure their understanding of course works leading to a satisfactory academic performance. As stressed by Boyd (2013), reading competency is crucial for success in school, and alongside the academic effect that poor comprehension can also have a social and emotional impact.

METHODS

Research Design

The descriptive data employed in this study were utilized to determine the level of reading competency of the participants in the study. The chi-square test for independence, the t-test, and the one-way analysis of variance were all employed to determine whether or not there is a relationship between reading competency and academic success among those who responded.

Research Participants

The population for this research study involved 185 first year college students or 49.60% of ISU, San Mariano Campus total first year college enrolment for SY 2020-2021. The first year group was chosen since reading and comprehension are considered crucial in relation to their academic life. Not only that, when reading weaknesses of students are known and well attended through early and effective interventions, students can do better in their academic subjects.

Table 1: Frequency and percent distribution of the students by course and sex

Category	Frequency	Percent
Course		
• Teacher Education	75	40.5
• Agricultural Technology	42	22.7
• Hotel and Restaurant Mgt.	54	29.2
• Information Technology	14	7.6
Sex		
• Male	63	34.1

• Female	122	65.9
Total	185	100.0

Data Tools

In obtaining the needed information from the identified respondents of the study, a questionnaire was used. The questionnaire comprised of a reading text entitled “Poverty is a stepping stone.” adopted from the book entitled “Wandering Thoughts” authored by Bella Angeles Abangan. In order to measure the respondents’ reading competency level, questions about the selection were included in the questionnaire like 1.) What is the only hope of poor parents?; 2.) What is the relation of a past failure to the success of a person?; 3.) How do you describe the 40 pupils who won in various contests in the annual Metro Manila Young Writer’s Conference? These questions were answered by them observing the conventions of writing which include clear presentation of answers, command of grammar, mechanics and usage. In evaluating the answers of the respondents, a rubric was used for realistic evaluation results. The answers of some of the respondents were validated through calls.

Data Analysis

Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS) version 21 aided the analysis of the research data. Frequency and percent were also used to determine the distribution of the students as to course, sex, academic performance, and reading competency. Chi-square test was run to test whether there was a significant difference between the reading competence level of the students when grouped by course and sex. Independent samples t-test was performed to compare the academic performance of the male and the female students. One-way between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to test the following: 1) whether there was a significant difference on the students’ academic performance when grouped by course; and 2) whether reading competency significantly affects academic performance. Post hoc analysis using Tukey HSD was employed for significant ANOVA results in order to determine which pair(s) of groups significantly differ. Partial eta squared was then calculated to gauge the effect size or the magnitude of the difference, whose results were interpreted based on the guidelines proposed by Cohen (1988) i. e., .01 is small; .06 is medium; while .14 is large.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 2: Academic performance of the students

Grades	Frequency	Percent
Math Grade		
• Below 83 (Fair)	17	9.2
• 83 to <86 (Fairly Good)	49	26.5
• 86 to <89 (Good)	62	33.5
• 89 and above (Satisfactory)	57	30.8
GWA		
• Below 83 (Fair)	28	15.1
• 83 to <86 (Fairly Good)	58	31.4
• 86 to <89 (Good)	77	41.6
• 89 and above (Satisfactory)	22	11.9
Total	185	100.0

Table 2 shows the distribution of the respondents as to their academic performance in Mathematics. There were 57 or 30.8 percent of them who obtained 89 or above (Satisfactory); 62 or 33.5 percent obtained 86 to 89 (Good); 49 or 26.5 percent obtained 83 to 86 (Fairly Good) while 17 or 9.2 percent obtained below 83 (Fair).

The data reveal that only about one third of the total number of respondents obtained a satisfactory performance in Mathematics which simply imply that the respondents encountered difficulties in understanding Mathematical problems caused by their unsatisfying reading competency.

As to the respondents’ General Weighted Average (GWA), 22 or 11.9 percent of them obtained grades of 89 and above (Satisfactory); 77 or 41.6 percent obtained 86 to 89 (Good); 58 or 31.4 percent obtained 83 to 86 (Fairly Good) while 28 or 15.1 percent obtained below 83 (Fair).

The above data reveal that only a few number of the first year college respondents showed a satisfactory academic performance which can be attributed to the fact that as first year college students, they were still experiencing adjustments to their new learning environment.

Table 3: Reading competency levels of the students

Reading Competency Level	Frequency	Percent
Beginning	55	29.7
Developing	94	50.8
Approaching Proficiency	19	10.3
Proficient	17	9.2
Total	185	100.0

The data in Table 3 show the reading competence level of the respondents. There were 17 or 9.2 percent of them who were categorized as proficient readers or possessing the ability to understand the language in which the text is written and the ability to recognize and process printed text.; 19 or 10.3 percent were under the category of approaching proficiency or readers who have developed the fundamental knowledge and skills; 94 or 50.8 percent were classified as developing readers or students who are able to read simple text and starting to develop a more extensive vocabulary and fluency while 55 or 29.7 were beginning readers are working hard to make several skills.

The data reveal that most of the respondents' reading competence level is under "developing" category in spite the fact they are already in college. This can be attributed to the fact that a number of college students enrolled in the campus today have poor reading foundation.

Table 4: Reading competence levels of the students when grouped by course

		Reading Competency				X ² (9)	p
		Beginning	Developing	Approaching Prof.	Proficient		
Course	Teacher Education	27	34	6	8	14.43	.108
	Agricultural Technology	12	24	3	3		
	Hotel and Restaurant Mgt.	15	29	5	5		
	Information Technology	1	7	5	1		

Table 4 displays that there was no significant difference between the reading competency level of the respondents when grouped according to course. This finding can be explained by the fact that first year college students who are considered new in the Campus shall have to adjust themselves to the academic discourse and teaching methods of their instructors.

Table 5: Reading competency levels of the students when grouped by sex

		Reading Competency				x ² (3)	p
		Beginning	Developing	Approaching Prof.	Proficient		
Sex	Male	18	35	5	5	1.136	.768
	Female	37	59	14	12		

Table 5 shows that there was no significant difference between the reading competency level of male and female students which is in contrast with the finding of Brenna, B, & Chen, S. (2013) who emphasized that there is a statistical significant difference between the reading competency of males and females.

Table 6: Academic performance of the students when grouped by course

Grades	Course	n	M	SD	F (3, 181)	p	Partial Eta Squared
Math Grade	Teacher Education	75	88.08 ^b	2.545	26.964	.000	.3088
	Agricultural Technology	42	87.64 ^b	2.526			
	Hotel Restaurant Mgt.	54	84.11 ^a	2.603			
	Information Technology	14	85.07 ^a	3.832			
GWA	Teacher Education	75	86.56 ^b	2.359	9.716	.000	.1387
	Agricultural Technology	42	86.06 ^b	2.413			
	Hotel and Restaurant Mgt.	54	85.23 ^b	2.738			

	Information Technology	14	82.75 ^a	3.374			
--	------------------------	----	--------------------	-------	--	--	--

The data show that the BSEd and the BAT students outperformed both the BSHM and the BSIT students, in the field of Mathematics, $F(3, 181) = 26.964$, $p < .01$, eta squared = .3088.

In general, the BSIT students had a significantly lower GWA as compared to the other three groups of students. This finding can be due to the fact that some of the first year college students of the BSIT program every year are those who fail in the screening process conducted for BSEd and BAT enrollees.

Table 7: Academic performance of the students when grouped by sex

Grades	Sex	N	M	SD	t (183)	P	95% CI
Math Grade	Male	63	86.09	3.392	-1.537	.126	[-1.72, .21]
	Female	122	86.85	3.057			
GWA	Male	63	85.30	2.823	-1.682	.094	[-1.55, .12]
	Female	122	86.01	2.686			

The data show that there was no significant difference between the grades of the male and the female students. The said finding can be supported by the fact that full diligence while pursuing college education regardless of sex can be an edge towards achieving good grades.

Table 8: Academic performance of the students when grouped by reading competence level

Grades	Reading Competency	n	M	SD	F (3, 181)	p	Partial Eta Squared
Math Grade	Beginning	55	86.56	3.023	.546	.652	
	Developing	94	86.39	3.424			
	Approaching Proficiency	19	87.00	3.162			
	Proficient	17	87.35	2.343			
GWA	Beginning	55	85.37 ^a	2.602	4.811	.003	.0738
	Developing	94	85.62 ^a	2.603			
	Approaching Proficiency	19	85.60 ^a	3.462			
	Proficient	17	88.08 ^b	2.160			

The data above show that the students with proficient level of reading competency garnered a significantly higher GWA than those students with beginning, developing, and approaching proficiency levels, $F(3, 181) = 4.81$, $p < .01$. The magnitude of the difference between their grades was moderate, eta squared = .07. This suggests that reading competency has a significant moderate effect on academic performance in general.

Temporal (2016) emphasized that students with better command in the English language were more likely to do better in their courses. He further emphasized that since English is the medium of instruction, students who were more proficient in English were able to do better in writing, speaking, grasping and understanding the instructions and lessons given to them in their professional courses. Teaching the curricular content and having proficiency in the language used for instruction increases the learner's amount of exposure and opportunities to understand the content of instruction, hence students develop greater control over what is taught in class (British Council, n.d.) resulting to positive outcomes on students' academic success.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Less than one half of the respondents have good academic performance.
2. More than half of the respondents have developing reading competency level.
3. There was no significant difference between the reading competency level of the respondents when grouped according to course and sex.
4. The BSEd students and the agricultural technology students outperformed both the BSHM and the BSIT students in the field of Mathematics.
5. The BSIT students had a significantly lower GWA as compared to the other groups of respondents.
6. There was no significant difference between the grades of the male and the female students when grouped according to sex.
7. The students with proficient level of reading competence obtained a significantly higher GWA than those students with beginning, developing and approaching competence levels.

Recommendations

1. Extensive mentoring on reading comprehension must be practiced by English faculty members.
2. Campus recruitment especially during interview process must include questions about commitment of applicants in contributing their efforts and time to improve the academic performance of students.

3. A monthly activity like reading and comprehension competition must be launched in the campus to improve the reading skill of the respondents.
4. Every faculty of the Campus must create a class culture that encourages thinking and learning.
5. An action plan by program focused in enhancing the reading skill of the respondents must be formulated and seriously implemented.
6. The Campus Administration must provide a conducive space for the conduct of reading enhancement activities for the respondents.
7. Encourage book borrowing among college students.
8. The Campus library should serve as an ideal environment where students can engage in voluntary reading.
9. Independent reading habit should be instilled among college students because of the benefits like improved academic performance.

REFERENCES

1. Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2013). Early warning confirmed. A research update on third-grade reading. Retrieved from <http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF-Early WarningConfirmed-2013.pdf>
2. Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2014). The 30 million word gap: The role of parent-child verbal interaction in language and literacy development. Retrieved from <http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-30million wordgap-2011.pdf>
3. Allington, R. L. (2014). How reading volume affects both reading fluency and reading achievement. *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education*, 7(1), 13-26.
4. Boltzmann, M., Russeler, J., Ye, Z., & Munte, T.F. (2013). Learning to read in adulthood: An evaluation of a literacy program for functionality illiterate adults in Germany. *Problems of Education in the 21st Century*, 51, 33-46.
5. Ferhat Köprü, M. Bahadır Ayas. An Investigation of the Criterion Validity of Anadolu Sak Intelligence Scale (ASIS): The Case of EPTS* . *Talent*. 2020; 10(2): 110-128.
6. Boonen, T., Van Damme, J., & Onghena, P. (2014). Teacher effects on student achievement in first grade: which aspects matter most? *School Effectiveness & Improvement*, 25(1), 126-152.
7. Boyd, P. (2013). Blogging in the classroom: Using technologies to promote learner-centered pedagogies. *Researcher: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 26(3), 85-113.
8. Brenna, B, & Chen, S. (2013). Teaching recommendations for reading-education components of B.Ed. program. *Journal of Reading Education*, 38(2), 10-17.
9. Bangayan- Manera, A. (2019). Doodle: Towards a hermeneutical appreciation in Jacques Derrida's deconstruction. *The Asian EFL Journal*, 24(4.2),191-204
10. Cambridge CEM (2019). 10 Essential Reads to improve reading comprehension.
11. Julian, MCC, Malana M. & Calanoga MC. (2019). How's my English? Communication Skills: A Relevant Indicator of Work Success. *The Asian EFL*. 24 (4.2), 429-442
12. Meniado, J.C. (2016) Metacognitive Reading Strategies, Motivation, and Reading Comprehension performance of Saudi BFL Students. *English Language Teaching* 9(3), 117-119.
13. Malenab- Temporal,C. (2016).Language use, needs and proficiency of English as a Second Language (ESL), 5(6) ,96-109.
14. Ölmez-Çağlar, F., Mirici, İ. H., Erten, İ. H. (2020). Measuring possible language teacher selves: A scale development study. *International Online Journal of Education and Teaching (IOJET)*, 7(1), 327-353.