Research Article

Choice of Reading Materials and Reading Achievement of Junior High Students

Paul Junrey A. Toyong*, Marino E. Toyong

Department of Education-Region VIII, Philippines

ABSTRACT

Reading is an important skill that can be used to communicate and understand the academic, business and cultural world. Reading can be a tool for learners' progress and success in different fields of discipline. This study utilized descriptive-correlational design to examine 41 respondents selected as census or total enumeration using purposive sampling. Findings revealed that majority of the respondents used hard copy reading materials for the past 12 months. There were 22 respondents who used books, 2 who used magazines and 1 respondent used newspaper. Most of the class were in frustration level which is 75. 6%. There was one non-reader. Independent readers were four and instructional were five. There was a significant negative relationship (cc= -0.572 and p-value= 0.001) between choice of reading materials and reading achievement. This suggested that the use of soft copies as reading material is correlated to high reading achievement. The implications may serve as basis for intervention, program, and policy formulation. Teachers need to design interactive reading materials using the 21st Century technologies like soft copies reading materials which can be handy and can be access anytime and anywhere using mobile phones. Reading intervention using technology-based materials may be designed to improve reading achievement of the students. Schools may introduce e-library which may introduce various materials that can be accessed and read in soft copy format. This will also be beneficial to distance learning modality.

Keywords: Choice of Reading Materials, Reading Achievement

Introduction

Reading is the process of getting meanings from the written codes. Reading is one of the macro skills which is a must to be developed by learners. Reading helps to develop other skills in other disciplines.

One of the most critical educational outcomes of primary education is the ability to read. Reading ability is important for children's learning, as well as their growth of wider literacy skills and potential active involvement in society, including the workforce (Department of Education, 2019).

Reading is the second-oldest form of communication that allows humans to progress into civilization. People used to read from various sources even before the advent of paper books or other staffs. Writing demonstrates the path to culture and reading aids in its implementation. For the time being, reading habits, like other human activities, have undergone significant changes. Reading, on the other hand, exposes us to new patterns or forms of thinking in the face of rapidly evolving technology and human needs.

Reading is important for cultivating curious minds, according to research from around the world; therefore, students should be educated not only as professionals but also as thinkers and reflective individuals (Rodriguez, 2007).

Reading is described as the ability to comprehend, comprehend, make sense of, and finally interpret written letters and symbols. Reading, according to Aina et al. (2011), is the method of perceiving the depiction of printed and written symbols by looking at them, naming them, and generally verbalizing these ocular signs.

It requires a mental contact formulation that generates human speech sounds. Shen (2006) defines reading habits as the amount, frequency, and content of what people read. Reading is, once again, a series of interactive processes between the reader and the text through which readers use their experience to develop, create, and build meaning.

Reading has to compete with the pleasures of mobile gaming, social media, and video series streaming in today's world. Interest from academics and the media makes a difference. Reading on paper vs. reading on a tablet is a battle of interests. It has evolved as devices and apps that allow children to read on screens have become more commonplace, resulting in an increasing area of investigation into the relationship between children's reading on screens and their reading skills and behavior.

Until recently, however, the quality and quantity of eBooks for children is insufficient to support large-scale longitudinal studies. Many aspects of screen reading have been investigated in a variety of international and national studies. This quick review compiles findings from studies on children's screen reading behavior, enjoyment, and skills, both from secondary sources and from (as of yet unpublished) findings from the National Literacy Trust's annual literacy survey 2012, which included questions that enabled us to look into the relationship between children's use of technology and their reading habits.

Children who responded to the survey were also more likely to say they favored reading on a tablet, with more than half (52.4%) saying they would rather read on an electronic device than on paper, compared to just under a third (32%). This was apparent in reading behavior responses, with 38.9% of respondents reporting daily reading on screen only, 33.2 percent reporting daily reading in print and on screen, and only 27.9% reporting daily reading in print alone. Depending on the user, different materials were read, with news and non-fiction being more common on computers and smartphones and fiction being more popular on e-readers and tablets (Picton, 2014).

The target school of this study has a problem in reading comprehension among students. There were 69% percent of grade 10 students who falls in frustration level. This was an alarming result. It can be observed that students usually skip reading text assigned to them and just answer questions that fall in multiple choice item. Essay and deeper comprehension test were left behind when answering modules. Students were fun of mobile games, electronic materials and online streaming. There was a need to check the interest of students in terms of reading materials used. The fact that technology invaded the learners made the researcher look on the factor of reading materials used. With the cited local and foreign literature there is a need to conduct a study on the kinds of reading materials students are inclined, whether soft copy or hard copy. Its relation to reading achievement was determined.

Literature Review

For students to be able to learn other English skills, they must first master reading. A student who wants to be a good writer, for example, must be a good reader. Additionally, students must be able to read in order to communicate and receive information

(technology, science, sport, economic, business, news, etc).

The above knowledge is commonly conveyed through written materials such as books, newspapers, magazines, journals, advertisements, articles, blogs, social media, and short messages. Students must read well and effectively to gain a good understanding of the written materials above, as well as to gain good comprehension from the written materials above. Greenal and Michaels both emphasize the importance of good reading (2006). Effective reading, according to them, entails being able to read correctly and comprehend as much of the passage as is necessary to achieve your goal.

Soft copy

A soft copy (also written "softcopy") is an electronic copy of data, such as a file displayed on a computer screen or sent as an e-mail attachment. PDF, E-book, Word document, and so on. To purchase a new book, one must first go to the market and then look for it from store to store. However, with the aid of a variety of digital resources, modern technical innovation has made things a lot easier. Readers today spend a lot of time in front of windows, such as computers, smartphones, and tablets. With a single click, they will find all they're looking for in a matter of seconds.

There are a variety of reasons why softcopy is becoming increasingly popular. In the twenty-first century, reading on a tablet is more convenient than carrying a written book. In Europe, bookstores are being shuttered at an alarming rate. As a result, the planet will use less printed materials in the immediate future.

Hardcopy

A hard copy is described as a permanent reproduction, or copy, in the form of a physical object, of any medium suitable for direct use by an individual (in particular paper), of displayed or transmitted data, according to the US Federal Standard 1037C (Glossary of Telecommunication Terms). Teleprinter pages, continuous printed tapes, machine printouts, and radio picture prints are all examples of hard copy.

There was a time not long ago when people had no choice but to search for printed books. The only rich information gem of mankind's knowledge and cultural wealth at the time was the library. Now, the library is making a difference in its accessibility by allowing people to access it with just a single click. This is just a small example of how technology is affecting our reading habits.

The widespread use of computers, mobile phones, the internet, and numerous types of databases has provided solid opportunities for conventional libraries of various types to survive and evolve. Instead of scouring the shelves, we can place a firm reservation for a book we want online before picking it up in person.

This clinically saves a significant amount of time. Digital libraries also give their members the ability to borrow e-books and gain free access to their databases. As a result, libraries that refuse to adapt to new technologies risk becoming obsolete. At the same time, digitalization added a new dimension to classroom practices. Smart boards are taking the place of conventional blackboards, allowing for the use of interactive materials as well.

Physical books, pens, and paper are becoming less and less important. People also tend to bring tablets, cellphones, or computers instead of printed books and notebooks so they have access to hundreds of books while still being able to take notes at the same time. Furthermore, devices allow them to watch instructive videos that are extremely successful in helping them learn about their respective issues.

Aside from the education fields, advanced technology has an effect on free reading practices. According to Pew Research Center, the number of e-reader users in the United States increased to 28% in 2016 from 17% in 2011. Reading is a strategic as well as an indivisible and systematic mechanism (Sole, 2006). (Carlino, 2006). Reading, according to a number of scholars, is an essential method for knowledge transfer.

This study centered on a local environment of a public high school in Leyte, Philippines, using the literature cited. The use of soft copy and hard copy reading materials has received little research. This study would also look at the relationship between reading achievement and the materials used.

Theoretical Support

The key theory used was Durkin's (1992) Interactive Theory, which argued that reading is an active process in which the reader communicates with a variety of factors relevant to himself, the text being read, and the context in which the reading takes place in order to comprehend. This backed up the study because it clarifies how reading materials influence reading comprehension.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of the study. In this framework, it shows the target flow of the study which is to determine the relationship between reading materials and reading achievement.
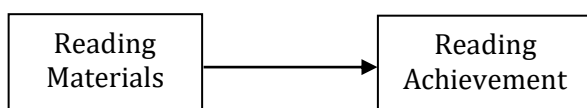

Figure 1. Reading Materials and Reading Achievement

Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following questions:
1. What reading materials are used by the students?
2. What is the reading achievement of the students?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the reading materials used and reading achievement of the respondents?

Methodology

Research design

A descriptive and correlational design was used in this research. Descriptive research is a form of research that focuses on describing the characteristics of the population or phenomenon under investigation. This approach emphasizes the "what" of the research topic rather than the "why" of the research topic (Bhat, 2018).

Descriptive and correlational studies look at variables in their normal settings and don't use interventions imposed by the study. Correlational studies use techniques like cross-tabulation and correlations to show the associations between variables. Ex post facto experiments are also known as correlational studies. This literally translates to "from after the case." The term is used to indicate that the study was carried out after the phenomenon of interest had naturally occurred (Simon and Goes, 2011).

Sampling

This used purposive sampling with 41 students as respondents. Purposive sampling were used because the class has the most number of frustration level students. The result of this study will be used for action research or intervention solely for that section which was selected.

Research instruments

Two instruments were used in gathering data. The first one is the Choice of Reading Materials which is a survey checklist which was researcher-made and validated by three experts in language, math, and research. The second was a standardized reading test called Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) used in DepEd schools which measure the reading achievement of the students.

Data analysis

The responses to the respondents' reading material preferences were tallied and represented using frequency and percentage.

The Phil-IRI findings were tallied and interpreted. The relationship between reading materials and reading achievement was determined using the Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient. All tests were performed at a 5% level of significance.

Ethical considerations

The participants in this study were chosen and briefed about the research process. To notify the parents or guardians that their children were participating in a research study, a letter was sent and parental consent was obtained. The researchers approached the school principal for permission to collect data and perform the analysis. Researchers sought permission from other researchers to use other instruments. The researchers conducted their study in an ethical manner.

Results and Discussion
Reading materials
Table 1. Choice of Reading Materials

Material	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Soft Copy	19	46.3
Hard Copy	22	53.7
Total	41	100.0

Table 1 shows that majority of the respondents used hard copy reading materials for the past 12 months. There were 22 respondents who used books, two who used magazines and one respondent used newspaper.

On the other hand, 19 respondents used soft copy materials which includes 12 of them used screenshots or pictures, five respondents used pdf and two used word file.

Reading achievement
Table 2. Reading Achievement

Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Non-Reader	1	2.4
Frustration	31	75.6
Instructional	5	12.2
Independent	4	9.8
Total	41	100.0

Table 2 shows that majority of the class were in frustration level which is 75. 6%. There was one non-reader. Independent readers were four and Instructional were five.

Relationship between Reading Materials and Reading Achievement
Table 3. Relationship of Variables

Variables	cc	p-value
Reading Materials Reading Achievement	-0.572	0.001

*Significant at p<0.05

Results revealed in Table 3 that there was a significant negative relationship between choice of reading materials and reading achievement. This suggests that the use of soft copies as reading material is correlated to high reading achievement.

Conclusion
The results of the study enabled the researcher to arrive at the following significant findings and conclusions.

1. Majority of the respondents used hard copy reading materials for the past 12 months. There were 22 respondents who used books, 2 who used magazines and 1 respondent used newspaper. There were 19 respondents used soft copy materials which include 12 of them used screenshots or pictures, five respondents used pdf and two used word file.
2. Majority of the class were in frustration level which is 75. 6%. There was one non-reader. Independent readers were four and instructional were five.
3. There was a significant negative relationship between choice of reading materials and reading achievement. This suggests that the use of soft copies as reading material is correlated to high reading achievement.
4.

Recommendations
1. Teachers need to design interactive reading materials using the 21st Century technologies like soft copies reading materials which can be handy and can be accessed anytime and anywhere using mobile phones.
2. Reading intervention using technology-based materials may be designed to improve reading achievement of the students.
3. Schools may introduce e-library which introduces various materials that can be accessed and read in soft copy format. This will also be beneficial to distance learning modality.

References
Bhat, A. (2018). Descriptive research:*Definition,characteristics, methods, examples and advantages*. Retrieved from https://www.questionpro.com/descriptive-research/

Chiang, C. N. (2016). Reading Habits, *Language Learning Achievement and Principles for Deep Knowledge*. Linguistics and Literature Studies, 204-208. DOI:10.13189/lls.2016.040304

Department of Education (2018). Philippine Informal Reading Inventory

Department of Education (2019). DM 173, 3B: Bawat Bata Bumabasa

Islam, N. (2019). Choice of Reading Tools: *Hardcopy or Softcopy retrieved* from DOI: 10.32996/ijllt.2019.2.6.4

Picton, I. (2014). National Literacy Trust: *The Impact of ebooks on the reading motivation and Reading Skills of Children and Young Peopl*e.