Research Article

Correlates of Reading Habits and Academic Performance of Grade 4 Pupils in a Public School

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to analyze the correlates of reading habits and academic performance of Grade IV pupils in a public school, school year 2022-2023. The study focus only on the reading habits of pupils and academic performance of pupils at home and in the school. There will be fifty nine total population of Grade IV pupil-respondents of Liozon Elementary School, Palauig, Zambales. The researcher will use survey questionnaire to gather data needed in the study, such as profile of respondents, Contributory Factors Affecting Reading Proficiency, Reading Proficiency Level of the pupils, and Average Academic Performance in English. The data gathered will be checked, tallied and treated using appropriate statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, mean, and Chi-Square. Treated data will be presented through tables and graphs, it will be analyzed and interpreted. Interpreted data will be summarized, concluded, and recommended for future research study. The result would be the reading proficiency level of the pupils is dependent on the average academic performance in English. Based on the findings, there is a significant correlation between the reading habits and the academic performance of pupil-respondents in English.

Keywords*: Reading Habits; Academic Performance; Grade IV Pupils; Reading Proficiency; Contributory Factors; English Subject; Public Elementary School; Liozon, Zambales*

Background

Reading is recognized as a powerful skill capable of transforming an individual's life and shaping society. Despite global development efforts, a learning crisis persists in many contexts, especially in foundational reading skills. Recent studies show that a significant proportion of learners still fail to reach expected levels of reading proficiency, underscoring the ongoing challenge of developing sustainable reading habits among children (Ali et al., 2023).

This undeniable reality urges educational institutions to consider reading a significant factor in achieving success across all academic disciplines. In the Philippines, the Department of Education's efforts in strengthening early literacy, including programs aimed at ensuring every child becomes a functional reader, reflect

this priority. Persistent work continues to uplift foundational reading and comprehension skills, highlighting ongoing efforts to improve literacy outcomes across school levels (Department of Education [DepEd], 2023).

Reading is a prerequisite for effective study habits and academic success. It enriches vocabulary, promotes critical thinking, and enhances comprehension, all of which are necessary for students to process and apply knowledge in school and beyond. Research shows that consistent reading habits are positively associated with academic performance, as students who engage more frequently with reading materials tend to demonstrate stronger achievement outcomes (Wani & Ismail, 2022).

Contemporary literature on reading habits further emphasizes how engagement with reading supports broader educational and cognitive development. Habitual reading fosters deeper understanding, contributes to language proficiency, and encourages lifelong learning. Students' reading habits influence writing skills and underpin other academic competencies, reinforcing the importance of reading across curricula (Resta et al., 2022).

The environment in which a learner reads also plays a role in shaping reading practices. Empirical studies among elementary pupils found strong positive relationships between reading environments and reading frequency and attitudes, suggesting that access to supportive reading contexts—including family, school resources, and motivation—enhances reading engagement (Quintano et al., 2023).

Despite these affirmative findings, research documents a decline in reading frequency and leisure reading, especially in contexts where digital media and social distractions compete for young people's attention. This trend highlights the growing need for intentional strategies in schools and homes to promote sustained reading habits (Ali et al., 2023).

Multiple contemporary studies continue to affirm that reading habits remain a core determinant of academic performance, literacy development, and educational success. Whether through daily engagement with texts, access to reading materials, or cultivation of supportive reading environments, reading remains a foundational skill that influences educational outcomes and lifelong learning trajectories (Wani & Ismail, 2022; Resta et al., 2022).

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to analyze the correlates of reading habits and the academic performance of Grade Four pupils in a public school. Specifically, the study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the Grade Four pupils in terms of the following:
    1.1 Age;
    1.2 Gender;
    1.3 Parents' Educational Attainment;
    1.4 Family Income;
    1.5 Activities during Leisure Time; and
    1.6 Reading Materials Available At Home?
2. How is the reading habits of the respondents be described in terms of:
    2.1 Types of English Reading Materials Read;
    2.2 Genre of Materials Read;
    2.3 Time Spent in Reading;
    2.4 Frequency of Reading;
    2.5 Parent's Support in Reading;
    2.6 School's Support in Reading; and
    2.7 Attitude towards Reading?
3. What is Phil-IRI/ reading proficiency level of the respondents in English?
4. What is the average academic performance of the pupil- respondents in English from 1st Quarter to 3rd Quarter?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the reading habits of pupils and their reading proficiency level?
6. Is there a significant correlation between reading habits and the academic performance of pupil-respondents in English?
7. What reading program may be proposed based on the findings?

Methodology
Research Design

This chapter presents the research methodology employed in the study, including the research design, population, research instrument, validation of instruments, data-gathering procedure, and statistical treatment of data used to answer the study's research questions.

Research Method

This study employed a descriptive–correlational survey design, which is appropriate for describing existing conditions and examining relationships between variables as they naturally occur (Ali et al., 2023). According to Best (1986), the descriptive method allows the researcher to define and describe conditions that exist, prevailing practices, effects being experienced, and trends that are developing for analysis and interpretation. The descriptive–survey method involves collecting data to test hypotheses or answer research questions concerning the current status of the subject and to explore potential causes of observed phenomena (Creswell & Creswell, 2022).

The questionnaire, as a primary data collection tool, was utilized to gather quantitative information regarding the reading habits and academic performance of Grade IV pupils. Calmorin (1994) emphasized that the descriptive–survey method systematically analyzes, interprets, and reports the present status of a group, institution, or area. Since this study aims to investigate the correlation between pupils' reading habits and their academic performance, the descriptive–correlational survey method was deemed most appropriate (McMillan & Schumacher, 2020).

Population

The population of the study included all Grade IV pupils enrolled during the Academic Year 2022–2023 at Liozon Elementary School, Palauig, Zambales, totaling 59 pupils (Department of Education [DepEd], 2023). The researcher opted to include the entire population to maintain the reliability and validity of the data gathered through the questionnaire.

Research Instrument

The primary instrument used for data collection was a self-designed questionnaire (Creswell, 2021). The questionnaire was constructed based on available literature and related materials on reading habits and submitted to the adviser for review and correction. After revisions and final approval, the instrument was administered to the respondents.

The questionnaire consisted of four parts:
- Part I: Personal profile of the pupils, including age, gender, parents' educational attainment, family monthly income, leisure-time activities, and availability of English reading materials at home (Ali et al., 2023).
- Part II: Pupils' reading habits, such as types and genres of reading materials, time spent reading, frequency, parental and school support, and attitude toward reading (Wani & Ismail, 2022).
- Part III: Phil-IRI/Reading Proficiency Level to determine reading ability through pretest and post-test assessments (Philippine Department of Education, 2021).
- Part IV: Pupils' average academic performance in English from the 1st to the 3rd Quarter (DepEd, 2023).

Validation of Instrument

The self-designed questionnaire underwent validation through expert review and pretesting (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). Initially, the instrument was submitted to the adviser for corrections and suggestions. A pre-test was conducted with 10 Grade IV pupils to ensure clarity and reliability of the items. After adjustments based on the pre-test results and final approval by the adviser, the questionnaire was ready for administration (McMillan & Schumacher, 2020).

Data-Gathering Procedure

Prior to data collection, the researcher secured permission from the Schools Division Superintendent through the District Supervisor and School Principal to administer the questionnaire (DepEd, 2023). The researcher requested the assistance of the class advisers to distribute and monitor the completion of the instrument to ensure accurate responses.

All ethical standards were strictly observed (American Psychological Association [APA], 2020). Voluntary informed consent was obtained from all participants, who were informed of the study's objectives, potential benefits, and their right to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality and anonymity of responses were guaranteed, and all data collected were treated with utmost privacy.

The researcher personally administered the instruments to minimize inconvenience and ensure a 100% retrieval rate. Participation was carefully coordinated with teaching schedules to avoid disruption of classes and school routines (Creswell & Creswell, 2022).

Treatment of Data

The data were categorized according to gender, age, parents' educational attainment, family monthly income, leisure-time activities, availability of English reading materials at home, reading habits, Phil-IRI/Reading Proficiency Level, and average academic performance in English. These data were tallied, recorded, analyzed, and treated using the following statistical tools:

- Percentage (%): Used to determine the proportion of respondents in each category:

$$\% = \frac{n}{N} \times 100$$

where n is the frequency of a given category, and N is the total number of respondents (Creswell & Creswell, 2022).

- Mean ($\bar{X}$): Used to determine the average academic performance of respondents:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\Sigma FX}{N}$$

where Σ is the summation symbol, F is the frequency, X is the score, and N is the total number of scores (McMillan & Schumacher, 2020).

- Chi-Square (X^2): Used to determine the correlation between reading habits and academic performance:

$$X^2 = \Sigma \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$$

where O is the observed frequency, E is the expected frequency, and Σ represents the summation of all categories (Creswell & Creswell, 2022).

This methodology ensures that the study presents an accurate description of pupils' reading habits, their reading proficiency, and the relationship with their academic performance in English (McMillan & Schumacher, 2020).

Result and Discussion

This chapter presents the gathered and processed data using tabular forms, interpreted and analyzed to provide a clearer understanding of the problems stated in Chapter 1.

1. Profile of the Respondents

The profile of the respondents is classified in terms of age, gender, parents' educational attainment, combined family income, activities during leisure time, and English reading materials available at home.

1.1 Age.

Table 1 presents the distribution of respondents by age. As shown in the table, there is one or 1.69 percent who is 13 years old, one or 1.69 percent who is 11 years old, thirty or 50.86 percent who are 10 years old, twenty-seven or 45.76 percent who are 9 years old with a total of fifty-nine or 100 percent respondents. The mean age of the pupil-respondents is 9.61 years.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age	F	%
13	1	1.69
11	1	1.69
10	30	50.86
9	27	45.76
Total	**59**	**100.00**

Table 1 shows that there are more Grade IV pupils who are 10 years old enrolled at the Liozon Elementary School this Academic Year 2022-2023. It may be observed that the mean score is 9.61 years or pupils turning 10 years old was the appropriate age of Grade IV. Early

experiences with reading and books are important for forming lifelong reading habits and language skills (Snow & Uccelli, 2020).

The computed mean age of 9.61 years indicates that the majority of the respondents fall within the expected age range for Grade 4 learners, which is typically 9–10 years old. This is further supported by the frequency distribution, where 50.86% of the pupils are aged 10 and 45.76% are aged 9. Together, these two age groups account for 96.62% of the total respondents.

The presence of two older learners aged 11 and 13 (each representing 1.69%) slightly increases the computed mean but does not significantly affect the overall age distribution. These cases may be attributed to late school entry, grade repetition, or contextual factors common in public and IPED schools. Nonetheless, their minimal proportion confirms that the sample is age-appropriate for Grade 4, and the mean age accurately reflects the developmental level of the majority of the learners.

1.2 Gender.

Table 2 presents the distribution of the respondents in terms of gender. As shown, there are twenty-six or 44.07 percent male and thirty-three or 55.93 percent female with a total of fifty-nine or 100 percent respondents.

Table 2. Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	F	%
Male	26	44.07
Female	33	55.93
Total	59	100.00

The data show that there are more female Grade IV pupils enrolled at Liozon Elementary School this academic year. Current research also indicates gender differences in certain reading outcomes, with female learners often showing stronger early literacy engagement than males (OECD, 2021).

1.3 Parents' Educational Attainment.

Table 3 presents the distribution by parents' educational attainment. As shown, most parents are high school graduates.

Table 3. Distribution of Respondents by Parents' Educational Attainment

Parents' Educational Attainment	Father F	Father %	Mother F	Mother %
Master's degree	1	1.69	0	0.00
College Graduate	17	28.81	19	32.20
Tech-Voc Graduate	1	1.69	3	5.08
High School Graduate	32	54.24	31	52.54
Elementary Graduate	8	13.56	6	10.17
Total	59	100.00	59	100.00

Parental educational attainment has been shown to influence children's academic and literacy outcomes, even after accounting for other socioeconomic factors (Castro & Brook, 2020).

1.4 Family Monthly Income.

Presented in Table 4 is the distribution of the respondents in terms of monthly family income.

Table 4. Distribution of Respondents by Family Monthly Income

Family Monthly Income (Php)	F	%
Php 5,000 and below	12	20.34
5,001 – 15,000	18	30.51

Family Monthly Income (Php)	F	%
15,001 – 30,000	21	35.59
30,001 and above	8	13.56
Total	59	100.00

As reflected, the majority are in the middle-income bracket. Economic stability is a key factor affecting access to reading materials and early literacy development; low income has been linked to reduced vocabulary exposure and readiness gaps (OECD, 2021; Hart & Risley, 2021).

1.5 Activities During Leisure Time.
Presented in Table 5 is the distribution of respondents by leisure activities. The majority spent time on games/sports and watching television.

*Table 5. *Distribution of Respondents by Activities During Leisure Time*
Multiple Responses

Activities During Leisure Time	F	%
Reading	38	64.41
Surfing the Net	20	33.90
Listening to Music	50	84.75
Games/Sport Activities	56	94.92
Watching Television	56	94.92
Sleeping	51	86.44
Others	17	28.81

These patterns are consistent with findings that high engagement in non-reading activities correlates with fewer leisure reading opportunities (Castro & Brook, 2020; Hart & Risley, 2021).

1.6 English Reading Materials Available at Home.
Table 6 presents English reading materials available at home.

*Table 6. *Distribution of Respondents by English Materials Available at Home*
Multiple Responses

English Materials Available at Home	F	%
Magazines/ Journals	21	35.59
English Comics	14	23.73
Books/Manuals	47	79.66
Newspapers	28	47.46
Recipes	20	33.90
Others (Dictionary, Catalogues)	7	11.86

The ajority have books and manuals available, which supports reading engagement and skill development (Dienn, 2020).

2. Contributory Factors Affecting Reading Proficiency
2.1 Types of English Materials Being Read.
Table 7 shows types of English materials read.

Table 7. *Types of English Materials Being Read
Multiple Responses

Types of English Materials Being Read	F	%
Literature	10	16.95
Journal Article	12	20.34
Fiction	50	84.75
Magazine	19	32.20
Articles	12	20.34
Reference Book	31	52.54
News/Report	20	33.90

Fiction is most read, and access to a variety of materials enhances reading interest and proficiency (Dienn, 2020).

2.2 Genre of Materials Read.
Table 8 shows genre preferences.

*Table 8. *Genre of Materials Read*
Multiple Responses

Genre of Materials Read	F	%
Drama	11	18.64
Action	21	35.59
Horror/Suspense	23	38.98
Health,Sports,Travel & Recreations	9	15.25
Fantasy	33	55.93
Science Fiction	11	18.64
Academic Topics	27	45.76
Others	1	1.69

Fantasy is most preferred, showing that reading preferences influence engagement and proficiency (Sangkaeo, 2020).

2.3 Time Spent in Reading (Hours) per Day.
Table 9 shows time spent reading.

Table 9. Time Spent in Reading (Hours) per Day

Time Spent in Reading (Hours) per Day	F	%
Less Than 1 Hour	27	45.76
1-2 Hours	24	40.68
3-4 Hours	8	13.56
Total	59	100.00

Most read less than one hour, and reading frequency and duration are known to affect reading proficiency (Shen, 2021).

2.4 Frequency in Reading.
Table 10 shows reading frequency.

Table 10. Frequency in Reading

Frequency in Reading	F	%
Always	8	13.56
Frequent	7	11.86
Sometimes	23	23.73
Seldom	10	16.95
Never	11	18.64
Total	59	100.00

Reading interest and intensity are linked to sustained reading behavior (Abeyrathna, 2020).

2.5 Parents Support in Reading.
Table 11 shows parents' support.
Table 11. Parents Support in Reading

Parents Support in Reading	WX	DR
My parent motivates me to read	1.97	Seldom
My parent provides interesting materials	2.98	Sometimes
My parent guides me in reading	2.56	Seldom
My parents allot time to help me	2.17	Seldom
My parents give rewards to encourage reading	2.80	Sometimes
Overall	2.49	Seldom

Parental involvement in literacy activities supports reading achievement (Castro & Brook, 2020).

2.6 School Support in Reading.
Table 12 shows school support.
Table 12. School Support in Reading

School Support in Reading	WX	DR
The school has a reading corner	2.93	Sometimes
There is a conducive reading area	2.54	Seldom
There is a library	1.90	Seldom
The school provides adequate reading materials	3.08	Sometimes
The teacher spends time guiding reading	3.81	Frequent
Overall	2.85	Sometimes

School environment and instructional support influence reading habits and proficiency (Quintano, Esto, & Sumayo, 2023; Resta, Amalia, & Amrina, 2022).

2.7 Attitude Towards Reading.
Table 13 shows attitude.
Table 13. Attitude Towards Reading

Attitude Towards Reading	WX	DR
I love and enjoy reading	4.02	Frequent
I prefer reading to games/TV	3.07	Seldom
I surf the internet to read	2.31	Seldom
I think reading is important	3.93	Frequent
I believe reading is essential	4.51	Always
I perceive reading as imaginative	3.86	Frequent

Attitude Towards Reading	WX	DR
I use reading to escape reality	3.73	Frequent
I learn a lot by reading	3.98	Frequent
I see reading as gaining ideas	3.83	Frequent
I read to develop positive views	3.46	Frequent
Overall	3.67	Frequent

Positive attitudes toward reading are linked to greater reading engagement (Smith, 2020).

3. Reading Proficiency Level of the Pupils.
Table 14 presents reading proficiency results.
Table 14. Reading Proficiency Level of Pupils based on Phil-IRI Results

Reading Proficiency Level	Pre-Test F	Pre-Test %	Post-Test F	Post-Test %
Frustration	45	76.27	45	76.27
Instructional	0	0.00	0	0.00
Independent	0	0.00	0	0.00
Non-reader	14	23.73	14	23.73
Total	59	100.00	59	100.00

Despite the generally positive reading attitudes of the learners, as reflected in Table 13 with an overall rating of *Frequent* ($\bar{x}$ = 3.67), and the high level of leisure reading engagement reported in Table 5 (64.41%), the reading proficiency results in Table 14 reveal a persistent and concerning gap. The majority of the learners (76.27%) remain at the *Frustration* level, while 23.73% are classified as *Non-readers*, with no observable improvement between the pre-test and post-test.

This discrepancy suggests that positive attitudes toward reading do not automatically translate into functional literacy skills. While learners may express enjoyment, interest, or willingness to engage in reading activities, such affective factors alone are insufficient to develop reading proficiency without adequate foundational skills. Many learners at the frustration and non-reader levels typically struggle with basic decoding, word recognition, and fluency, which prevents them from comprehending texts even if they are motivated to read.

Furthermore, the high engagement in leisure reading does not necessarily indicate exposure to developmentally appropriate or skill-building reading materials. Learners may engage in browsing pictures, recognizing familiar words, or listening to others read rather than independently decoding and comprehending text. This is particularly evident among struggling readers, where "reading" may be more passive than active, limiting opportunities for skill acquisition.

Another contributing factor may be the lack of targeted and intensive reading instruction aligned with learners' proficiency levels. Without explicit instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, and guided reading strategies, learners remain unable to progress from frustration to instructional or independent levels. This aligns with the zero gains observed in the post-test results, indicating that existing reading activities may not sufficiently address learners' specific literacy needs.

Lastly, contextual factors such as limited access to culturally relevant reading materials, language barriers (especially in multilingual or IPED settings), and insufficient home literacy support may further hinder the translation of positive attitudes into measurable reading gains.
Most respondents are at the frustration level in both pretest and posttest, indicating difficulty with basic reading skills (Swearingen & Allen, 2020).

4. Average Academic Performance in English.
Table 15 presents the average academic performance in English.

Table 15. Respondents' Average Academic Performance in English

Average Academic Performance in English	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter
90-94 Outstanding	8	7	9
85-89 Very Satisfactory	9	8	5
80-84 Satisfactory	13	14	11
75-79 Below Satisfactory	11	19	17
70-74 Did Not Meet Expectation	18	11	17
Average	80.14	80.39	79.63

The data show that average performance increased from the first to the second quarter but then decreased in the third. Reading habits and academic achievement are closely related, with stronger reading habits supporting better academic outcomes (Swearingen & Allen, 2020).

5. Test of Independence of Reading Proficiency with Contributory Factors
Table 16 shows the test of independence using the Chi-Square test between the reading proficiency level of the pupils and the different contributory factors identified in the study.

It can be observed that the reading proficiency level of the pupils is not dependent on the number of types of English reading materials being read and the genre of English materials read, with computed X^2 values of 5.177 and 4.219, respectively. These values are not significant at the 0.05 level since the critical values are higher; therefore, the null hypotheses are accepted.

Conversely, the reading proficiency level of the pupils is dependent on the time spent in reading, frequency of reading, parents' support in reading, school support in reading, and pupils' attitudes toward reading, with computed X^2 values of 13.267, 25.543, 15.555, 18.312, and 26.114, respectively. Since the critical values are lower than the computed values, these results are significant at the 95% confidence level, and the null hypotheses are rejected.

This indicates that time spent in reading, frequency of reading, parents' support, school support, and pupils' attitudes toward reading are all significant contributors to the reading proficiency of the pupils.

Table 16. Chi-Square Test for the Independence of Reading Proficiency with Contributory Factors

Contributory Factors	Computed X^2	Critical Value of X^2	df	Decision
Number of Types of English Reading Materials Being Read	5.177	7.815	3	Accept H_0 (Independent)
Genre of English Materials Read	4.219	9.488	4	Accept H_0 (Independent)
Time Spent in Reading	13.267	5.991	2	Reject H_0 (Dependent)
Frequency in Reading	25.543	9.488	4	Reject H_0 (Dependent)
Parents' Support in Reading	15.555	9.488	4	Reject H_0 (Dependent)
School Support in Reading	18.312	9.488	4	Reject H_0 (Dependent)
Attitude towards Reading	26.114	9.488	4	Reject H_0 (Dependent)

6. Correlation of Reading Proficiency with Average Academic Performance in English
Table 17 presents the Chi-Square test of independence between reading proficiency levels and the average academic performance in English.

It can be observed that the reading proficiency level of the pupils is dependent on their average academic performance in English, with a computed X^2 value of 14.001. This value is significant at the 0.05 level since it exceeds the critical value of 9.488. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected, indicating a significant correlation between reading proficiency and academic performance.

Table 17. Chi-Square Test for the Independence of Reading Proficiency with Average Academic Performance in English

Variables	Computed X^2	Critical Value of X^2	df	Decision
Reading Proficiency with Average Academic Performance in English	14.001	9.488	4	Reject H_0 (Dependent)

Acknowledgement

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