

# Motivation and Comprehension in Reading of Senior High School Students

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## Abstract

*This study determined the profile, levels of motivation and comprehension in reading of Senior High School students in Paniqui, Tarlac for the School Year 2019 - 2020. It established the significant relationship between the respondents' levels of motivation and reading comprehension skills and the significant difference between the levels of motivation across the profile of the respondents. Employing the descriptive cross-sectional correlational method of research, the study involved fifty nine (59) Grade 11 Senior High Schools in Balaoang National High School, Paniqui, Tarlac. Data gathered were analyzed using frequency counts and the corresponding percentages, weighted mean, mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis, Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, and Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA). Findings indicate that the respondents are broadly 16 to 17 years old, female, performed fairly or very satisfactorily in reading, speak Filipino or Tagalog, had a wide variety of reading materials used by the students but prefer reading through online sources, and did not have knowledge on the monthly income of their families or belonged to averagely earning families. While they were highly motivated intrinsically, they are moderately motivated extrinsically in reading. The Grade 11 students demonstrated above average reading comprehension skills. Intrinsic motivation in all of its facets had moderate relationship to the students' reading comprehension skills. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is weakly linked to the students' level of reading comprehension skills. The students' perceptions in reading efficacy and topics aesthetically enjoyed significantly differ as mediated by GPA in reading. Their perceptions also significantly differ in competition in reading when their sex and GPA in reading are considered. Among others, it was recommended that English teachers may consider extrinsic motivation as a starting point in encouraging the students to read. Merits such as Best in Reading and Little Teacher Awards may be given to students periodically after evaluating their performance in the activities during their reading-related tasks.*

**Key Words** - motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, reading comprehension, senior high school students

## INTRODUCTION

The ability to read and make meaning of what is read is perhaps one of the greatest accomplishment students can achieve from any educational activity. Learning to read, albeit the challenges or difficulties it may entail, is not a stand-alone miracle that is built in a day. Authentically engaged, students have to have for themselves a feeling of liking, fondness, or desire every teacher calls motivation. As a student, hooked by interest, may finish a season of his favorite television series in one sitting, a driven learner may equally have the desire to read an entire essay of a subject that sparkles his curiosity and inquisitiveness.

Generally regarded as playing a critical role in learning, motivation frequently severalizes learning that is superficial and shallow from learning that is deep and internalized. Knowledgeable of the significance and potent influence that motivation plays in literacy learning, teachers are more interested than ever before in understanding the relationships that exist between motivation and achievement and in learning how to help all students achieve the goal of becoming effective, lifelong readers.

For many people, the pleasure gained from reading is its own reward. For children and young adults, the rewards of reading widely move far beyond pleasure. Being an active, engaged reader is a powerful support to other learning and to the development of students' literacy skills. Literacy and numeracy skills provide the foundation for lifelong learning, rewarding and satisfying work, and a fulfilling personal life. Being literate and numerate are critical factors in improving students' ability to learn at all stages of schooling and are essential skills for accessing opportunities beyond school.

Research shows that to improve student reading literacy, schools need to increase student engagement with reading as well as develop their cognitive skills. Developing student engagement with reading is an important aspect of curriculum planning and provision for literacy. Strategies, events and activities that increase student interest in and engagement with reading are appropriate across all areas of the curriculum.

Reading is an important skill for English language learners in today's world. It supports the development of overall proficiency and provides access to crucial information at work and in school. With English being the dominant language of the internet, international business, and academia (including science), beginning and advanced students alike face pressures to develop their second language (L2) reading abilities. The acquisition of reading skills, however, is never easy, and students need consistent practice to become

fluent readers. Successful readers have to solve many puzzles, such as learning to recognize unfamiliar letters, words, syntax, and discourse patterns. Morrow and Weinstein [1] carried out a study on primary-grade children and found out that very few of the children choose to look at books during their free time. They believe that children do not spend enough time reading and that they rather do other activities in their spare time. Thus, it is important for educators to motivate their students to read because many students are at risk of reading failure due to their lack of motivation. In addition, reading is closely related to writing competence, students who do not read in their free time often face problems during their writing assignments and thus many perform poorly in writing test.

Teaching children to read for the sake of literacy learning is not an adequate goal. The goal should be for teachers to teach their children to value reading so that they will read for various purposes such as for information as well as for pleasure.

The experiences of the researcher, being an English teacher, saw students who have different reading problems - from oral to silent. As a matter of fact, there are still senior high school students who have hard time mastering oral reading fluency. Reading comprehension is also a perennial problem of students that generally affect their reading habits and academic performance.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This study attempted to determine the profile, levels of motivation and comprehension in reading of Senior High School students in Paniqui, Tarlac for the School Year 2019 - 2020. Specifically, this research sought answers the following questions. The profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, Grade Point Average (GPA) in Reading, mother tongue, reading materials read, and monthly family income. The levels of the respondents' reading motivation in terms of Intrinsic and Extrinsic. The level of reading comprehension of the Senior High School students. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' levels of motivation and reading comprehension. And if there's any significant difference between the levels of motivation across the profile of the respondents.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

A descriptive cross-sectional correlational method of research was utilized in this study. The descriptive method was used in describing the levels of the Senior High School

students' reading comprehension and level of motivation. A descriptive research describes the characteristics of the population or phenomenon that is being studied. This methodology focuses more on the "what" of the research subject rather than the "why" of the research subject (Bhat, 2019). The study involved a total of fifty nine (59) Grade 11 Senior High Schools, enrolled in two (2) sections in Balaoang National High School, Paniqui, Tarlac, during the school year 2019-2020.

Questionnaire served as the main data gathering tool to be used in this study designed and adapted by the researcher and checked by experts in research, education and language education or curriculum. The researcher adopted the 50-item reading comprehension skill test developed by Capinpin [2]. Said was objective in type and each item has four (4) choices. Passages and excerpts from texts were taken followed by a group of questions which aim to measure specific reading skills. The tool was piloted by Capinpin[2] prior to use with Grade 10 students in Cluster II, Schools Division of Tarlac Province.

Total enumeration of all the 59 Grade 11 Senior High Schools, enrolled in two (2) sections in Balaoang National High School was employed in the present study. With the signed letter of request, the researcher personally administered the reading test and questionnaire to the target respondents. The directions in accomplishing the questionnaires were amply explained to the students, and that classes were not disturbed was ensured. The researcher also personally administered the 50-item reading test to the target respondents.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The data which were gathered, analyzed and interpreted. The presentation, analysis, and interpretation followed the sequential order of the problems stated. Moreover, the data were presented in tables and graphs showing the profile of the Grade 11 students, namely: academic performance in English and available reading materials at home. It also includes the performance of Grade 11 students in identifying morphological and syntactical errors and the relationship between the students' profile variables and performance of the students in identifying morphological and syntactical errors.

### **PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS**

The profile of the Grade 11 students was described in terms of their age sex, GPA in reading, mother tongue, reading materials, and monthly income of their parents or families. It

could surmised from the data on table 2 that majority of the students clustered within ages 16 to 17 years old (45 or 76.27%). Meanwhile, 9 (nine) or 15.25% are aged 18 to 19 years old while only 1 (one) of them is 20 years old or above. The prevalence of students aged from 16 to 17 years old is supported by the findings of Sioco [3] who found out that students vary in terms of age ranging from 12 to 19 years old. This age range is corroborated by the fact that these are the usual ages of students in Grade 11 in Balaoang National High School.

The dispersion of the students in terms of sex points out that more than half of them (33 or 55.93%) are female and the remaining (26 or 44.07%) are male. The data shows a close balance of male and female in the research population. In contrast, Sioco [3] documented a slight leverage in number of male students over the female ones.

To describe the Grade Point Average of the students in reading, their final grades in the subject Reading and Writing was considered. Their GPAs were interpreted using Baguia and Moneva's[4] scale on students' academic performance. Majority of the students earned "fair" and "very satisfactory" performances. As to the students' mother tongue, majority of them used "Filipino/Tagalog" (35 or 59.32%) and the rest spoke in Ilokano (24 or 40.68%). These show that given that the students rather speak Ilokano because barangay Balaoang, Paniqui broadly speaks said dialect, majority of them prefer speaking in Tagalog.

There were a wide variety of reading materials used by the students. Notably, more than half of them declared that they read through online sources (36 or 61.02%). In support of this, Sioco [3] reported 51.4% of her respondents as having access to online reading materials although majority resorted to textbooks, newspapers, and magazines. It could be gleaned from the data that most of the Grade 11 students did not respond to the item on their family's monthly income (36 or 61.02%). This indicates that majority of the Grade 11 students did not have definite knowledge of the financial status of their families as maybe indicated by the occupations of their parents or employments of their working siblings. To validate this information, the researcher conducted short interviews with the concerned students and found out that majority belong to the family which are into farming or part-time jobs, thus no definite amount of income per month.

## **LEVELS OF THE RESPONDENTS' READING MOTIVATION**

Intrinsic motivation is tantamount to inherent satisfaction. In the context of reading, this may include efficacy, challenge, curiosity, and topics aesthetically enjoyed. The level of reading efficacy of the Grade 11 students, as per their self-report, was generally "moderate"

(3.35). Asriati et al [5] had similar discernment, concluding that majority of the students' self-efficacy on reading were in good level thereafter stating that the students' self-efficacy on reading motivation was good.

In all of the remaining indicators, majority of them were moderately motivated by their knowledge that they will do well in reading in the following year (22 or 37.29%). Summing up, the students believed that they had moderate motivation as to reading efficacy. This might generally suggest that given having assessed themselves in an average level, students understood that they still can make the transition from their current level to being excellent readers.

A broadly "moderate" level of intrinsic motivation as to reading challenge was self-reported by the Grade 11 students (3.39). This might mean that the students are moderately motivated by the challenges they experience while reading. This might mean that the students are moderately motivated by the challenges they experience while reading. Dakhi and Damanik [6] acceded, revealing from their findings that averagely, 83.00% of the respondents are in line with the concept that challenge, though lower than curiosity, functions as an additional factor of reading. Reading Curiosity. Data suggest that the students have largely "high" self-reported level in reading curiosity (3.65).

It might therefore be surmised that the Grade 11 students are highly curious, leading them to read. This finding are supported Dakhi and Damanik's [6] in their study on the reasons for the student's motivation in reading English text. They revealed that reading curiosity is the highest domain of the students' motivation.

Extrinsic motivation is a type of motivation is usually driven by external rewards which could be money, fame, grades, and praise. The level of the Grade 11 students' reading motivation as to extrinsic factors was described along recognition, social reasons, and competition.

Competition in reading, as shown on the table, was "moderately" motivating the students (2.93). In a considerable extent, the findings of Dakhi and Damanik [6] support present data. According to the authors, 60.56% of the students positively that competition is a causal extrinsic factor in reading motivation.

To further underscore the relevance of competition as a facet of extrinsic motivation for reading, it is noteworthy that Turner (2017) cited Wigfield & Guthrie and Wigfield [7] who contested that performance goals are often reflected in the form of recognition, grades, or competition and may significantly influence a pupil's motivation for reading.

In addition, Collins & Matthey [8] earlier reckoned the hope that they will lead to intrinsic motivation is a fundamental foundation of extrinsic motivators. In the parlance of Balaoang High School, in an attempt to motivate students to become good readers, teachers and heads have introduced extrinsic incentive programs in the different extra-curricular activities with the hope of self-motivation in mind.

### **LEVEL OF READING COMPREHENSION OF THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

The level of the students' reading comprehension was described in the context of a 50-item reading comprehension test administered by the researcher to the the Grade 11 learners. Processed reading comprehension test scores as presented in Table 5 indicate that the Grade 11 students averaged 32.458 which when expressed in percentage results to 64.916%. Adhering to Salingay and Tan's [9] scale, this suggests that the students had "above average" reading comprehension. However, the table further reveals that 3 or 5.08% of the students had actually scored "above average" scores with 61%-80% of correct answers.

Findings presented above are corroborated by Lingan and Malana's [10] current report on the reading comprehension of senior students in Cagayan. The senior students displayed very satisfactory performance in the literal dimension skills across all types of schools. However, the part of their report which claimed that the students scored poorly in the inferential, critical, creative and valuing-application dimension skills cannot support the entirety of the present study's findings on reading comprehension such that the latter did not look into the levels of reading skills.

### **SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE RESPONDENTS' LEVELS OF MOTIVATION AND READING COMPREHENSION**

To establish the relationship between the Grade 11 students' levels of reading motivation and reading comprehension. Results of the computation of the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient signal that "moderate" or "substantial" relationships exist between the levels of intrinsic motivation and reading comprehension of the students (reading efficacy,  $r=.479^{**}$ ;  $p=.000$ ; reading challenge,  $r=.479^{**}$ ;  $p=.000$ ; reading curiosity,  $r=.516^{**}$ ;  $p=.000$ ; and reading topics aesthetically enjoyed,  $r=.401^{**}$ ;  $p=.002$ ). In synthesis of the above findings, the while the Grade 11 students see themselves as being motivated by being moderately efficacious and challenged, and exceedingly curious and get to read topics they aesthetically enjoy, they also register above average reading comprehension.

In addition, findings might be reinforced by Ahmadi [11] who regarded intrinsic

motivation as the abilities that stem from within the students which cause them to act or learn, say self-concept, self-respect, self-confidence, and emotional needs.

Due to their self-motivation, they moderately went beyond the requirements of the academic texts assigned to them because they are looking for learning about the subject not just performing a restricted number of reading tasks. They likely studied more, possessing high curiosity and aesthetic enjoyment of what they read, albeit being moderately efficacious and challenged because they were given individual attention in what they are learning about and are allowed to select their own activities.

### **SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE LEVELS OF MOTIVATION ACROSS THE PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS**

Computed data in the table below show that there is a significant difference between the level of intrinsic motivation in terms of reading efficacy (Wilks'  $\Lambda = 0.076$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ;  $F_c = 2.040$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and reading topics aesthetically enjoyed (Wilks'  $\Lambda = 0.076$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ;  $F_c = 3.135$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) of the students and their GPA in reading. Accordingly, the hypothesis which asserts that there is a significant difference between the levels of motivation across the profile of the respondents is accepted. This holds true in the case between reading efficacy and reading topics aesthetically enjoyed and GPA in reading.

The findings might, at any extent, by Whitten et al.'s [12] conclusion that students who read for pleasure averaged higher scores and Cullinan's [13] contention that pleasure readers at all grade levels whom scored higher on standardized tests in all subject areas, developed greater reading comprehension, had increased fluency, and displayed higher levels of general knowledge.

Furthermore, the revelation of Oriogu *et al.* [14] that reading habits which might constitute reading performance has significance effect on academic performance of student could also explain the findings, at any rate. However, none of these studies had specifically delved into significant differences between the students' levels of motivation across the profile of the respondents particularly in academic performance or GPA in reading.

Above findings evidently show that the students have significantly different level of perceptions on their reading efficacy and the topics they aesthetically enjoy, depending upon the level of academic performance in reading they perform. This might mean that the students performed very satisfactorily or in the advanced level have higher self-reported reading efficacy than those who had fair to satisfactory GPAs in reading.



The result on the significant difference in competition in reading and sex reverberates the findings of Jetter and Walker [13] in their study about gender differences in competitiveness. They revealed that male teenagers and college students wager substantially less when competing against females, whereas the gender of opponents does not influence females' behavior. Even Nonte et al. [16] asseverated that gender differences are apparent in reading achievement and choices, which, in this study might constitute reading challenge and GPA in reading as forms of extrinsic motivation. The researchers, henceforward, concluded that results also support previous findings on gender differences in reading attitudes, as girls show more positive attitudes toward reading than boys.

Above findings provide evidence that the students displayed significantly different extents of extrinsic motivation as to competition in reading on the basis of their sex and GPA in reading. Then, the students who may have perceived themselves to "low" in competition in reading also had fair to satisfactory GPAs while the ones who reported "moderate" level in competition also registered "very satisfactory" to "moderate" levels of GPAs. Significant difference was also noted in reading competition and sex. This may show that since the respondents are predominantly female, their self- assessments might be significantly higher than that of their male counterparts.

Moreover, data show that there exists no significant difference in the level of extrinsic motivation of the students in terms of recognition and social reasons for and competition in reading and their profile as to age and mother tongue as indicated by the Wilks'  $\Lambda$  and significant values. Thus, irrespective of the age of the students and their mother tongue they speak, they have nearly or the same moderate levels of recognition and social reasons for and competition in reading.

Lastly, computed data prove that no significant difference in the level of extrinsic motivation of the students in terms of recognition and social reasons for reading and their profile as to sex and GPA in reading. This could mean that moderate levels of recognition and social reasons for reading are being shared by the students, regardless if they are male or female, or if they possess fair to satisfactory or very satisfactory to advanced grades in reading.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were derived:

1. The respondents are generally in their late teenage years, female, performed satisfactory

in reading, speak Filipino, with wide variety of reading materials but prefer reading online sources, and belong to families with average monthly income.

2. Students are motivated to read more even with limited rewards.
3. The Grade 11 students demonstrated above average reading comprehension.
4. Intrinsic motivation in all of its facets had moderate relationship to the students' reading comprehension. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is weakly linked to the students' level of reading comprehension.
5. The students' perceptions in reading efficacy and topics aesthetically enjoyed significantly differ as mediated by GPA in reading. Their perceptions also significantly differ in competition in reading when their sex and GPA in reading are considered.

On the basis of the prominent findings of the present research and the conclusions derived, the following are recommended and suggested:

1. English teachers may consider extrinsic motivation as a starting point in encouraging the students to read. Merits such as Best in Reading and Little Teacher Awards may be given to students periodically after evaluating their performance in the activities during their reading-related tasks. Aside from frequently assigning students as Story Teller of the Day or Week, they may further be encouraged to attend book launching of their favorite local author. Their excitement in competing in reading contests may be bolstered by means of providing extra points or marks. Lastly, tasks which could strengthen their love of books may be regularized such as Text/Book Reading Report, evaluative papers, short journalistic editorials or features, and many other approaches.
2. Frequent short reading comprehension tasks, quizzes, and other related activities may be given by the English teacher. This is to access complete information of the reading abilities of the students as the areas they will register the weakest may be remedied with teacher-initiated reading innovations and action researches.
3. Reading activities in the classroom during English classes may be diverse and contextualized or localized. The same may ingrain multiliteracies, 21st century skills-aligned, and be differentiated, irrespective of gender and academic performance.
4. Further related studies may be conducted and making use of other variables.

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