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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS' READING FREQUENCY AND READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS

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ABSTRACT
This study examines the relationship between students' reading frequency and their reading comprehension skills among Junior High School learners. It aims to determine whether increased reading frequency contributes to better comprehension and to provide insights for improving literacy outcomes. A quantitative research design was employed involving 50 Junior High School students from World Citi Colleges Guimba Campus, selected through simple random sampling. Data were collected using a validated survey instrument measuring reading frequency, prior knowledge activation, and reading comprehension skills. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize students' reading habits and comprehension levels, while Pearson's correlation coefficient was applied to determine relationships among variables. Results showed that students frequently engaged in reading, particularly online texts and class notes, and actively activated prior knowledge while reading. Reading comprehension skills were found to be moderate. Correlation analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between reading frequency and comprehension, as well as a moderate to strong relationship between reading frequency and prior knowledge activation. These findings highlight the importance of promoting consistent reading habits to support students' academic success.

KEYWORDS: *Reading Frequency; Comprehension Skills; Prior Knowledge Activation*

1. INTRODUCTION
In today's world, wherein language proficiency plays a crucial role in academic success, understanding the relationship between reading frequency and comprehension skills. The frequency of reading not only improves vocabulary and understanding of sentence structures but also strengthens cognitive processes related to interpreting and synthesizing information. Nowadays, students are spending more time on digital devices and less time reading. It's crucial to examine the relationship between reading frequency and reading comprehension, as well as how this relationship contributes to the development of strong language skills.

This study, which focuses on language proficiency and reading comprehension, falls under the category of language proficiency and literacy education. Guiding educators and curriculum developers in promoting effective reading habits among students. By highlighting the link between reading frequency and comprehension, the study can lead to improved teaching strategies and stronger literacy outcomes.

This study examined the relationship between reading frequency and comprehension skills among students. Yet despite this known correlation, many students today still struggle with understanding what they read. This raises an important question: how does the activation of prior knowledge through frequent reading influence learners' reading comprehension, and why do some students continue to struggle despite repeated exposure to text?

According to Hasanah, Romdanih, and Susilawati (2021), the students' understanding of text is a crucial component of the learning process because reading is a foundational skill that underpins learning in all fields of study. This suggests that fostering strong reading comprehension is essential for academic success, as it enables students to engage meaningfully with content, analyze information critically, and construct knowledge effectively.

This study examined the relationship between reading frequency and comprehension skills as a foundation for language proficiency. It seeks to understand how other student engage in reading and how this impacts their ability to comprehend text effectively. By examining students' reading habits and comprehension levels, this study examines whether reading more often really leads to stronger language skills. On the other hand, the goal is to provide insight that can help improve language teaching and to highlight the importance of reading as a simple but powerful tool for boosting language proficiency.

2. OBJECTIVES
The primary objective of this study is to examine the relationship between reading frequency and reading comprehension skills as a foundation for language proficiency among students.
Specifically, this study aims to:

1. Determine the reading frequency of students in terms of how often they engage in reading activities;

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2. Assess students' reading comprehension skills across different levels of understanding;
3. Examine the relationship between reading frequency and reading comprehension skills among students;
4. Analyze how frequent reading contributes to the activation of prior knowledge and its influence on reading comprehension;
5. Identify possible factors that cause some students to struggle with comprehension despite frequent exposure to reading materials; and
6. Provide insights that may help educators and curriculum developers design effective strategies to promote regular reading habits and improve language proficiency.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research design to determine the relationship between students' reading frequency and reading comprehension skills as a basis for language proficiency. Quantitative research focuses on the collection and analysis of numerical data to explain relationships among variables through objective measurement and statistical analysis (Creswell, 2014).

In this study, reading frequency, prior knowledge activation, and reading comprehension skills were quantified using structured survey questionnaires and comprehension tests. The design enabled the researchers to identify patterns, measure the strength of relationships among variables, and draw conclusions based on empirical evidence. This approach was deemed appropriate because the study aimed to examine correlations rather than explore subjective experiences.

4. SAMPLING DESIGN

The study utilized a simple random sampling technique. The target population consisted of Junior High School students enrolled at World Citi Colleges Guimba Campus. Each student had an equal opportunity to be selected as a respondent, ensuring fairness and minimizing sampling bias.

A total of 50 Junior High School students were randomly chosen to participate in the study. The respondents were not grouped based on grade level, gender, or reading habits, allowing for an unbiased analysis of the relationship between reading frequency and reading comprehension skills. This sampling design ensured that the sample was representative of the population and provided a reliable basis for statistical analysis.

5. STATISTICAL DESIGN

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, and weighted means were used to describe the demographic profile of respondents and determine their levels of reading frequency, prior knowledge activation, and reading comprehension skills.

For inferential analysis, Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (r) was employed to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between:

1. Reading frequency and reading comprehension skills
2. Reading frequency and prior knowledge activation

6. GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

The study was conducted at World Citi Colleges Guimba Campus, a private educational institution located in Guimba, Nueva Ecija, Philippines, a semi-urban area. The campus was purposively selected as it provides a suitable setting for examining students' reading habits and comprehension skills within a formal academic environment.

7. RESULT

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1. Sex of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	20	40%
Female	30	60%
Total	**50**	**100%**

The results show that the majority of respondents were female, with 30 students representing 60% of the sample, while 20 students, or 40%, were male. This indicates a higher participation rate among female students compared to male students. Despite this difference, both sexes are sufficiently represented, allowing for valid comparisons in reading frequency and comprehension. According to Fathima Nashath and Akram (2023), female students in Sri Lankan universities showed better reading skills and more positive attitudes toward reading than male students. This supports the present study's finding that more female students participated, which may reflect their greater engagement in reading activities. Nevertheless, the inclusion of both male and female respondents allows for valid comparisons in reading frequency and comprehension, aligning with the recommendations of previous studies.

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Table 2. Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
13 to 14	27	54%
15 to 16	23	46%
Total	**50**	**100%**

The majority of the respondents were aged 13 to 14, accounting for 27 students or 54% of the sample, while 23 students or 46% were aged 15 to 16. This indicates that most participants were in early adolescence, a critical stage for developing reading skills and comprehension. According to Rico-Juan, Peña-Acuña, and Navarro-Martinez (2024), reading skills and reading autonomy remain important during adolescence, illustrating that the development of comprehension is ongoing and influenced by various factors such as environment and instruction. This finding supports our study, as it shows that even at ages 13–14 — the majority of our respondents — reading skills and comprehension continue to develop, highlighting the importance of assessing their reading abilities during this critical stage of early adolescence.

Table 3. Grade Level of Respondents

Grade Level	Frequency	Percentage
Grade 7	0	0%
Grade 8	15	30%
Grade 9	19	38%
Grade 10	16	32%
Total	**50**	**100%**

Most of the respondents were in Grade 9, comprising 19 students or 38% of the sample, followed by Grade 10 with 16 students (32%) and Grade 8 with 15 students (30%). There were no respondents from Grade 7. All participants were junior high students, which ensures a consistent academic context for the study. This distribution allows for meaningful comparisons of reading frequency and comprehension skills across the different grade levels present. According to Alindayu, Cristobal, Jose, Palattao, Panganiban, and Rivers (2025), reading performance and comprehension abilities in junior high students are influenced by grade-specific factors such as linguistic knowledge, teacher support, and environmental context. This supports our study, as the distribution of respondents across junior high students allows us to meaningfully compare reading frequency and comprehension skills, showing how these abilities may differ or develop at each grade level.

Table 4. Mean Scores on Reading Frequency

Items	Statement	Mean	Interpretation
1	I read academic texts (modules, textbooks, articles).	3.74	Agree
2	I read non-academic texts (novels, stories, magazines, comics).	4.00	Agree
3	I read online texts (blogs, e-books, social media posts, articles).	4.04	Agree
4	I spend time reading even when it is not required for school.	3.72	Agree
5	I read regularly to improve my knowledge and skills.	4.02	Agree
6	I read social media post that provide information or stories.	4.00	Agree
7	I prefer reading stories with strong characters or plots.	3.98	Agree
8	I review class notes before exams.	4.04	Agree
Overall Mean		**3.94**	**Agree**

The overall mean score for Reading Frequency was 3.94 (Agree), with the highest scores observed in reading online texts and reviewing class notes before exams (4.04), indicating that students are particularly consistent in these activities. According to Clamares and Pelandas (2024), studies on reading habits among senior high school students in the Philippines found that students exhibited high levels of reading frequency and time allocation, which were positively associated with better reading comprehension outcomes. This supports the current study's finding that students are consistent in reading

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online texts and reviewing class notes, reflecting that frequent engagement with reading materials is a common practice and an important component of literacy development among secondary learners.

Table 5. Mean Scores on Prior Knowledge Activation

Items	Statement	Mean	Interpretation
1	I can connect what I read with my personal experiences.	3.78	Agree
2	I use my background knowledge to understand new or difficult texts.	4.00	Agree
3	I find it easier to comprehend when the text is about familiar topics.	3.92	Agree
4	I relate what I read to lessons I have previously studied.	4.02	Agree
5	I make predictions or guesses about the text based on what I already know.	3.96	Agree
6	I apply ideas from past readings to help me interpret new information.	4.12	Agree
7	I review notes or past lessons to prepare for a new topic.	3.74	Agree
8	I talk to others (classmates, teachers, friends) to refresh my memory before starting something new.	3.84	Agree
Overall Mean		**3.92**	**Agree**

The overall mean was 3.92 (Agree), with the highest score in applying ideas from past readings to interpret new information (4.12), showing that students actively use prior knowledge to aid comprehension. According to Hattan, C. (2024), activating prior knowledge and reading comprehension helps readers make sense of new information and improves comprehension performance, as learners connect what they already know with the ideas in the text. This supports the current study's finding that students scored highest in applying ideas from past readings (mean 4.12), indicating they actively use prior knowledge to interpret new texts, a strategy shown to deepen comprehension and meaning-making during reading.

Table 6. Reading Comprehension Test

Respondents	Score	Interpretation
1	15	Moderate Understanding
2	17	High Understanding
3	20	High Understanding
4	18	High Understanding
5	9	Low Understanding
6	19	High Understanding
7	17	High Understanding
8	18	High Understanding
9	6	Low Understanding
10	18	High Understanding
11	6	Low Understanding
12	20	High Understanding
13	19	High Understanding
14	19	High Understanding
15	0	Low Understanding
16	0	Low Understanding
17	17	High Understanding
18	17	High Understanding
19	20	High Understanding

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20	12	Moderate Understanding
21	4	Low Understanding
22	15	Moderate Understanding
23	16	High Understanding
24	15	Moderate Understanding
25	14	Moderate Understanding
26	10	Moderate Understanding
27	16	High Understanding
28	16	High Understanding
29	10	Moderate Understanding
30	6	Low Understanding
31	4	Low Understanding
32	16	High Understanding
33	16	High Understanding
34	15	Moderate Understanding
35	17	High Understanding
36	12	Moderate Understanding
37	12	Moderate Understanding
38	14	Moderate Understanding
39	12	Moderate Understanding
40	5	Low Understanding
41	6	Low Understanding
42	10	????
43	5	Low Understanding
44	6	Low Understanding
45	5	Low Understanding
46	15	Moderate Understanding
47	8	Low Understanding
48	10	Moderate Understanding
49	0	Low Understanding
50	0	Low Understanding

The results show a wide range of reading comprehension levels among the students who answered the reading comprehension test about Clifford Bax's poem "Excavation." A majority of the respondents demonstrated High Understanding, indicating that many students were able to interpret the poem effectively and provide detailed answers. Several students fell under the Moderate Understanding category, suggesting that while they grasped the general meaning of the poem, they may have struggled with deeper analysis. On the other hand, a noticeable portion of the class showed Low Understanding, which may imply difficulties in interpreting poetic devices or expressing their ideas clearly.

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Table 7. Reading Comprehension Skills

Items	Statement	Mean	Interpretation
1	I can easily identify the main idea and supporting details of a passage.	3.62	Agree
2	I can understand the meaning of unfamiliar words by using context clues.	3.82	Agree
3	I can summarize a passage in my own words.	3.6	Agree
4	I can recall and explain what I have read even after some time.	3.76	Agree
5	I used strategies like highlighting or underlining when I read.	3.92	Agree
6	I know how to find the meaning of a word using clues from the sentence or paragraph.	3.78	Agree
7	I remember important details after reading.	3.82	Agree
8	When reading, I try to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words on my own.	3.94	Agree
Overall Mean		**3.78**	**Agree**

In Reading Comprehension, the overall mean was 3.78 (Agree), with the highest score in trying to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words independently (3.94), reflecting students' proactive approach to understanding texts.

Table 8. Reading Frequency and Reading Comprehension

Correlation Between Reading Frequency and Reading Comprehension

Variables	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Reading Frequency and Comprehension Skills	0.621	0.001	Highly Significant

The Pearson correlation analysis showed a strong positive relationship between students' reading frequency and reading comprehension, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.621$. This indicates that students who read more often tend to have higher comprehension skills. The relationship is highly significant ($p < 0.001$), meaning it is unlikely to have occurred by chance. According to Sintawati & Azzahro (2024), the stronger the students' reading habit, the higher their comprehension ability. This supports the idea that habitual reading contributes not only to basic reading skills but also deeper understanding of written text. According to this, the more students read regularly, the better they become at understanding and interpreting what they read.

Table 9. Reading Frequency and Prior Knowledge

Correlation Between Reading Frequency and Prior Knowledge

Variables	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Reading Frequency and Prior Knowledge	0.596	0.001	Highly Significant

The Pearson correlation coefficient between students' reading frequency and prior knowledge is $r = 0.596$, indicating a moderate to strong positive relationship. The result is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), showing that the correlation is unlikely due to chance. The results indicated a significantly strong relationship between high levels of prior knowledge and reading comprehension. Conversely, students with low prior knowledge demonstrated a significantly weaker relationship with reading comprehension. Overall, students with high prior knowledge performed substantially better on reading comprehension tasks compared to those with low prior knowledge, highlighting the critical role of prior knowledge in facilitating understanding of texts (Abdelaal, 2014).

8. SUGGESTIONS

Students are encouraged to develop regular reading habits and apply effective comprehension strategies to improve their reading skills. Teachers should integrate engaging reading activities and provide support to help students enhance comprehension. Schools are advised to strengthen reading programs, provide accessible learning resources, and promote literacy-focused activities. Parents play a vital role by encouraging reading at home and supporting comprehension through discussion. Future researchers are encouraged to expand the scope of the study and explore additional factors affecting reading comprehension for a deeper understanding.

9. CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that junior high students who read more frequently tend to demonstrate stronger reading comprehension skills and greater use of prior knowledge in understanding texts. Students showed generally positive reading habits, active background knowledge activation, and moderate comprehension abilities. The strong and statistically significant correlation between reading frequency and reading comprehension ($r = 0.621$, $p < 0.001$) confirms that frequent

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reading plays a vital role in improving students' understanding of written materials. Likewise, the moderately significant correlation between reading frequency and prior knowledge activation ($r = 0.596$, $p = 0.001$) indicates that students who read often are better able to connect new information with what they already know. Overall, the findings highlight the importance of promoting consistent and meaningful reading practices to enhance literacy and support academic success among junior high learners.

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