Factors Affecting the Reading Comprehension Skills Among Grade 7 Learners Toward School-Based Intervention

Roselyn P. Espinosa, Aprilyn R. Esquerida, Ivy M. Lozarito & Joana M. Oloverio
Quezon National High School, Brgy. Quezon, San Carlos City, Negros Occidental, 6127
Roselyn P. Espinosa E-mail: premorroselyn@gmail.com
Aprilyn P. Esquerida E-mail: aprilbebeparadero@gmail.com
Ivy M. Lozarito E-mail: ivylozarito01@gmail.com
Joana M. Oloverio E-mail: oloveriojoana@gmail.com

Abstract — This study highlighted the factors affecting the reading comprehension skills of Grade 7 learners at Quezon National High School, Barangay Quezon, San Carlos City, Negros Occidental during the School Year 2025-2026. Through utilizing a descriptive-quantitative research design, it evaluated the demographic profiles of teachers, students, and parents and probed the perceived factors influencing learners' reading comprehension abilities. Data were collected through structured survey questionnaires and interpreted with Pearson correlation to determine relationships between demographic characteristics and reading performance. The outcomes of the study revealed that multiple correlated factors—such as home environment, early literacy exposure, instructional strategies, and learners' attitudes toward reading—affected reading comprehension, which was moderate overall with strengths in literal comprehension but challenges in inferential and critical understanding. Significant positive correlations were found between reading comprehension and certain teacher and learner profiles, including age, educational attainment, years of service, and parental education. Socio-economic constraints, limited access to reading materials, and learner motivation were identified as critical challenges to reading proficiency. Based on these results, a school-based reading intervention plan was developed to enhance instructional strategies, foster positive reading attitudes, and promote parental engagement to improve literacy skills. The results offer valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders in designing effective literacy programs that address both academic and environmental factors to scaffold learners' success towards achieving lifelong learning.

Keywords — Reading Difficulties, Reading Comprehension, Reading Comprehension Skills, Reading Intervention

I.   INTRODUCTION

Reading was a foundational skill necessary for academic success and lifelong learning, as it equipped learners to process and understand content across all subject areas. However, reading difficulties—particularly those related to comprehension—remained a challenge, especially during the transition from primary to secondary education. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) consistently showed that many learners globally struggled with reading comprehension and fluency during early adolescence, when academic demands became more complex (OECD, 2018).

Reading difficulties were complex and did not focus only on decoding issues. Studies showed that factors such as limited early literacy exposure, lack of background knowledge, low motivation, and inadequate instructional strategies significantly hindered reading comprehension (Capin et al., 2024; Lam, Leachman, & Pratt, 2024). Moreover, the home environment, learners' attitudes toward reading, and access to learning resources also played vital roles in shaping reading development.

In the Philippine context, reading proficiency remained a critical concern. National assessments and international studies revealed that many Filipino learners, particularly in junior high school, continued to experience difficulties in reading fluency and comprehension (Department of Education DepEd, 2021). The Philippines' low performance in the 2018 PISA reading assessment highlighted persistent gaps in reading literacy. Contributing factors included socioeconomic conditions, limited exposure to print materials, and insufficient instructional support (Figuerres, 2025; Abergos et al., 2022).

These challenges were evident at the local level, such as in Quezon National High School in the Division of San Carlos City, Negros Occidental. Grade 7 learners in the school faced these difficulties in reading comprehension as they adjusted to more complex academic texts. Teachers observed that learners' home backgrounds, early reading exposure, classroom strategies, and their attitudes toward reading significantly affected their ability to understand texts. Additionally, learners' demographic backgrounds—such as age, sex, parental education, and family income—

have influenced their reading comprehension levels, as did the qualifications and training of their teachers.

Given these issues, this study sought to assess the factors affecting reading comprehension skills among Grade 7 learners in Quezon National High School for the Academic Year 2025–2026. It aimed to examine how variables related to learners' and teachers' profiles, instructional practices, home environments, and learners' attitudes contributed to reading comprehension performance. It also investigated the levels of comprehension skills—literal, inferential, applied, vocabulary understanding, and text structure awareness—among the learners. Ultimately, the study aimed to design a school-based reading intervention that was grounded in data and tailored to the needs of both learners and teachers.

By grounding the investigation in both international and local studies, this research intended to provide relevant insights for educators, school leaders, and policymakers who strived to enhance reading comprehension outcomes in the Filipino educational context.

Literature Review

Reading comprehension skills played a critical role in an individual's capacity to understand, interpret, and engage with written information. The literature reviewed for this study integrates both conceptual foundations and empirical findings, emphasizing key themes related to factors affecting the reading comprehension skills among Grade 7 learners.

Conceptual Literature

Several studies explored the various factors influencing reading comprehension skills among learners, providing valuable insights for designing school-based interventions. Torres (2021) identified that teacher strategies, home-related factors, and learner motivation played significant roles in shaping reading comprehension, suggesting that interventions should address both instructional methods and students' backgrounds. Similarly, Maglunob and Tabernilla (2023)

highlighted how health, maternal education, and access to reading materials at home contributed to learners' reading difficulties, advocating for home visits as part of remedial programs to support students effectively. Setianingsih (2017) further emphasized the importance of vocabulary, input quantity, and learner motivation in enhancing reading literacy among junior high students, underscoring the need for balanced instructional approaches that stimulated interest and comprehension simultaneously.

In terms of learner motivation and interest, Abidin, Rakhmayanti, and Undayasari (2022) found that these were crucial determinants of literacy ability, sometimes outweighing direct teacher and school support. Mabborang and Balero (2023) examined how academic track strands and learning modalities influenced reading comprehension, revealing that tailored interventions aligned with learners' academic paths and learning preferences yielded better outcomes. Instructional frameworks such as Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI), developed by Guthrie and Humenick (2004), stressed motivation and concept-based learning as essential for improving comprehension. Supporting this, Yunus, Salehi, and Sigan Anak John (2013) demonstrated how visual aids increased students' interest in literary texts, enhancing engagement and understanding.

Day et al. (2024) explored the effectiveness of interactive e-books in developing word knowledge and comprehension skills, highlighting the potential of technology-based tools in modern reading interventions. Complementary instructional methods like Classwide Peer Tutoring (CWPT) also showed promise in fostering collaborative learning and improving reading outcomes. Moreover, digital literacy and reading habits were examined by Abidin and Sinha (2022), who reported that while students were proficient with digital tools, there remained a strong preference for print materials, pointing to the importance of integrating both formats in literacy programs.

Motivation remained a central theme across the literature. Reading Motivation (2023) underscored the role of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators in sustaining reading engagement, with strategies such as sensory-rich experiences and organized reading materials shown to boost students' willingness to read. King (2025) addressed a cultural concern, noting the decline in book reading among children due to digital distractions, which had implications for literacy

development and necessitated innovative school-based interventions to rekindle interest in reading.

Collectively, these studies affirmed that factors affecting reading comprehension were multifaceted, including cognitive abilities, motivation, instructional strategies, home environment, and access to resources. The integration of these insights supported the development of comprehensive school-based reading interventions tailored to the specific needs of Grade 7 learners. Such programs needed to combine targeted skill development, motivational support, and adaptive teaching methods to address the diverse challenges faced by learners in improving their reading comprehension skills.

Research Literature

Several recent studies explored the various factors affecting reading comprehension skills among Grade 7 learners and highlighted effective school-based interventions. Diga (2022) identified learner, teacher, and school-related factors influencing reading abilities, emphasizing the importance of targeted action plans. Maglunob and Tabernilla (2023) examined intermediate learners' reading difficulties and proposed remedial reading interventions to address these challenges.

Yunus, Salehi, and Sigan Anak John (2013) focused on the role of visual aids in motivating students to engage with literary texts, enhancing their comprehension. Schiavo et al. (2021) developed an assistive read-aloud technology that improved comprehension among children with reading disabilities, demonstrating the potential of technological tools. Mabborang and Balero (2023) investigated the impact of academic track strands, learning modalities, and gender on comprehension, suggesting tailored interventions.

Day et al. (2024) found that interactive e-books significantly boosted vocabulary and comprehension skills, supporting multimedia use in reading programs. Giofrè, Donolato, and Mammarella (2022) explored cognitive factors like working memory that contributed to reading

success, informing intervention strategies. Abergos et al. (2024) evaluated remedial reading programs for Grade 7 learners, finding them effective in improving comprehension outcomes.

A study conducted at San Rafael-Agpo Elementary School identified absenteeism, bullying, lack of reading materials, and instructional quality as significant barriers to reading comprehension among intermediate learners. Lastly, Caabay et al. (2024) demonstrated that combining strategies such as background knowledge activation, repeated readings, reading aloud, and questioning improved reading comprehension skills in Grade 7 students.

Collectively, these studies provided valuable insights into the multifaceted factors influencing reading comprehension and emphasized the importance of comprehensive, school-based interventions tailored to learners' specific needs.

II.   METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative-descriptive-correlational research design to examine the factors affecting the reading comprehension skills of Grade 7 learners. The quantitative approach was appropriate as it allowed for the collection and analysis of numerical data such as reading test scores, survey ratings, and demographic profiles. It provided an objective means to measure both the learners' comprehension levels and the extent to which various factors contributed to reading difficulties.

Study Locale

The study was conducted at Quezon National High School, Division of San Carlos City, Negros Occidental.

Population and Sampling

This study included teachers, learners, and parents as respondents. The necessary data were obtained from the records of the school registrar at Quezon National High School, which had a total enrollment of 252 Grade 7 learners for the academic year 2025–2026. To determine the learner participants, a systematic random sampling technique was employed. Using a sampling interval of three (3), every third student on the enrollment list was selected, starting from a randomly chosen number between 1 and 3. This process initially yielded approximately 84 learner respondents. To meet the target of 100 learner participants, additional students were randomly selected from the remaining names on the list. To gain deeper insight into factors potentially affecting reading comprehension, the parents or guardians of these learners were also included, thereby creating a dual-participant design that captured perspectives from both the learners and their home environments.

In addition to the learners and their parents, the study also included 100 teacher respondents, selected from the total population of 107 teachers at Quezon National High School. A similar systematic random sampling technique was used to ensure equal and unbiased representation. A sampling interval of one (1) was applied, meaning nearly all teachers were included, with seven (7) randomly excluded to achieve the desired sample size. The inclusion of teacher respondents aimed to gather professional insights into the reading challenges observed among Grade 7 learners and how these difficulties might have affected their reading comprehension skills.

Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of the study respondents.

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENT GROUPS

Respondents	F	%
Teachers	100	33.33%
Learners	100	33.33%
Parents	100	33.33%
Total	300	100%

As shown in Table 1, a total of 300 respondents participated in the study, comprising 100 teachers (33.33%), 100 Grade 7 learners (33.33%), and 100 parents (33.33%). For the purposes of this research, the focus was placed specifically on Grade 7 learners, as they were in a critical stage of transition from elementary to secondary education, making them suitable subjects for assessing reading comprehension skills. Their developmental stage offered valuable insight into the early challenges of high school-level reading. Thus, the inclusion of these 300 respondents—comprising educators, learners, and their parents—ensured a well-rounded perspective and represented a significant portion of the school community relevant to the study.

Data Collection Instrument

The study utilized a researcher-developed questionnaire based on the research objectives. It was divided into three parts: Part I: Profile of teachers, students and parents. Part II: Teachers perceptions on factors affecting the reading comprehension. Part III: Extent of the factors affecting the reading comprehension skills of the grade 7 learners.

The study used a Likert scale to assess respondents' perceptions of factors affecting reading comprehension skills. Scores from 4.20 to 5.00 were interpreted as Agree (A), indicating a strong influence on comprehension. The results showed that all factors were rated Agree, with means ranging from 4.24 to 4.49 and a grand mean of 4.33, suggesting that respondents perceived these factors as highly influential. Among the indicators, Learners' Attitude Towards Reading had the highest mean (4.49), highlighting its significant role in comprehension. Instructional Strategies obtained the lowest mean (4.24), though still within the "Agree" range, while Home Environment (4.25) and Early Literacy Exposure (4.35) were also seen as key contributors. Overall, the findings reveal that both learner-related and environmental factors play a crucial role in developing reading comprehension skills.

To determine the perception of teacher respondents on the factors affecting reading comprehension among Grade 7 learners, Part II of the instrument was rated by the teachers using a five-point Likert scale. This scale indicated the perceived significance of each factor in

influencing learners' reading comprehension, with the following scoring: 4.51–5.00 – Strongly Agree (SA); 3.51–4.50 – Agree (A); 2.51–3.50 – Disagree (D); and 1.00–2.50 – Strongly Disagree (SD).

To assess the perception of parent respondents regarding their children's reading habits, Part III of the instrument was completed by the parents using a five-point Likert scale. This scale reflected the perceived significance of each factor influencing learners' reading comprehension, with the following scoring: 4.51–5.00 – Strongly Agree (SA); 3.51–4.50 – Agree (A); 2.51–3.50 – Disagree (D); and 1.00–2.50 – Strongly Disagree (SD).

To examine the extent of the factors affecting the reading comprehension skills of Grade 7 learners, Part IV of the research instrument was administered using a 5-point Likert scale. This scale was designed to measure the frequency with which learners experience or demonstrate specific behaviors or conditions related to reading comprehension. The response options were as follows: 5 – *Always*, 4 – *Often*, 3 – *Sometimes*, 2 – *Seldom*, and 1 – *Not Evident*. To interpret the results, the following weighted mean ranges were used: 4.51 to 5.00 – *Always* (5); 3.51 to 4.50 – *Often* (4); 2.51 to 3.50 – *Sometimes* (3); 1.51 to 2.50 – *Seldom* (2); and 1.00 to 1.50 – *Never* (1). This method provided a quantitative basis for assessing learners' self-reported experiences, thereby facilitating the identification and analysis of key factors that may influence their reading comprehension performance.

The questionnaire underwent expert review by the adviser and panel members for relevance and clarity. It was further assessed by instrumentation experts to ensure reliability and validity.

Data Collection Procedures

Upon approval from the adviser and university administration, the researcher personally distributed the questionnaires to the selected respondents, along with instructions and clarifications to ensure accurate and honest responses. Completed questionnaires were retrieved, and responses were collated for analysis.

Data Processing and Analysis

The study utilized several statistical tools to analyze the data effectively. Frequency and Percentage were employed to describe the respondents' profiles, providing a clear summary of demographic distributions. To assess the Factors Affecting the Reading Comprehension Skills Among Grade 7 Learners Toward School-Based Intervention, the Mean and Standard Deviation were used, offering insights into trends and variability in responses. Additionally, Pearson r correlation test was conducted to identify significant relationship between the profile of the teacher-respondents and the reading comprehension skills, the profile of the learners and the reading comprehension skills, the profile of the teachers and the factors affecting the reading comprehension skills.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher strictly adhered to ethical guidelines in conducting this study. Participation was voluntary, with full disclosure of the research purpose and procedures. Respondents were treated with respect, and their identities and responses were kept strictly confidential. Data were stored securely, accessible only to the researcher, adviser, and designated evaluators. The researcher also ensured proper citation of all sources to avoid plagiarism and upheld integrity throughout the research process.

III.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Factors Affecting the Reading Comprehension Skills

To determine the perception of teacher respondents on the factors affecting reading comprehension among Grade 7 learners, Part II of the instrument was rated by the teachers using a five-point Likert scale. This scale indicated the perceived significance of each factor in

influencing learners' reading comprehension, with the following scoring: 4.51–5.00 – Strongly Agree (SA); 3.51–4.50 – Agree (A); 2.51–3.50 – Disagree (D); and 1.00–2.50 – Strongly Disagree (SD).

TABLE 23. SUMMARIZED PERCEPTION OF RESPONDENT GROUPS ON FACTORS AFFECTING READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS

S/N	INDICATOR	AWM	Std Dev	C
1	Home Environment	4.25	0.55	A
2	Early Literacy Exposure	4.35	0.63	A
3	Instructional Strategies	4.24	0.68	A
4	Learners' Attitude Towards Reading	4.49	0.52	A
GRAND MEAN/ STANDARD DEVIATION/CATEGORY		4.33	0.60	A

Table 23 showed the summary of the factors affecting reading comprehension skills, with a total average mean of 4.33 and a standard deviation of 0.60, indicating that teacher respondents consistently agreed that these factors had a strong impact on learners' reading comprehension. Among the four indicators, learners' attitude toward reading obtained the highest mean (4.49), suggesting that motivation, persistence, and positive reinforcement played a crucial role in shaping comprehension skills. Early literacy exposure also ranked high (4.35), emphasizing the importance of early reading experiences in building strong foundations. Meanwhile, the home environment (4.25) and instructional strategies (4.24) were likewise considered significant, highlighting the roles of parental support, availability of resources, and effective teaching practices. Overall, the results implied that addressing these interconnected factors through school-based interventions and collaborative efforts with families could significantly enhance learners' reading comprehension outcomes.

To examine the extent of the factors affecting the reading comprehension skills of Grade 7 learners, Part IV of the research instrument was administered using a 5-point Likert scale. This scale was designed to measure the frequency with which learners experience or demonstrate specific behaviors or conditions related to reading comprehension. The response options were as follows: 5 – *Always*, 4 – *Often*, 3 – *Sometimes*, 2 – *Seldom*, and 1 – *Not Evident*. To interpret the

results, the following weighted mean ranges were used: 4.51 to 5.00 – *Always* (5); 3.51 to 4.50 – *Often* (4); 2.51 to 3.50 – *Sometimes* (3); 1.51 to 2.50 – *Seldom* (2); and 1.00 to 1.50 – *Never* (1).

TABLE 28
SUMMARY OF LEVEL OF READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS OF GRADE 7 STUDENTS

S/N	Category	$\overline{X}$	Std Dev	C
1	Literal Comprehension	3.26	1.09	S
2	Inferential Comprehension	2.89	1.16	O
3	Applied Comprehension	3.60	0.95	O
4	Vocabulary Understanding	3.60	0.95	O
5	Text Structure Awareness	3.53	0.99	O
	GENERAL AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN / GENERAL STANDARD DEVIATION / CATEGORY	3.38	1.03	S

Legend: A weighted mean ranging from 4.51 to 5.00 - Always (5); 3.51 to 4.50 - Often (4); 2.51 to 3.50 - Sometimes (3); 1.51 to 2.50 - Seldom (2); and 1.00 to 1.50 - Never (1).

This implied the need for explicit instruction in inferencing strategies, such as using context clues, identifying implied ideas, and analyzing character motivations. Strengthening this skill would help learners move beyond surface understanding and develop deeper, critical reading comprehension abilities.

Overall, the general average weighted mean of 3.38 with a standard deviation of 1.03, categorized as Sometimes, suggested that while learners demonstrated moderate proficiency in reading comprehension, there was still room for improvement, particularly in higher-order thinking and inferential understanding.

FACTORS AFFECTING THE READING COMPREHENSION AND THE LEVEL OF GRADE 7 LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS

This part presented the factors affecting the reading comprehension and the level of grade 7 learners' reading comprehension skills.

TABLE 33
CONTINGENCY TABLE

		Level of Grade 7 Learners' Reading Comprehension Skills		
		Always	**Often**	**Total**
Factors Affecting Reading Comprehension	**Highly Significant**	14	16	30
	Significant	18	52	50
	Total	32	68	100

CHI SQUARE TEST APPROACH						
	Value	**Degree of Freedom (df)**	**Level of Significance (α)**	**One-tailed p-value**	**Two-tailed p-value**	**Result**
Pearson's Chi-Square	4.92	1	0.05	0.013	0.027	**Reject H_0**
Fisher's Exact Probability Test		1	0.05	0.025	0.035	**Reject H_0**
N	100					

As shown in the Chi Square Test Table, the null hypothesis was **REJECTED** because both One-tailed p-value and Two-tailed p-value were lower than the 0.05 level of significance. Moreover, the said result was also supported by the nonparametric Fisher's Exact Probability Test.

Accordingly, there was a significant relationship between the factors affecting reading comprehension skills and the level of reading comprehension skills of Grade 7 learners.

FACTORS AFFECTING READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS

This part presented the factors affecting the reading comprehension skills and the level of reading comprehension skills of Grade 7 learners

TABLE 34

Rank	Factor	Concern
1	**Home Environment**	• The availability of reading materials at home, such as books and magazines, greatly influences a learner's reading development. • Supportive parents who allot time for reading and provide a quiet, conducive environment help learners strengthen their comprehension skills. • Teachers and parents agree that a positive home environment enhances reading performance and encourages a consistent reading habit.
2	**Early Literacy Exposure**	• Learners who were exposed to reading activities at an early age tend to develop better comprehension skills compared to those who had limited early reading experiences. • Early exposure builds vocabulary, fluency, and familiarity with language structures essential for understanding texts. • Teachers strongly recognize early literacy as a foundation for higher levels of reading comprehension in later grades.
3	**Instructional Strategies**	• The use of varied and interactive teaching methods, such as guided reading, vocabulary building, and comprehension questioning, directly affects learners' understanding of texts. • When teachers integrate differentiated strategies and encourage discussion, students become more engaged and better able to interpret meaning. • Both teachers and learners acknowledge that effective instructional strategies significantly improve comprehension levels.

Discussion

As perceived by both teachers and learners, several factors significantly influence reading comprehension, with home environment, early literacy exposure, and instructional strategies ranking as the most critical. A supportive home environment, characterized by the availability of books and reading materials, parental involvement, and a quiet, conducive space for study, was identified as the top factor, as it not only strengthens comprehension skills but also fosters consistent reading habits. Early literacy exposure was ranked second, highlighting that learners introduced to reading activities at a young age develop stronger vocabulary, fluency, and familiarity with language structures, forming a solid foundation for advanced comprehension in later grades. Instructional strategies followed closely, with teachers' use of varied, interactive methods—such as guided reading, vocabulary-building exercises, and comprehension questioning—proving essential for engaging students and enhancing their ability to interpret and analyze texts. Collectively, these factors underscore the interplay of home support, early learning experiences, and effective teaching practices in shaping learners' reading development.

IV.   CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that reading comprehension remained a vital yet challenging aspect of literacy development among Grade 7 learners at Quezon National High School. The results revealed that comprehension performance was shaped by multiple factors, including the home environment, early literacy exposure, instructional strategies, and learners' attitudes toward reading. The demographic data further indicated that socio-economic constraints, limited access to reading materials, and large household sizes contributed to disparities in students' reading achievement.

Despite these challenges, teachers demonstrated a strong commitment to improving instructional quality through continuous professional growth and adaptation of effective reading strategies. This professional dedication served as a crucial foundation for fostering a more supportive literacy environment. Moreover, the study highlighted that students who received

consistent encouragement and exposure to reading, both at home and in school, tended to perform better in comprehension tasks.

Overall, the study concluded that strengthening home-school partnerships, enhancing teacher capacity, and cultivating positive reading attitudes among learners were essential to improving reading comprehension outcomes. Targeted interventions addressing socio-economic barriers and instructional gaps would further help ensure that all learners could develop the necessary comprehension skills for academic success and lifelong learning.

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