

Reading Performance as a Predictor of Academic Success of Key Stage 2 Learners

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationship between reading performance and academic success among grades 4, 5, and 6 elementary students. The research explores the predictors of reading proficiency, including comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary knowledge, and their implications for overall academic achievement. Data analysis involves scoring procedures for reading and academic performance, demographic profiling, differences in reading performance based on demographic variables, and correlation analysis between reading performance and academic success. The findings reveal a significant association between reading competence and academic success, with higher levels of reading ability correlating with improved performance across various academic subjects. Demographic profiling reveals a balanced gender representation, most learners are ten years old, and the majority are in Grade 5. Differences in reading performance based on demographic variables show significant associations between comprehension, age and grade level. Fluency significantly correlates with age, while vocabulary significantly correlates with grade level. Correlation analysis reveals a moderate to strong positive correlation between reading performance and academic success, indicating that students with higher reading abilities tend to achieve higher grades. These findings underscore the importance of early literacy development and targeted interventions to enhance reading skills and promote academic success among elementary students. Overall, this research contributes to our understanding of the critical role of reading proficiency in shaping students' academic trajectories and underscores the importance of fostering a culture of reading to promote long-term educational success.

Keywords: reading performance, comprehension, fluency, vocabulary knowledge, and academic success.

INTRODUCTION

Academic success in many disciplines and grade levels depends critically on reading ability. Students move from learning to read to reading to learning in grades 4, 5, and 6, which emphasizes how important reading proficiency is to understanding many academic subjects. With students in these crucial grades, this study aims to explore the complex link between reading achievement and academic success. By identifying reading competency predictions and their consequences for academic success, this study provides educators and legislators with useful suggestions to support students' literacy development and improve their overall academic performance.

One of the key macro abilities in English, reading, requires pupils to be proficient. It encompasses the difficult cognitive process of decoding signals to infer meaning and comprehension and is a fundamental function in modern culture and a precondition for learning (Bashir & Mattoo, 2012). Good reading habits are developed by regular reading at home and school, which shapes children's cognitive development. Moreover, encouraging a constant dedication motivated by desire and personal will produces positive results (Bashir & Mattoo, 2012).

One way to determine whether students understand the lesson is to see how well they can analyze and grasp textual information (Corteza, 2006). Gaining enough understanding of various topics is essential for kids to succeed academically. Exam performance is one of the main indicators of this accomplishment in the K–12 grading system. Academic success, then, provides a means for students to demonstrate their understanding and mastery of the course material through written and oral presentations.

As an elementary school teacher, the researcher was motivated by the understanding of the critical need to provide Grade IV, V, and VI pupils with a strong basis for reading and academic success. Noting the range of reading behaviors that students today exhibit, especially in grades K–12, the researcher saw differences in academic achievement in the classroom that resulted from several causes. Therefore, by clarifying how reading comprehension, fluency, vocabulary acquisition, and academic success among key stage 2 students interact, this study has promise in helping educational institutions.

Providing elementary students access to culturally relevant texts that mirror their identities and experiences is crucial to promoting fairness and inclusiveness in reading teaching (Bishop, 1990). A wide range of literature cultivates empathy, comprehension, and admiration for all cultures and viewpoints, enhancing students' reading experiences. By integrating multicultural literature, indigenous narratives, and varied perspectives into the curriculum, educators affirm students' real-life encounters and establish inclusive educational settings that prioritize all students' recognition, acknowledgment, and worth.

Peer tutoring is a very effective educational technique that shows the potential to enhance reading abilities in primary pupils (Topping, 2005). Peer-mediated interventions promote cooperation, interpersonal communication, and academic assistance, improving reading achievements. Matching students with different levels of reading proficiency facilitates a mutually beneficial learning experience, where tutors and tutees gain from sharing knowledge and skills. Peer tutoring programs enhance student agency, foster peer relationships, and promote self-efficacy, thus creating a positive learning environment in which elementary kids are empowered to assume responsibility for their reading progress.

The reading achievement of elementary kids is greatly influenced by their socioeconomic status (SES), with students from low-income households often encountering more obstacles to achieving literacy success (Sirin, 2005). More availability of books, educational tools, and surroundings that promote literacy can worsen the gap in reading skills between pupils from underprivileged families. To tackle the achievement gap, it is necessary to implement focused interventions that ensure fair access to excellent teaching, early literacy programs, and support services for elementary students coming from poor communities. By tackling the structural inequalities that sustain educational differences, educators may establish fairer opportunities for all students to attain reading proficiency.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Extensive research has firmly proven a strong correlation between the ability to read well and achieving academic achievement, regardless of the field of study or educational level (Francisco, 2019). The National Reading Panel (2000) emphasizes that effective reading is important for understanding and is crucial in promoting critical thinking and acquiring knowledge. The significance of this association is deep, as it highlights the crucial importance of reading proficiency in influencing the academic progress and lifelong educational pursuits of elementary pupils.

The shift from elementary to middle school is important during learning to read, where pupils experience substantial cognitive and linguistic progress (Liu et al., 2021). A transition distinguishes this era from deciphering written text to extracting significance and establishing links across many genres and subject areas. Comprehending the subtle distinctions of this process of growth and development is crucial for educators who aim to customize their teaching methods to accommodate the changing requirements of their primary school students.

Understanding reading competence requires an examination of the various aspects that influence pupils' ability to read and write. Reading outcomes are significantly influenced by socioeconomic status, home literacy environment, parental involvement, teacher quality, and instructional techniques (Le et al., 2019). Understanding the intricate relationship between these characteristics is crucial to creating fair and comprehensive literacy interventions that cater to the varied requirements of elementary pupils.

Fluency, the connection between decoding and comprehension, is a crucial aspect of skilled reading (Colmar et al., 2019). Proficient readers exhibit precision, swiftness, prosody, and expression, which serve as signs of profound understanding and involvement with the text. Therefore, it is crucial to prioritize fluency development in elementary pupils by providing them with focused instruction and many practice opportunities. This is essential for promoting reading proficiency.

According to the study conducted by Yildiz et al. (2019), an extensive vocabulary is essential for understanding written texts since it allows pupils to interpret meaning based on the surrounding context and establish links between words and concepts. Comprehensive vocabulary training includes directly teaching words and using ways to promote awareness of terms and the ability to use them in many contexts. By providing students with a wide range of words and a deep understanding of their meanings, teachers give them the ability to read and understand complicated texts with certainty and ease.

Assessing reading competency includes a wide range of instruments and methods specifically developed to measure students' literacy skills and provide information for making instructional decisions (Gamazo et al., 2019). From standardized tests to formative measurements, each assessment method provides distinct observations regarding students' abilities, limitations, and opportunities for improvement. By triangulating several sources of data, teachers can create a thorough depiction of elementary pupils' reading capabilities and customize interventions to address their specific requirements.

According to Balan et al.'s study (2019), technology has become both a benefit and a difficulty for developing literacy in the digital era. Although digital tools provide unparalleled access to information and interactive learning experiences, they also present distractions and cognitive overload. To effectively navigate the digital landscape, one must possess a sophisticated awareness of how technology can improve reading engagement, comprehension, and critical literacy abilities in elementary students.

Recognizing and appreciating students' cultural and linguistic origins is crucial for promoting an inclusive and fair learning environment (Neumann et al., 2019). Culturally responsive teaching practices acknowledge and respect students' personal experiences, integrate a variety of viewpoints into the curriculum, and appreciate the diversity of languages. By embracing cultural and linguistic diversity in reading instruction, educators enable elementary students to relate to the texts they read and interact with the world with compassion and comprehension.

Based on the findings of the study conducted by Usher et al. (2019), the pursuit of efficient reading education involves a collection of empirically supported techniques rooted in research and pedagogical theory. From direct phonics instruction to reciprocal teaching, the range of instructional styles allows educators to adapt to the varied requirements of elementary children. By implementing a well-rounded and tailored strategy for teaching reading, teachers may support students' growth in literacy skills and cultivate a lasting passion for reading.

Classroom libraries function as dynamic centers of literacy engagement, providing students with various texts tailored to their interests, preferences, and reading abilities (Johnson, 2020). The diverse assortment of books, from illustrated stories to longer novels, cultivates a reading culture beyond formal education. Through carefully selecting and developing classroom libraries, educators establish welcoming environments that foster curiosity, investigation, and creativity in young primary students.

According to the study conducted by Pan et al. (2019), children's reading development is greatly impacted by the home literacy environment, where parental participation and literacy practices at home play a crucial role

in determining reading achievement. Promoting family literacy activities can enhance the reading achievement of primary pupils, both inside their homes and at school. Activities such as engaging in group reading, narrating stories, and going to libraries foster a passion for reading and strengthen the significance of literacy in our daily existence.

Motivation influences elementary pupils' reading habits and academic performance (Sánchez et al., 2019). Nurturing innate drive and cultivating a passion for reading can increase involvement and perseverance in literacy-related tasks. Providing choices in reading materials, creating meaningful reading experiences, and connecting reading to students' interests and aspirations are effective strategies for promoting reading motivation among elementary students.

According to Cadiz-Gabejan et al. (2021), it is crucial to provide focused interventions and differentiated instruction to meet the individual needs of elementary pupils who struggle with reading. Intensive interventions that are based on evidence can greatly assist readers who are struggling to achieve substantial improvements in their reading skills. Small-group instruction, individualized tutoring, and multisensory techniques like Orton-Gillingham efficiently deliver specialized assistance to struggling readers. Timely detection of reading issues and prompt assistance are essential for preventing persistent academic difficulties and fostering literacy achievement among elementary pupils.

By incorporating reading teaching into different subject areas, teachers can strengthen children's literacy abilities and enhance their comprehension of elementary-level information (Vitta et al., 2017). Content-area literacy education enables pupils to understand and evaluate intricate texts in various academic settings proficiently. Teachers can integrate reading strategies such as close reading, annotation, and text-dependent questioning into science, social studies, and mathematics lessons to assist elementary children in developing strong reading skills in all subject areas.

Continual professional development is essential for providing instructors with the knowledge and abilities to conduct efficient reading teaching (Abid et al., 2023). Teachers can improve their instructional practices and promote student results by participating in high-quality professional learning activities. Teachers who receive training in evidence-based reading tactics, assessment approaches, and differentiated instruction can effectively address the varying needs of elementary students and establish nurturing learning environments that foster literacy development.

Instructing young children in cognitive methods, such as summary, questioning, and visualization, can improve their understanding of written material (Schmidtke et al., 2024). Direct teaching of metacognitive methods enables students to assess their understanding and actively utilize good reading techniques independently. Teachers can demonstrate the application of cognitive methods, facilitate supervised practice, and provide constructive feedback to develop elementary pupils into skilled readers who actively participate in and understand a wide range of texts.

Reading as a social practice highlights the significance of social engagement, cooperation, and conversation in developing literacy skills (Celik, 2020). Classroom discussions, literature circles, and collaborative reading activities cultivate a feeling of togetherness and encourage deep involvement with texts. Teachers foster a nurturing reading culture that promotes discourse, engagement, and shared meaning-making by providing opportunities for elementary children to express their opinions, ask questions, and explore other perspectives.

Reading is one of the three Rs for a child's education. It is a fundamental skill crucial to academic success and personal development. Indeed, the child's academic success or failure is heavily influenced by his reading skills. Reading can be seen as a fundamental talent that every learner must acquire, and hence, every effort should be made to improve it in children from an early age.

Some studies assessed the impact of previous academic performance, which likely encompasses literacy and reading abilities as components of academic preparedness (McKenzie, 2010). It was observed that one

should highlight the role of self-belief in one's own reading and study skills in predicting academic success. It links academic self-efficacy to academic performance and a student's overall adjustment to the academic environment, which signifies the broad impact of such skills (Chemers et al., 2001). It highlighted the central role of reading habits in academic achievement, particularly noting that the purpose behind reading is significantly related to academic success (Balan, 2019).

Moreover, a study outlines various factors and contributors, situating reading habits with a larger matrix of elements affecting academic outcomes, identified multiple determinants of academic performance such as high school grade, English ability, class attendance, study effort, and academic self-efficacy (Sothan, 2018). The impact of gender, grade level, and other sociodemographic factors on school achievement. It underscores the importance of these variables in the educational context (Sirin & Gupta, 2015).

Research frequently makes a distinction between "gender" (socially constructed roles, behaviors, and activities) and "sex," which refers to biological characteristics. Research may employ statistical methods to examine academic success information to look for relationships with student's biological sex. On the other hand, gender studies may concentrate on how gender norms and expectations affect students' academic success and conduct. Notably, some indications exist that boys and girls could encounter disparate academic results in distinct subjects, and scholars have explored this to differing degrees of certainty (Alfifi & Abed, 2017).

Regarding Age, academics investigate how it interacts with academic achievement by considering aspects such as maturity, life experience, and motivation, particularly for non-traditional, mature-aged students returning to school later in life. Age studies may use cross-sectional methods to compare different age cohorts simultaneously or longitudinal approaches to track the same students' growth over time (Alfifi & Abed, 2017).

Researchers frequently study grade levels through the lens of the kids' developmental stage, considering the rise in academic expectations and complexity as students go through their schooling. These studies may use hierarchical linear modeling to account for the fact that students are nested inside classrooms and schools to understand better how individual grade levels interact with academic success (Fairless, 2020). This reference refers to a study that found various demographic characteristics, such as age and gender, strongly associated with primary pupils' academic achievement. It has also been shown that family living situations are linked to student academic achievement, which can be altered by a student's grade level (Aguirre et al., 2020).

Reading fluency is a fundamental skill that supports the transition from learning to reading to reading to learning, making it a powerful predictor of academic achievement in pupils. It emphasizes the role of reading fluency in the broader context of academic success. Reading fluency, as described, contributes to a student's ability to understand and engage with the learning material (Rasinski, 2004).

Vocabulary knowledge is inextricably related to reading comprehension and general academic performance, with numerous studies highlighting its importance as a direct and indirect predictor of school success. It investigates the critical role that vocabulary plays in reading comprehension and, as a result, in overall educational achievements. It emphasizes effective vocabulary education (Baumann et al., 2012). A high vocabulary is not only a predictor of reading comprehension but is also connected with overall academic success, implying that vocabulary instruction should be an important part of the educational curriculum (Mezynski, 1983).

Fluent reading, which includes both speed and accuracy, is essential for comprehension and is frequently a challenge for kids with learning difficulties, hurting their overall academic performance. This paper emphasizes the relationship between fluency and academic success and summarizes effective approaches for enhancing reading fluency (Chard et al., 2002).

Reading comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary knowledge are important components of academic performance, and their relationship with academic outcomes should be highlighted. Comprehension is the

essence of reading and the active process of generating meaning from the text (Durkin, 1993). Reading comprehension is a complicated interaction between automatic and strategic cognitive processes that allow the reader to form a mental representation of the text (Van den Brock & Espin, 2012).

However, the reader will most likely derail the process by failing to grasp, giving up, and stopping reading. As a result, the reader is thought to be the most accountable for comprehension (Hansen, 2016). According to recent studies, positive attitudes toward reading increase in the early school years but begin to decline around middle school. As pupils enter puberty, there is a shift in attitudes regarding reading (Howard, 2011). While there may be some overlap between in-school and out-of-school reading, research indicates that most pupils have completely different attitudes toward each. Reading and learning techniques are inextricably linked, and what is regarded as important in learning processes also applies to reading comprehension. Many students today confront multiple years of higher education, making strong reading methods vital (Roe, 2018).

All areas of learning require reading fluently and accurately and comprehending what is read (Hansen, 2016). Furthermore, academic success relates to how students approach their studies and how they handle or complete the duties assigned to them by their lecturers. In educational institutions, success is judged by academic success or how well the student meets the requirements set by the local government and the institution itself, as cited (Galvez, 2010).

Since time immemorial, elementary schools have provided the best education to our children. Teachers strive to improve their students' academic success because poor performance is directly attributed to the school, their teachers, and the educational programs and methods in place. As a result, they are constantly looking for methods to tailor their instruction to the requirements of their students (Galvez, 2010). However, Steven (2001) contends that reading comprehension enables the reader to interact meaningfully with the material. It links passive and active reading, connecting letters, words, characters, and context. In addition, Onkoba (2014) confirmed that reading comprehension practices influence academic success; therefore, a significant correlation exists between reading comprehension practices and academic success.

Framework

This study is grounded on Kintsch's Theory of Comprehension. According to this theory, comprehension involves two levels: the surface level, which involves decoding the literal meaning of a text, and the deep level, which involves drawing inferences and understanding the underlying meaning of the text (Kintsch, 1998).

In the context of this research, Kintsch's theory is used to explain how reading performance can predict academic success in Grades 4, 5, and 6. Reading performance is evaluated at the surface level (e.g., word recognition, fluency) and the deep level (e.g., comprehension, inference making).

The hypothesis is that students who perform well in both reading comprehension levels will also show higher academic success. This is because the skills involved in reading comprehension, such as critical thinking, inference-making, and understanding complex texts, are also crucial for learning and understanding academic content.

Moreover, the theory suggests that improving students' reading skills, especially their deep comprehension skills, can enhance their academic success. This can be achieved through targeted reading interventions and instructions that focus on both the surface and deep levels of comprehension.

This will guide the research in examining the relationship between reading performance and academic success and understanding how reading skills can be effectively developed to enhance students' academic outcomes.

This will also inform the research methodology, particularly the selection of reading performance measures and the analysis of the relationship between reading performance and academic success.

Research Questions

This study aimed to determine the correlation between reading performance and academic success of Key Stage 2 learners. It sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of sex, age, and grade level?;
2. What is the key stage 2 learners' reading performance in terms of reading comprehension; reading fluency; and vocabulary knowledge?;
3. What is the level of academic success of the key stage 2 learners as measured by their grades in all learning areas?;
4. Is there a significant difference in the reading performance of key stage 2 learners when grouped by demographic profile?; and
5. Is there a significant correlation between key stage 2 learners' reading performance and academic success?

METHODS

Research Design. This study used descriptive quantitative-correlational research to determine the relationship between reading fluency, reading comprehension, vocabulary knowledge, and student's academic success in Grades IV, V, and VI. Gender, sex, and age were the moderating variables in this study, and they were anticipated to impact the other variables. This study examines quantitative correlations. Using a reading test and learner grades, a correlational approach will be utilized to investigate the relationship between academic and reading performance. This method will also be applied to employ these techniques to improve students' performance and comprehension retention.

Fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary tests were compared to determine the relationship between the results and the learners' academic success. The mean and SD were used to calculate the significant reading and academic performance differences. The collected data and information were methodically verified, calculated, tallied, and analyzed.

Setting. During the school year 2023–2024, the study was carried out in two schools in District 7 in the Division of Ozamiz City, School Id 203505 and 128187 in District 7 Ozamiz City, specifically in grades 4, 5, and 6. With 202 students enrolled overall, the two schools are full elementary schools.

Respondents. Because the researcher works at a rural school in District 7 in the Division of Ozamiz City that provides elementary education, the respondents for this study were enumerated completely from the school. There are about 202 students enrolled in this small school. In most classes, there are less than thirty students. All students are assessed in reading at every grade level as part of their education. The three reading tests chosen for this research were made to evaluate students in the fourth grade and above accurately. Numerous studies have already linked reading to academic success. Given our society's prevalence of textual information, the link between reading ability and academic performance is natural. Espin and Deno (1993) discovered a link between basic reading literacy and student academic progress.

Data were gathered and examined for every student in grades four through six at the school site. As a result, the study focused on the key stage 2 levels for which the reading performance assessments were created. A total of 202 pupils were examined. There were 48 fourth-graders, 91 fifth-graders, and 63 sixth-graders in the student body.

Sampling. Two hundred two elementary school students were selected from the population to participate in this study as respondents using complete enumeration sampling. The research was conducted in the two District 7 schools.

Research Tools. This study uses data from school records, including information about students' academic performance in all subjects as determined by several assessments and their grades as determined by a battery

of tests, including vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. The vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency assessments came from a reading test created by the researcher.

The respondents' reading performance test served as the study's instrument. To identify the students who must participate in the research study, the researcher requested permission from the principal to administer the tests. Subsequently, the principal authorized the researcher to access and use the academic and reading test data kept on file at the school.

Data Collection. Following the instrument's preparation, the researcher requested ethics clearance. Following the release of the implementation clearance, the researcher asked the principals of Schools ID 203505 and 128187 for permission to administer the research instrument to the study respondents. Following the request's approval, the principal gave the concerned teachers instructions to permit the identified respondents to participate in the study. The researcher then gave the identified respondents a consent form so they could sign off on the study if they were willing to participate. They were also given the assurance that the results would be kept private. Since the respondents are under 18, consent forms were provided so they could ask their parents' permission before allowing their kids to participate in the study. Subsequently, the researcher distributed the reading tests. Ten minutes were allotted to them to complete the test. Subsequently, the respondents responded to the 30-item reading tests. They had thirty minutes to respond. Ultimately, the researcher reviewed the tests, and statistical analysis was performed on the data.

The researcher employed a test as a means of collecting data and conducting assessments of the student's reading performance. The researchers compared the means of the comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary results to see if there was a discernible variation in the learners' means. To collect data, the researcher reviewed documents containing students' grades from the teacher's record. The documents were reviewed using the school's second-quarter reports to analyze academic performance. The school database gathered information on each student's performance in every subject. Each student's average performance level was calculated using the mean score from their second quarter grades. The teachers in each classroom distributed the tests.

The test results also provided information on the reading performance of the students. Cunningham and Stanovich's (1998) research suggests that reading significantly impacts cognitive development, enhancing various mental processes and skills. Fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension were the three components of reading performance that were evaluated; each student was given an overall composite score. The class adviser's classroom served as the venue for the assessment. The researcher created the reading assessment that was utilized. Before responding to the tests, students had to read the sentence aloud to themselves twice. The researcher's scripted instructions administered the test to maintain consistency between administrations. Each student's average reading performance was calculated by taking the mean score after administering all three tests. The researcher's classroom was secured when no adults were present, and printed documentation containing student names and the master list connecting those names with coded numbers was kept there to protect student confidentiality. Instead of student names, the working copies used codes the researcher carried with her from the school site to her home. The researcher was able to correlate reading performance data with academic success data by using the codes to determine the student's grade level.

Ethical Consideration. The authority to conduct research, respondent safety and well-being, particularly for minors, research integrity and originality, and data confidentiality were all addressed in this study. Students voluntarily participated in this research project. Consent from students and parents was requested. Consent forms were requested to be signed by parents and pupil beneficiaries. The nature of the student's participation was described in consent forms, along with the option for them to stop working on the project at any time. The study also upheld confidentiality and anonymity by omitting any mention of the respondent's identity or the school throughout the publication.

Data Analysis. The demographic profile of the respondents, including sex, age, grade level, and academic grades, will be analyzed using frequency distribution and percentage.

The researcher used the term weighted mean to describe the weighted value of the responses on the reading assessments. In this instance, Grades 4, 5, and 6 students are regarded as a group, and the standard deviation will be computed to show the degree of deviation for the group. The research question will be answered by computing the t-test.

Following data collection, each student's academic progress and reading performance were recorded in a spreadsheet that produced composite scores. After that, a web-based statistical software program processed the data to see if there was any correlation, as indicated by Pearson's r .

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile of the Pupils

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of grades IV, V, and VI pupils. It shows that there are slightly more males than females in the sample. The sex distribution shows a nearly equal split between male and female participants. This suggests that the research has managed to gather a relatively balanced sample regarding gender representation. It is important to ensure gender balance in research to avoid bias and ensure results are applicable across genders.

Most participants are between 9 and 11 years old, with 10 being the most common age group. There needs to be more participation as Age increases beyond 12, with very few participants in older age groups. The age distribution suggests that the research primarily targets children in pre-adolescence's lower to middle range. The age distribution might indicate the age range of the target audience or the population under study.

Most participants are from Grade 5, followed by Grade 6, with Grade 4 having the lowest participation. This distribution aligns with the age distribution, as children around 9-11 are typically in Grades 4 to 6. The research is likely conducted within a school setting, targeting specific grade levels. The distribution could also indicate the focus on a particular curriculum or developmental stage. The research has successfully gathered a balanced sample in terms of gender representation. It predominantly includes children in the 9-11 age range, with Grade 5 having the highest participation.

Table 1 Demographic Profile of the Pupils

| Profile | Counts | Percent |
|-------------|--------|---------|
| Sex | | |
| Male | 103 | 50.99 |
| Female | 99 | 49.01 |
| Age | | |
| 9 | 37 | 18.32 |
| 10 | 74 | 36.63 |
| 11 | 66 | 32.67 |
| 12 | 21 | 10.4 |
| 13 | 1 | 0.5 |
| 14 | 1 | 0.5 |
| 15 | 1 | 0.5 |
| 18 | 1 | 0.5 |
| Grade Level | | |
| 4 | 48 | 23.76 |
| 5 | 91 | 45.05 |
| 6 | 63 | 31.19 |

Notably, some indications exist that boys and girls could encounter disparate academic results in distinct subjects, and scholars have explored this to differing degrees of certainty (Alfifi & Abed, 2017). Another study found various demographic characteristics, such as age and gender, strongly associated with primary pupils' academic achievement. It has also been shown that family living situations are linked to student academic achievement, which can be altered by a student's grade level (Aguirre et al., 2020). Understanding the age and grade level distribution helps contextualize the findings and interpret their relevance within the targeted population. Further analysis could explore correlations between age, grade level, and other variables under study to derive deeper insights from the data.

Key Stage 2 Learners' Reading Performance

Table 2 presents the reading performance of Key Stage 2 learners across several variables, reporting mean scores (M) and standard deviations (SD) for comprehension, fluency, vocabulary knowledge, and overall mean reading performance. All variables are assessed as fair. Since the table does not provide p-values, we cannot identify statistically significant differences or relationships among the variables. The mean scores indicate that comprehension (M = 5.010, SD = 1.54), fluency (M = 5.104, SD = 1.60), and vocabulary knowledge (M = 5.322, SD = 1.86) are consistent, with vocabulary knowledge being slightly higher. The overall mean reading performance (M = 5.145, SD = 1.5) also reflects a fair level of reading ability. Comprehension, which has the lowest mean score of 5.010 (SD = 1.54), indicates that learners find it slightly more challenging to understand and interpret the texts they read. This suggests that Key Stage 2 learners have balanced reading abilities across comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary knowledge. Still, there is room for improvement in all areas to elevate their reading proficiency from fair to good or excellent. To draw more definitive conclusions about the significance of these variables, further statistical analysis, including p-values and R-values, would be necessary.

Table 2 Key Stage 2 Learners' Reading Performance

| Variables | M | SD | Remarks |
|----------------------|-------|------|---------|
| Comprehension | 5.01 | 1.54 | Fair |
| Fluency | 5.104 | 1.6 | Fair |
| Vocabulary Knowledge | 5.322 | 1.86 | Fair |
| Mean Reading | 5.145 | 1.5 | Fair |

Scale: 5:00-4:00 (Excellent); 3:99-3:00 (Very Good); 2:99-2:00 (Good); 1:99-1:00 (Fair); 0:99-0:00 (Needs Improvement)

The ultimate objective of reading is to extract and construct meaning from any text (Snow, 2002). It is important to note that disparities in background information do not fully explain variations in accurate decoders' reading comprehension abilities. Although comprehension is sometimes conceptualized as a function of decoding ability and the presence of relevant knowledge, studies on children's comprehension using available knowledge show that there are several sources of comprehension failure, even when the underlying knowledge base required for comprehension appears to be sound (Cain et al., 2001).

The findings reveal that while the learners demonstrate a relatively consistent reading performance across different aspects, vocabulary knowledge is slightly their strongest area. However, the overall " fair " assessment across all variables suggests considerable room for improvement in reading skills.

These findings imply that Key Stage 2 learners require targeted interventions to enhance their reading skills, particularly in comprehension, which is currently the weakest area. Educators and curriculum planners should consider incorporating more comprehensive reading strategies and activities emphasizing understanding and interpreting texts. Additionally, professional development for teachers on effective reading instruction techniques could be beneficial. To address these gaps, it is recommended that the following activities be implemented: reading comprehension workshops, vocabulary enrichment programs,

and fluency practice sessions. Reading comprehension workshops could focus on improving comprehension skills through interactive activities like group discussions, story mapping, and question-and-answer exercises. Vocabulary enrichment programs could introduce activities that expand learners' vocabulary through word games, flashcards, and reading diverse genres. Fluency practice sessions could include timed reading activities, paired reading exercises, and the use of reader's theater to enhance reading speed and expression. By focusing on these areas, educators can help improve the overall reading performance of Key Stage 2 learners, leading to better academic outcomes and a stronger foundation for future learning.

The ultimate objective of reading is to extract and construct meaning from any text (Snow, 2002). It is important to note that disparities in background information do not fully explain variations in accurate decoders' reading comprehension abilities. Although comprehension is sometimes conceptualized as a function of decoding ability and the presence of relevant knowledge, studies on children's comprehension using available knowledge show that there are several sources of comprehension failure, even when the underlying knowledge base required for comprehension appears to be sound (Barnes et al., 1996; Cain et al., 2001).

The Key Stage 2 Learners' Academic Success

Table 3 presents the academic success of Key Stage 2 learners across various subjects, including their overall academic performance. The overall academic success is classified as "Satisfactory" ($M = 84.335$, $SD = 3.121$). The highest mean score was observed in MAPEH ($M = 88.218$, $SD = 4.031$), which falls under the "Very Satisfactory" category. This is followed by Science ($M = 85.738$, $SD = 4.295$) and TLE ($M = 85.079$, $SD = 3.746$), both rated as "Very Satisfactory." Subjects such as Filipino ($M = 84.777$, $SD = 3.974$), Araling Panlipunan ($M = 84.376$, $SD = 3.607$), ESP ($M = 83.822$, $SD = 4.220$), English ($M = 82.545$, $SD = 4.567$), and Mathematics ($M = 80.267$, $SD = 4.115$) were all classified as "Satisfactory."

The data indicates that learners exhibit robust performance in MAPEH, likely due to its integrative and interactive nature, encompassing music, arts, physical education, and health, which might engage students more effectively. Science and TLE also performed well, reflecting a possible emphasis on these subjects within the curriculum, supported by engaging teaching methods and resources. On the other hand, lower mean scores in Mathematics and English suggest that students may need help with challenges, including conceptual difficulties, limited resources, or less engaging pedagogical methods. The consistent "Satisfactory" performance in Filipino, Araling Panlipunan, and ESP suggests steady but average comprehension and achievement in these areas.

Table 3 Level of Academic Success of the Key Stage 2 Learners

| Variable | Mean | SD | Remarks |
|--------------------|--------|-------|-------------------|
| Filipino | 84.777 | 3.974 | Satisfactory |
| English | 82.545 | 4.567 | Satisfactory |
| Mathematics | 80.267 | 4.115 | Satisfactory |
| Science | 85.738 | 4.295 | Very Satisfactory |
| Araling Panlipunan | 84.376 | 3.607 | Satisfactory |
| ESP | 83.822 | 4.22 | Satisfactory |
| TITLE | 85.079 | 3.746 | Very Satisfactory |
| MAPEH | 88.218 | 4.031 | Very Satisfactory |
| Academic Success | 84.335 | 3.121 | Satisfactory |

Scale: 90-100 (Outstanding); 85-89 (Very Satisfactory); 80-84 (Satisfactory); 75-79 (Fairly Satisfactory)

The findings imply a need for targeted interventions in subjects where learners have lower mean scores, particularly Mathematics and English. Educational authorities and teachers should consider implementing specialized programs to address these gaps. Enhanced teacher training, focusing on innovative and interactive teaching strategies in these subjects, can help make them more engaging. Providing additional learning resources, such as interactive software, educational games, and tutoring programs, can support students struggling in these areas. Encouraging greater parental involvement through regular updates and home-based learning activities can reinforce concepts taught in school. Implementing frequent formative assessments to identify and address learning difficulties promptly can help improve overall academic success. Educators can help bridge performance gaps by focusing on these areas, fostering a more balanced and comprehensive academic development for Key Stage 2 learners.

This finding found that the respondents' academic progress was good. The results indicate that the respondents perform well academically (Kingco, 2015). Another comparable outcome revealed that elementary school students have good long-term academic achievement (Devs, 2016). The results also suggest that the critical 2-stage children perform on average, meeting the class's requirements.

Differences in the Key Stage 2 Learners' Reading Performance and Demographic Profile

Table 4 provides insights into the variations in reading performance among Key Stage 2 learners, categorized by demographic profiles. The analysis reveals significant differences in comprehension and vocabulary based on age and grade level, with older learners or those in higher grades demonstrating superior performance.

Conversely, sex does not appear to play a significant role in reading proficiency across all indicators. However, age significantly influences fluency, suggesting developmental differences in reading fluency among different age groups. These findings underscore the importance of tailoring instructional approaches to suit learners' developmental stages and grade levels.

Moreover, interventions to enhance comprehension and vocabulary skills, particularly for younger or lower-grade learners, could help narrow the performance gaps. Additionally, professional development opportunities for teachers to effectively teach reading across diverse age groups and grade levels are warranted.

However, the study did not find significant correlations between reading performance and sex, suggesting that gender differences may not significantly influence reading proficiency among Key Stage 2 learners.

While age and grade level impact comprehension and vocabulary skills, they may affect fluency less. Thus, interventions targeting age and grade level may be particularly effective in enhancing reading proficiency in this population, while considerations of sex may not be as critical.

Age studies may use cross-sectional methods to compare different age cohorts simultaneously or longitudinal approaches to track the same students' growth over time (Alfifi & Abed, 2017). These studies may also use hierarchical linear modeling to account for the fact that students are nested inside classrooms and schools and better understand how individual grade levels interact with academic success (Fairless, 2020).

The findings from Table 4 carry significant implications for educators, parents, and policymakers invested in enhancing reading proficiency among Key Stage 2 learners. The significant correlations between age, grade level, and reading performance underscore the importance of tailored interventions considering learners' developmental stages and educational progress.

Table 4 Differences in the reading performance of key stage 2 learners when grouped by demographic profile

| Indicators | Test Statistics | p-Value | Remarks |
|---------------|-----------------|---------|-----------------|
| Comprehension | | | |
| Sex | T=0.37 | 0.713 | Not Significant |
| Age | F=3.16 | 0.003 | Significant |
| Grade Level | F=4.69 | 0.01 | Significant |
| Fluency | | | |
| Sex | T=1.65 | 0.101 | Not Significant |
| Age | F=2.43 | 0.021 | Significant |
| Grade Level | F=2.29 | 0.104 | Not Significant |
| Vocabulary | | | |
| Sex | T=1.84 | 0.068 | Not Significant |
| Age | F=1.67 | 0.118 | Not Significant |
| Grade Level | F=5.47 | 0.005 | Significant |

Note: **p < 0.01 (Highly Significant); *p < 0.05 (Significant); p > 0.05 (Not Significant)

Educators can utilize these insights to design instructional approaches that cater to learners' specific needs and abilities at different age groups and grade levels. For example, implementing differentiated instruction strategies and providing targeted support to younger or lower-grade learners may help bridge the performance gaps observed in comprehension and vocabulary.

Moreover, educators can collaborate with parents to reinforce reading skills at home through activities such as reading aloud, engaging in discussions about texts, and encouraging regular reading habits. Policymakers are crucial in allocating resources towards initiatives that support age-appropriate reading materials, teacher professional development opportunities, and parental engagement programs.

Correlation between key stage 2 Learners' Reading Performance and Academic Success.

Table 5 delineates the correlation between reading performance and academic success among Key Stage 2 learners. The analysis reveals a highly statistically significant correlation ($r = 0.682$, $p < .001$) between reading proficiency and academic achievement. This finding underscores the pivotal role of reading skills in overall academic success among learners at this stage. Students with stronger reading abilities are likelier to excel across various subjects, as reading comprehension is fundamental to understanding and synthesizing information in academic contexts. These results emphasize the importance of prioritizing literacy development initiatives to enhance students' reading skills, bolstering their academic performance and long-term educational outcomes.

Table 5 Correlation between key stage 2 learners' reading performance and academic success

| Variables | r value | p-value | Remarks |
|------------------|---------|---------|----------------------------------|
| Academic Success | 0.682 | < .001 | Highly statistically significant |

Note: **p < 0.01 (Highly Significant); *p < 0.05 (Significant); p > 0.05 (Not Significant)

This finding suggests that individuals' perceptions of their performance are significantly related to their academic achievements. This finding is similar to the study: students with better reading comprehension skills also performed better in science and mathematics (Akbash et al., 2016).

Similarly, the article discusses the benefits of reading daily, including improved comprehension, vocabulary, and critical thinking skills. These skills are essential for success in all academic subjects (Auld, 2019). Moreover, a study found that students who read for pleasure have higher grades in all subjects, not just English. This suggests that reading for enjoyment can lead to academic success (Whitten. et al. 2016).

This study reveals that the relationship between reading and academic performance builds on and reinforces the findings of Tsegaw (2023), who discovered that reading comprehension and fluency skills were connected to students' academic success. The research suggests a positive correlation between reading performance and academic success. Students who read well are better equipped to learn and succeed in all areas of school.

It holds crucial implications for educators, parents, and policymakers. Educators should prioritize literacy instruction and implement evidence-based strategies tailored to students' needs, such as differentiated instruction and literacy interventions.

Parents can support their children's reading development by fostering a literacy-rich home environment and encouraging regular reading habits. Policymakers should allocate resources towards initiatives that promote early literacy development and provide professional development opportunities for teachers in literacy instruction.

FINDINGS

The analysis of the data gathered, the study reveals that:

1. The sex distribution among participants demonstrated a near-equal split between male and female individuals. It predominantly included children in the 9-11 age range, with Grade 5 having the highest participation.
2. The learners exhibit a consistent reading performance across various aspects, with vocabulary knowledge emerging as their strongest area. However, the overall "fair" assessment across all variables suggests significant room for improvement in reading skills.
3. The learners demonstrated robust performance in MAPEH, potentially attributed to its integrative and interactive nature, encompassing music, arts, physical education, and health, which may engage students more effectively. Similarly, Science and TLE also exhibited strong performance, reflecting a possible emphasis on these subjects within the curriculum, supported by engaging teaching methods and resources. Conversely, lower mean scores in Mathematics and English implied that students may encounter challenges, such as conceptual difficulties, limited resources, or less engaging pedagogical methods in these subjects. Despite this, the consistent "Satisfactory" performance in Filipino, Araling Panlipunan, and ESP indicated steady but average comprehension and achievement in these areas.
4. There are disparities in comprehension and vocabulary based on age and grade level, showcasing superior performance among older or higher-grade learners. Conversely, the influence of sex on reading proficiency appears negligible across all indicators. However, age significantly impacts fluency, indicating developmental variations in reading fluency across distinct age groups.
5. There was a highly statistically significant correlation between reading proficiency and academic achievement. This highlighted the pivotal role of reading skills in overall academic success among learners at this stage. Students with higher levels of reading proficiency were more likely to excel academically, as strong reading skills were foundational to success across various subjects.

CONCLUSION

From the findings, the study deduced that:

1. The near-equal split in sex distribution and the predominant presence of children aged 9-11, especially in Grade 5, suggest a well-rounded participant profile. This balanced representation enables

comprehensive analysis across age and grade levels, offering valuable insights into reading proficiency trends.

2. While learners demonstrate a consistent level of reading performance across various aspects, the overall assessment of "fair" underscores significant opportunities for improvement. Despite emerging vocabulary as a strong suit, the need for targeted interventions to enhance reading proficiency is evident.
3. Learners exhibit robust performance in integrative subjects like MAPEH, Science, and TLE, possibly due to their interactive nature and engaging instructional methods. However, lower scores in Mathematics and English highlight areas where students may face challenges, emphasizing the importance of tailored support and enhanced teaching strategies.
4. Significant disparities in comprehension and vocabulary based on age and grade level suggest that older or higher-grade learners tend to outperform their younger or lower-grade counterparts. While sex appears to have minimal impact on reading proficiency, age notably affects fluency, indicating developmental variations across age groups.
5. The highly significant correlation between reading proficiency and academic achievement underscores the pivotal role of reading skills in overall academic success among Key Stage 2 learners. Strengthening these skills is essential for empowering students to excel across diverse subjects and attain academic milestones.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and conclusion, the study recommends to:

1. Implement targeted interventions: Develop and implement targeted interventions to enhance overall reading proficiency, focusing on areas of weakness such as comprehension and fluency.
2. Enhance instructional strategies: Invest in innovative and engaging instructional strategies, particularly in Mathematics and English, to address conceptual difficulties and improve student engagement.
3. Provide professional development: Offer professional development opportunities for educators to enhance their teaching methods and strategies, particularly in subjects where students demonstrate lower proficiency levels.
4. Foster parental involvement: Encourage parental involvement in supporting reading development at home, promoting regular reading habits and providing access to diverse reading materials.
5. Address demographic disparities: To ensure equitable educational opportunities, address demographic disparities in reading performance by providing tailored support and resources to younger or lower-grade learners.
6. For future researchers, it is recommended to explore longitudinal studies: Conduct longitudinal studies to examine the long-term impact of reading proficiency on academic achievement and educational outcomes among Key Stage 2 learners; the effectiveness of specific interventions and instructional approaches in improving reading skills and academic success among Key Stage 2 learners; include diverse populations and contexts to better understand the factors influencing reading performance and academic achievement among Key Stage 2 learners; and evaluate the outcomes of intervention programs to determine their effectiveness in improving reading proficiency and academic success among Key Stage 2 learners.

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