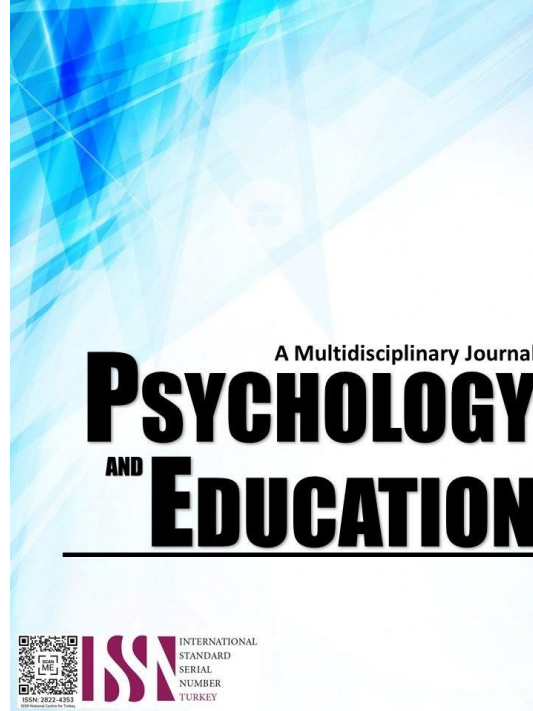


SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS AND LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION



PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL

Volume: 40

Issue 5

Pages: 690-703

Document ID: 2025PEMJ3884

DOI: 10.70838/pemj.400508

Manuscript Accepted: 05-13-2025

Socio-Demographic Factors and Learners' Reading Comprehension

Jedean Blossom A. Ligutan,* Dr. Susan S. Olana
For affiliations and correspondence, see the last page.

Abstract

This study was conducted to find the relationship between socio-demographic factors and learners' reading comprehension. It applied the descriptive-correlation research design. It was conducted in the public elementary schools of Quezon II District, Division of Bukidnon, School Year 2023-2024. The respondents were all grade six learners in the locale's big schools. Purposive sampling was used to determine the respondents. A researcher-made survey questionnaire instrument was used to gather. Frequency count and percentage and Pearson r Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient or Pearson r. Most respondents were females aged 11 to 12, members of the Bukidnon Tribe. Their fathers were at the elementary school level, their mothers were at the high school level, and their fathers and mothers were farm laborers. They utilized television as a learning resource at home and had television, tablets, books, and dictionaries within the school environment. They had no Internet connection at home. The majority of learner-respondents fall into the instructional reader category. The findings demonstrate statistically significant relationships with learners' reading comprehension, precisely, sex, fathers' educational attainment, utilization of learning resources at home, utilization of learning resources at school, and internet connection exhibit positive correlations with reading comprehension. The following recommendations are offered now: The communities parents offered may motivate their children, irrespective of gender, to give importance to and participate in reading activities. The teachers may employ differentiated instruction tactics that address the many reading comprehension levels present in the classroom. The school heads may prioritize establishing fair and equal access to educational resources within the school setting.

Keywords: *socio-demographic factors, learners' reading comprehension*

Introduction

A learner's capacity to learn must be considered. A genius can rise among a non-professional family, and a struggling learner may also hail from a well-to-do family. However, research has shown that sociodemographic profiles could affect a learner's reading comprehension skills.

The act of reading is considered a crucial component in the process of acquiring knowledge and skills. Developing proficient and versatile reading abilities significantly augments the likelihood of achieving academic achievement and thriving in several contexts beyond the educational realm. Reading extends beyond the confines of academic settings and holds relevance in other aspects of one's existence. Engaging in diverse forms of reading is crucial for acquiring a more comprehensive knowledge base, enhancing self-awareness, and fostering a more profound comprehension of others. It enables individuals to become conscientious and productive participants in a democratic and harmonious community.

Proficiency in reading is an essential aptitude for accessing and retrieving information. A nation where individuals of all age groups engage in trivial matters with minimal enthusiasm for valuable knowledge and education is destined for failure. The comprehensive process of education and the cultivation of literacy heavily rely on printed words. As a pivotal method, reading is fundamental in fostering literacy skills and acquiring knowledge about one's surroundings. According to Issa and Aliyu (2012), comprehensive and practical education encompasses the practice of individual inquiry. The practice of personal exploration necessitates engaging in self-directed study, which is complemented by reflective contemplation and critical analysis. The practice of self-study, also known as voluntary reading, requires the development of a habitual routine.

The demographic factors and life experiences associated with age-related changes in comprehension (including skill acquisition and development, decline, maintenance, compensation, and improvement) and understanding the epidemiology of age-related decline in comprehension. Bray et al. (2004, as cited by Tor-Akwer Chorus, 2014) noted that college students' literacy, which includes reading comprehension and attitude toward literacy activities, fluctuated depending on the background variables such as race, gender, and prior literacy activities. Amongst these trends that affect reading habits are age and gender; specifically, preferences change as children get older, and boys and girls may exhibit different reading habits.

Also, one notable connection is boys' relatively poor literacy performance compared to girls in school and on standardized achievement tests. Concern over this "gender gap" has prompted much research. Studies attempting to explain the discrepancy between girls' and boys' academic achievement often look at reading preferences, specifically, if there is a difference in the reading habits and choices of boys and girls. Additionally, studies have examined how these habits change over time – particularly as the gap widens around middle school. Sturm (2003) (Tor-Akwer & Chorus, 2014) suggested that age and gender affect reading preferences, which change as a child ages. He asserts that girls enjoy reading more than boys, and boys tend to hold more negative attitudes toward reading than girls. Hopper (2005 as cited by Tor-Akwer & Chorus, 2014) depicts that (67%) of girls were reading compared with (54%) of boys.

Hill Strategies Research (2008, as cited by Tor-Akwer Chorun, 2014) researched Canadians on demographic factors in book reading and submitted that overall, book reading is an activity enjoyed fairly equally by many groups. The only demographic factors that substantially impact book reading rates are education and sex. Hill Strategies Research (2008) further expresses that the book reading rate for individuals whose mothers obtained a university degree (79%) is 1.2 times the rate for individuals whose mothers did not get a high school diploma (65%). Also, Demographic factors that have either a limited or no impact on book reading include age, income, presence of children, residing in an urban area, language, country of birth, and activity limitations.

When a teacher had already done her best but still, the learners seemed to not display retention nor progress in reading at all, she could not help but wonder if the socio-demographic background has a significant relationship to the problem posed. Hence, the researcher would like to study the relationship between the socio-demographic factors and students' reading comprehension: the basis for developing instructional materials in District of Quezon II, Division of Bukidnon, the school year 2023-2024.

Research Questions

This study was conducted to find the relationship between the socio-demographic factors and learners' reading comprehension in District of Quezon II, Division of Bukidnon, School Year 2023-2024. Specifically, this study endeavored to answer the following questions:

1. What is the respondents' socio-demographic profile regarding age, sex, ethnic group, parents' educational attainment, parents' occupation, utilization of learning resources at home and school, and internet connection?
2. What is the learners' reading comprehension?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the socio-demographic profile of respondents and the learner's reading comprehension?

Methodology

Research Design

This study followed the descriptive-correlation design. It determined the relationship between the socio-demographic factors and learners' reading comprehension in District of Quezon II, Division of Bukidnon, School Year 2023-2024.

Data on respondents' socio-demographic profiles and reading comprehension were obtained through the researcher-made questionnaire. Learners' reading comprehension is based on the result of the reading assessment through Phil-IRI Pre-Test School Year 2023-2024.

Respondents

This study was conducted in the public elementary schools of Quezon II District, Division of Bukidnon, School Year 2023-2024. The Municipality of Quezon encompasses a land area of 71,128 hectares, with around 33.35% of this expanse designated for agricultural use. The town, the Sugar Capital of Bukidnon, derives its economic strength from the sugar milling industry. Quezon province is also recognized as the location of Busco Sugar Milling Co., which stands as one of the prominent sugar mills in the country, boasting a significant milling capacity and serving as a critical hub for sugar production within the region. The presence of Busco has significantly contributed to the growth of the local economy and has facilitated the creation of a substantial number of employment opportunities since the 1970s.

The pineapple business in Quezon has shown significant growth despite its comparatively recent establishment. One example is Del Monte Philippines, Inc., which initiated its initial pineapple operations in the Municipality in 2008 and developed a fresh fruit packing facility in Barangay San Jose. Davao Agri-Ventures Corporation, Inc. (DAVCO) is involved in pineapple cultivation activities within the Municipality.

Corn and lowland rice plantations occupy the majority of agricultural land. The remaining land allocated for agricultural purposes is used to cultivate seasonal crops, vegetables, and perennial crops like coconut and rubber.

Cattle production is a significant economic driver in the local region of Quezon, encompassing around 3.76% of its total geographical area. Ozamis Agricultural Development, Inc. (OADI), Kiantig/Fortich Farm (now known as Kiantig Development Corporation or KDC), Rancho Montalvan Inc. (RMI), located in Brgy. San Jose and Circle T Farms are notable pioneers in this business. These ranches engage in cattle breeding and provide live animals for local consumption, as well as meat sellers in nearby urban areas and cities. Small-scale cattle and swine producers also support the local meat industry.

According to the data from 2014, the labor force participation rate stands at 73.92%. Among this group, 85.39% are engaged in agricultural, forestry, and fishing occupations, 12.92% are classified as laborers and unskilled workers, and 1.29% are employed in government agencies and private corporations. At the same time, the remaining portion of the working population is involved in the service and sales sector.

Quezon is situated in the southern portion of Bukidnon, encompassed by Valencia City to the north, the municipalities of Maramag and Don Carlos to the west, San Fernando to the east, and Kitaotao to the south. Located 75 kilometers from Malaybalay City, the

province's seat, the region under consideration encompasses a total land area of 71,128 hectares or 711.28 square kilometers. According to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), almost half of the total land area is designated timberland, with the remaining 20,878 hectares categorized as alienable.

The Municipality of Quezon was divided into four (4) districts: Quezon I, II, III, and IV. This study was mainly conducted in the District of Quezon II. Its district office is situated in Salawagan, Quezon, Bukidnon. The district comprises 12 elementary schools, three integrated schools, and one national high school. Figure 2 shows the map of the locale of the study.

The study's respondents were all grade six learners in the big schools in Quezon II District, Division of Bukidnon, SY 2023-2024. The district has four big schools: Salawagan Central Elementary School, Dilapa Integrated School, Sta. Cruz Integrated School and Mibantang Integrated School.

Table 1 presents the distribution of respondents by school.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents by School

<i>School</i>	<i>Number of Respondents</i>	
Salawagan Central Elementary School	178	123
Dilapa Integrated School	71	60
Sta. Cruz Integrated School	41	39
Mibantang Integrated School	55	51
Total	345	273

Instrument

The instrument used to gather the needed data was a researcher-made two-part survey questionnaire.

Part I was about the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, ethnic group, parents' educational attainment, parents' occupation, learning resources at home and school, and internet connection.

Part II concerned the learners' reading comprehension during the Philiri pretest assessment. The teacher-adviser of the grade six learners sought to provide this information.

Procedure

The present study adhered to the appropriate protocol as a standard operational method for conducting research at Valencia Colleges (Bukidnon) Incorporated—the initial step involved soliciting approval and an endorsement letter from the Dean of Graduate Studies. Subsequently, the document was forwarded for review and consideration to the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division of Bukidnon. Once the researcher had obtained the necessary approval, she sought permission from the Public Schools District Supervisor of Quezon II District. Subsequently, the researcher asked for consent from the School Heads of the selected educational institutions to conduct a study within their jurisdiction. Subsequently, the questionnaires were administered to the selected participants, and then the instruments were retrieved and coded.

Results and Discussion

This section presents findings, analyzes the problems posed, and interprets them in the light of descriptive research.

This study found the necessary data to describe the socio-demographic profile of respondents in terms of age, sex, ethnic group, parents' educational attainment, parents' occupation, utilization of learning resources at home and school, and internet connection. It also determined the learners' reading comprehension level during the Phil-IRI pretest assessment. The data were used to examine the significant relationship between the socio-demographic profile of respondents and the learners' reading comprehension.

The following sections present and discuss the respondents' socio-demographic profile regarding age, sex, parents' educational attainment, occupation, home learning resources, and internet connection.

Table 2 presents the socio-demographic profile of respondents in terms of age.

Table 2. Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents in terms of Age

<i>Age</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
10 Years Old	0	0
11 Years Old	76	38.0
12 Years Old	110	55.0
13 Years Old	14	7.0
Total	200	100.0

As presented in Table 2 on the socio-demographic profile of respondents categorized by age, among the 200 respondents, the majority fall within the 11 to 12 years old age range ($f = 76$ 38.0%) and ($f = 110$ or 55.0%) 12 years old. Surprisingly, there is a relatively low

representation of respondents at the younger age of 10 years old, with no data provided for this age group. Additionally, only a small proportion of respondents are 13 years old ($f = 14$ or 7.0%); this distribution suggests that the sample population predominantly consists of pre-adolescents, particularly those in the 11 to 12 age brackets.

This suggests a notable clustering of participants in the pre-adolescent phase of development. Remarkably, there needs to be more representation for the demographic of children aged 10, as no data is available for this particular age group. The data indicates further that the high proportion of participants in the pre-adolescent period could affect how we understand and use the research findings, as the results may be more relevant to people within this particular age group.

Table 3 shows the socio-demographic profile of respondents in terms of sex.

Table 3. *Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents in terms of Sex*

<i>Sex</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
Male	85	42.5
Female	115	57.5
Total	200	100

As shown in Table 3 on the socio-demographic profile of respondents categorized by sex, among the 200 respondents surveyed, there is a clear majority of females, with 115 individuals (57.5%) identifying as female. In contrast, males constitute a smaller portion of the sample, with 85 respondents (42.5%) identifying as male. This distribution suggests a slightly higher representation of females within the sample population.

The disproportionate number of females in the sample has implications for interpreting the research findings. This implies that female viewpoints, encounters, and attributes are more significant in the analysis. The higher proportion of female participants presents an opportunity to investigate gender-related patterns and trends within the study's scope.

It is crucial to recognize that the gender distribution of the sample may not accurately reflect that of the whole population. Therefore, it is vital to use caution when applying the findings to the larger population. Possible factors that may have influenced the gender composition of the sample include recruitment tactics, geographic location, and the nature of the research issue.

Heterogeneous groups promote diverse perspectives; Briggs (2023) mentioned that collaboration and peer teaching could enhance critical thinking and problem-solving skills, benefiting all students involved, girls and boys. To add, boys will not only learn the skills limited only to their gender but may also learn those of the other gender and girls. This encourages both learners to understand each other and become more intelligent in the psychological aspect of our physical selves. This learning style builds rapport between learners and significantly impacts their communication skills.

One notable demographic variable under consideration in this research is the gender composition of the learners. The influence of gender on the academic accomplishment of pupils has explicitly been explored in reading proficiency in learners who do not have disabilities (Ezeokoli & Ezenandu, 2013). Insufficient attention has been given to the academic performance of students with impairments in their ability to comprehend written texts. According to Cekiso (2016), it is crucial to engage in a discourse regarding the disparities in gender in the understanding of texts. This is particularly significant due to the increasing prevalence of subpar reading performance among male and female students in national and international assessments.

According to Reilly, Neumann, and Andrews (2018), there is evidence to imply that females have superior linguistic talents compared to males. The accuracy of this submission, especially among students experiencing academic challenges in Nigeria, has yet to be determined. Hence, it is imperative to examine the correlation between the academic performance of male and female students with learning difficulties in the context of reading comprehension.

Table 4 shows the socio-demographic profile of respondents in terms of Ethnic Group.

Table 4. *Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents in terms of Ethnic Group*

<i>Ethnic Group</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
Bukidnon	128	64.0
Ilonggo	5	2.5
Lumad (IP)	5	2.5
Cebuano	58	29.0
Ilocano	1	.5
Others	3	1.5
Total	200	100.0

As shown in Table 4 on the socio-demographic profile of respondents categorized by ethnic group, the majority identify as Bukidnon among the 200 respondents surveyed, constituting 64.0% of the sample population. Cebuano is the next prominent ethnic group, with 58 respondents (29.0%) identifying as such. The representation of other ethnic groups is relatively low, with only a small number of

respondents identifying as Ilonggo, Lumad (IP), Ilocano, or belonging to other ethnicities. This distribution indicates a significant prevalence of individuals from the Bukidnon ethnic group within the surveyed population.

An important observation is the high incidence of people belonging to the Bukidnon ethnic group in the examined population. It implies that the study might have been conducted in a location or community where the Bukidnon ethnicity is dominant or that specific recruitment strategies were used to attract individuals from this group specifically. The high concentration of respondents from Bukidnon may impact on the interpretation of the research findings since the viewpoints, experiences, and features of the Bukidnon ethnic group may have a more substantial influence and shape the overall results.

When applying the findings to the larger population, it is essential to note the underrepresentation of other ethnic groups, such as Ilonggo, Lumad (IP), Ilocano, and others. The sample may not wholly represent the ethnic variety within the target population or the research location.

Table 5 shows the respondents' socio-demographic profile regarding fathers' educational attainment.

Table 5. Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents in terms of Fathers' Educational Attainment

<i>Fathers' Educational Attainment</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
Elementary Level	128	64.0
Elementary Graduate	5	2.5
High School Level	5	2.5
High School Graduate	58	29.0
College Level	1	.5
College Graduate	3	1.5
Total	200	100.0

As shown in Table 5 on the socio-demographic profile of respondents categorized by their fathers' educational attainment, among the 200 respondents surveyed, a significant proportion of fathers have attained education up to the elementary level, representing 64.0% of the sample population. High school graduates followed, with 58 respondents (29.0%) having completed high school. The remaining categories, including elementary graduates, individuals with education up to high school level, college graduates, and those with education up to college level, have relatively lower representation within the sample population. This distribution suggests that most respondents' fathers have attained education up to the elementary level, with fewer progressing to higher levels of education.

Table 6 shows the respondents' socio-demographic profile regarding mothers' educational attainment.

Table 6. Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents in terms of Mothers' Educational Attainment

<i>Mothers' Educational Attainment</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
Elementary Level	53	26.5
Elementary Graduate	27	13.5
High School Level	55	27.5
High School Graduate	35	17.5
College Level	14	7.0
College Graduate	16	8.0
Total	200	100.0

As shown in Table 6 on the socio-demographic profile of respondents categorized by their mothers' educational attainment, among the 200 respondents surveyed, mothers' educational levels vary across different categories. A notable proportion of mothers have achieved education up to the high school level, with 55 respondents (27.5%) having completed high school and 35 respondents (17.5%) being high school graduates. Furthermore, many mothers have attained education up to the elementary level, with 53 respondents (26.5%) falling into this category. The remaining categories, including elementary graduates, individuals with education up to college level, and college graduates, also contribute to the overall educational profile of mothers. This distribution underscores the diverse educational backgrounds of mothers within the sample population.

Table 7 shows the respondents' socio-demographic profile regarding fathers' occupations.

Table 7. Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents in terms of Fathers' Occupation

<i>Fathers' Occupation</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
Regular Employee	36	18.0
Farming	22	11.0
Self-Employed/Business	41	20.5

Farm Labor	55	27.5
Others	23	11.5
Total	200	100.0

As shown in Table 7 on the socio-demographic profile of respondents categorized by their fathers' occupation, among the 200 respondents surveyed, fathers' occupations vary across different categories. A significant proportion of fathers are engaged in farm labor, with 55 respondents (27.5%) working in this sector. Additionally, fathers' self-employment or business ownership is prevalent, with 41 respondents (20.5%) falling into this category. Regular employment follows, with 36 respondents (18.0%) identified as regular employees. Farming is another common occupation, with 22 respondents (11.0%) engaged in agricultural activities. The remaining respondents belong to other occupational categories, contributing to the overall diversity of fathers' occupations within the sample population.

The distribution of fathers' occupations mirrors the occupational composition of the examined population. The high occurrence of agricultural labor and entrepreneurship indicates substantial participation of the respondents' fathers in these industries. This discovery could have significant implications for the economic and social dynamics within the community or region being examined.

Including regular employment and farming as prevalent jobs suggests that the respondents' fathers adhered to more conventional or established employment trends. These professions may have distinct consequences for the stability of income, chances for career advancement, or the availability of resources for the families involved.

The presence of additional occupational groups among the remaining respondents underscores the diversity within the sample population. Examining these varied professions can offer significant perspectives on the distinct situations and encounters of households with fathers involved in uncommon or specialized industries.

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) also investigates the determinants that impact this process. The factors that impact student academic accomplishment are learning curriculum, school, and the education system. Learner factors encompass several elements, such as students' gender, the socioeconomic condition of their family, motivation (including interest in learning, level of involvement, and self-confidence), and expectations for education.

Table 8 shows the respondents' socio-demographic profile regarding mothers' occupations.

Table 8. *Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents in terms of Mothers' Occupation*

<i>Mothers' Occupation</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
Regular Employee	39	19.5
Farming	75	37.5
Self-Employed/Business	7	3.5
Farm Labor	21	10.5
Others	58	29.0
Total	200	100

As shown in Table 8 on the socio-demographic profile of respondents categorized by their mothers' occupation. Among the 200 respondents surveyed, mothers' occupations vary across different categories. Farming is the most prevalent occupation among mothers, with 75 respondents (37.5%) engaged in agricultural activities. Following farming, a notable proportion of mothers are identified as regular employees, with 39 respondents (19.5%) working in formal employment settings. Other occupations include farm labor, self-employment or business ownership, and miscellaneous categories labeled "Others," contributing to the diversity of mothers' occupational profiles within the sample population.

The high occurrence of moms involved in farming shows a substantial level of participation by the respondents' mothers in agricultural activities. This observation could indicate the town's or region's economic organization, cultural environment, or geographical position. It indicates that agriculture has a significant role in the lives and household dynamics of the examined population.

The depiction of mothers working as regular workers in official employment settings emphasizes the existence of more conventional or mainstream job patterns among a significant share of the respondents' moms. These factors could potentially affect the stability of income, the availability of job prospects, and the accessibility of social services or resources for the families involved.

Incorporating additional occupational classifications, such as agricultural labor, self-employment, or entrepreneurship, and the miscellaneous "Others" group showcases the variety within the sample population. Examining these diverse professions can offer valuable perspectives on the distinct situations, responsibilities, and impacts of mothers in varied work environments.

Table 9 shows respondents' socio-demographic profile regarding utilizing learning resources at home.

Table 9. *Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents in terms of Utilization of Learning Resources at Home*

<i>Utilization of Learning Resources at Home</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
TV	149	74.5
Tablet	35	17.5
Books	168	84.0
Encyclopedia	16	8.0
Computer/Laptop	40	20.0
Android Phone	153	76.5
Magazines/Newspapers	24	12.0
Dictionary	88	44.0
Others	20	10.0

As shown in Table 9, regarding the utilization of learning resources at home among the respondents, among the 200 surveyed individuals, various learning resources are prevalent within households. Television is the most widely utilized learning resource, with 149 respondents (74.5%) indicating its use. Books are also highly utilized, with 168 respondents (84.0%) reporting their presence in their homes, reflecting a strong emphasis on traditional forms of learning. Additionally, digital resources such as Android phones (76.5%) and computers/laptops (20.0%) are commonly accessed for learning purposes, highlighting the integration of technology into educational practices. Tablets (17.5%), encyclopedias (8.0%), magazines/newspapers (12.0%), and dictionaries (44.0%) are also utilized to varying extents, contributing to the diverse array of learning materials available within households.

The high occurrence of moms involved in farming shows a substantial level of participation by the respondents' mothers in agricultural activities. This observation could indicate the town's or region's economic organization, cultural environment, or geographical position. It indicates that agriculture has a significant role in the lives and household dynamics of the examined population.

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In a study conducted by Shamaki (2015), a sample of 337 secondary school students in Yobe State, Nigeria, was examined to determine the impact of the learning environment on mathematics performance. The findings indicated a statistically significant difference in the academic achievement of students who were exposed to a stimulating learning environment compared to those who were not.

The results suggest that the learning environment plays a crucial role in shaping students' academic performance, specifically in the context of mathematics. A stimulating learning environment can enhance students' motivation, engagement, and comprehension of mathematical concepts. It provides opportunities for active learning, critical thinking, and collaboration, which are essential for developing mathematical skills.

Table 10 shows respondents' socio-demographic profile regarding utilizing learning resources at school.

Table 10. *Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents in terms of Utilization of Learning Resources at School*

<i>Utilization of Learning Resources at Home</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
TV	200	100.0
Tablet	200	100.0
Books	200	100.0
Encyclopedia	0	0
Computer/Laptop	0	0
Android Phone	0	0
Magazines/Newspapers	0	0
Dictionary	123	61.5
Others	0	0

As shown in Table 10 on the utilization of learning resources at school among the respondents, among the 200 surveyed individuals, specific learning resources are universally available within the school environment. These include television, tablets, books, and dictionaries, with 100.0% utilization reported for each resource. However, there needs to be more utilization reported for other resources such as encyclopedias, computers/laptops, Android phones, magazines/newspapers, and miscellaneous items, indicating that these

resources may not be commonly available or utilized within the school setting.

The research indicates that some learning tools are widely accessible in the classroom, while others are less frequently used.

Television, tablets, books, and dictionaries are fully utilized, with a utilization rate of 100.0%, in the educational environment. This suggests that these tools are routinely available and used by all participants in their educational experience at school. Television's existence implies the utilization of educational programs or movies as instructional tools or supplementary resources. Tablets, books, and dictionaries are vital tools for reading, conducting research, and accessing information in the classroom.

However, the lack of reported usage for resources such as encyclopedias, computers/laptops, Android phones, magazines/newspapers, and miscellaneous goods implies that these resources may not be widely accessible or used in the school environment. The school infrastructure or resources may need to be improved to facilitate the widespread use of these goods, or the survey respondents may have needed access to them during their time at school.

The findings suggest that there may be differences in the accessibility and usage of learning resources in various educational settings. The existence of universally accessible resources implies the need for a standardized method of providing those resources. Conversely, the lack of utilization of specific resources indicates that there may be constraints or deficiencies in the availability of such resources within the school setting.

Curriculum considerations encompass various elements such as instructional methodologies, the classroom environment experienced by students, the class size, the level of instructor support for student learning and personal development, utilization of textbooks, and other related aspects. School-level factors encompass various elements such as the school's management type (public or private), organizational structure, the caliber of teaching personnel, the quantity of computer resources, prevailing culture (including the conduct and ethical standards of both students and teachers), as well as the efficacy of school management. Additionally, classroom practices, which encompass classroom instructional activities, student assessments, study hours, and teacher supervision, contribute to the overall school-level factors (Rivkin et al., 2005).

In their study conducted in Osun State, Nigeria, Ayeni, Adeyemo, and Olanikanmi (2014) examined the relationship between school environmental elements and the academic performance of adolescents. Their findings revealed a significant association between the environmental characteristics present within schools and the academic achievements of high school students. Previous research examining the relationship between the learning environment within a school system and academic achievement has consistently demonstrated that the school environment plays a crucial role in shaping student learning outcomes (Chepkonga, 2017; Chikezie & Ekott, 2019; Duruji et al., 2014; Ngene et al., 2018).

Table 11 shows the socio-demographic profile of respondents in terms of internet connection.

Table 11. *Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents in terms of Internet Connection*

<i>Internet Connection</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
Presence	78	39.0
Absence	122	61.0
Total	200	100

As shown in Table 11 on the socio-demographic profile of respondents regarding internet connection, among the 200 surveyed individuals, 39.0% reported having internet access. In contrast, 61.0% indicated its absence within their households. This distribution highlights the digital divide within the community, with a significant portion of respondents lacking access to the Internet.

The proportion of participants indicating internet access reflects the level of digital connectedness among the individuals surveyed. The estimated population possesses the necessary resources to access online platforms, get information, and utilize digital services. This group may benefit from accessing educational materials, online learning platforms, job opportunities, communication tools, and other resources that rely on the Internet.

Conversely, a majority of respondents reported that they did not have an internet connection in their homes. This indicates that a considerable segment of the population is encountering a digital gap, which entails restrictions or obstacles in their ability to access the internet and its advantages. Insufficient internet connection can significantly affect individuals' educational chances, access to information, employment prospects, social connectivity, and engagement in digital-driven activities.

The existence of a digital divide carries significant socio-economic and demographic consequences. Various factors may contribute to this division, including income discrepancies, geographic location, educational possibilities, and infrastructure limits. Gaining insight into the digital disparity among community members can facilitate the identification of specific areas where intervention, policy formulation, and resource allocation are needed to narrow the divide and foster digital inclusivity.

The learners' reading comprehension is presented and discussed next.

Table 12 shows the learners' reading comprehension level during the Phil-IRI pretest assessment.

Table 12. *Learners' Reading Comprehension Level during the Phil-IRI Pretest Assessment*

<i>Reading Level</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
Independent Readers	61	30.5
Instructional Readers	98	49.0
Frustration Readers	41	20.5
Total	200	100

As shown in Table 11 on the reading comprehension levels of learners during the Phil-IRI pretest assessment, the majority of the 200 assessed individuals fall into the instructional reader category, with 98 respondents (49.0%) achieving a score of 2. Following this, 61 respondents (30.5%) are classified as independent readers with a score of 3, while 41 respondents (20.5%) are categorized as frustrated readers with a score of 1. These categories reflect different proficiency levels in reading comprehension, with independent readers demonstrating a higher level of proficiency, instructional readers requiring some guidance and support, and frustrated readers encountering comprehension difficulties.

These findings indicate that these learners would benefit from supervision and support to better understand the materials they read. They could benefit from focused training, tactics, and interventions to improve their reading comprehension abilities.

This group exhibits a superior level of expertise in reading comprehension, suggesting their ability to comprehend texts autonomously and extract meaning proficiently. Proficient readers are more likely to have a firm understanding of comprehension strategies and possess the ability to comprehend texts at or above their grade level.

The findings suggest that these learners need help comprehending as they struggle to grasp and derive significance from the texts they read. Readers experiencing frustration may benefit from focused interventions, supplementary support, and personalized instruction to meet their needs and enhance their reading comprehension abilities.

The allocation of participants among these categories indicates varying levels of reading comprehension ability. The categories of instructional, autonomous, and frustrated readers provide a foundation for comprehending learners' capabilities and pinpointing places where intervention and help may be necessary.

The investigation also considers school-related factors, including demographic information such as school type, location, and the availability of school facilities. The final component that influences education, other than the school itself, encompasses the educational environment within the family and the allocation of leisure time. Using indicators regularly employed in prior studies is prevalent in contemporary empirical research. The assessment of student academic accomplishment encompasses various variables, including sociodemographic factors, student characteristics, instructor attributes, and school-related factors. Barbera et al. (2012) categorized additional studies based on personal characteristics, family-related factors, school-related factors, and social factors.

According to Kolawole (2009), Higher education in Nigeria has a diverse range of institutions, including universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, and other similar establishments, all of which prioritize cultivating reading skills. This level of advancement or progress is contingent upon achieving success at the secondary school level. The poor academic performance of students in higher education institutions can often be attributed to a deficiency in reading skills and reading comprehension. It is not unfounded to suggest that undergraduate students who struggle with reading comprehension may have encountered difficulties in this area since their primary school years. In essence, the development of reading comprehension skills at the elementary level is of utmost importance as it serves as a child's cornerstone and educational foundation. The student's overall academic achievement is severely compromised.

Compared to individuals experiencing academic challenges, learners with a strong comprehension of texts typically have proficient decoding abilities, read fluently, and demonstrate a wide-ranging vocabulary comprehension. According to Olu and Abiodun (2013), activating prior knowledge while reading is crucial in facilitating readers' comprehension and ability to grasp fundamental concepts presented in texts. In addition, proficient readers endeavor to comprehend the organization of the written material. The readers engage in critical analysis by contemplating the information presented in the text and inferring the implicit details that the author does not explicitly disclose.

The test of a significant relationship between the socio-demographic profile of respondents and the student's reading comprehension is presented and discussed below.

Table 13 shows the significant relationship test between respondents' socio-demographic profile and the learners' reading comprehension.

Table 13. *Test of Significant Relationship between the Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents and the Learners' Reading Comprehension*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
Age	-.128	.070	Not Significant
Sex	.165	.020	Significant

Ethnic Group	.011	.880	Not Significant
Fathers' Educational Attainment	.151	.012	Significant
Mothers' Educational Attainment	.059	.326	Not Significant
Father's Occupation	.057	.420	Not Significant
Mother's Occupation	-.071	.317	Not Significant
Utilization of Learning Resources at Home	.175	.013	Significant
Utilization of Learning Resources at School	.185	.009	Significant
Internet Connection	-.206	.003	Significant

As shown in Table 13 on the results of a test assessing the significant relationship between the socio-demographic profile of respondents and learners' reading comprehension, the variables examined include age, sex, ethnic group, fathers' educational attainment, mothers' educational attainment, fathers' occupation, mothers' occupation, utilization of learning resources at home, utilization of learning resources at school, and internet connection. The test results show correlation coefficients (r), p -values, and interpretations of significance.

Among the socio-demographic variables, sex ($r_b = .165$, p -value = .020), fathers' educational attainment ($r_b = .151$, p -value = .012), utilization of learning resources at home ($r_b = .175$, p -value = .013), utilization of learning resources at school ($r_b = .185$, p -value = .009), and internet connection ($RRB = -.206$, p -value = .003) demonstrate statistically significant relationships with learners' reading comprehension. Specifically, sex, fathers' educational attainment, utilization of learning resources at home, utilization of learning resources at school, and internet connection exhibit positive correlations with reading comprehension, indicating that certain demographic factors and access to learning resources are associated with higher reading comprehension levels among learners.

The evidence indicates a significant relationship between sex (gender) and reading comprehension. Consequently, specific gender categories may have elevated levels of reading comprehension in comparison to others. Nevertheless, in the absence of precise data regarding the correlation's direction (whether males or females exhibit superior reading comprehension), it becomes challenging to establish conclusive findings. Additional investigation is necessary to comprehend the essence of this association and the elements that contribute to it.

The results demonstrate a direct relationship between dads' educational achievements and their reading comprehension levels. These findings indicate that learners with highly educated fathers are likely to demonstrate superior reading comprehension abilities. This association emphasizes the possible impact of parental education on a child's literacy development and the significance of parental engagement and assistance in fostering reading abilities.

A positive correlation exists between using learning tools at home and reading comprehension. This discovery suggests that learners who can utilize and actively interact with diverse learning resources in their homes, such as books, television, digital devices, and other materials, are more inclined to exhibit elevated reading comprehension levels. This association highlights the importance of a conducive learning environment and varied resources in promoting reading proficiency.

The results indicate a direct relationship between using educational materials in schools and the degree of reading comprehension. Therefore, learners with ample access to diverse educational materials inside the school setting, including books, dictionaries, tablets, and television, are more inclined to demonstrate superior reading comprehension abilities. Having these materials in the classroom can offer extra assistance in developing learners' comprehension skills.

The study demonstrates a direct correlation between internet connectivity and reading comprehension levels. These findings suggest that individuals with internet access are more inclined to exhibit superior reading comprehension abilities. The internet offers various educational resources, texts, and interactive platforms that can improve reading comprehension skills. Utilizing online resources, e-learning platforms, and digital information can enhance reading experience and facilitate the development of literacy skills.

These connections demonstrate the impact of different demographic parameters and the availability of educational resources on learners' reading comprehension levels. Gaining insight into these connections can guide focused interventions, strategies for distributing resources, and educational policies to provide fair and equal access to learning materials and enhance reading skills for all students.

Curriculum considerations encompass several elements such as instructional methodologies, the classroom environment experienced by students, student-teacher ratios, instructor facilitation of student learning and well-being, utilization of educational resources, and other related aspects. School-level factors encompass various elements such as the school's management type (public or private), organizational structure, the caliber of teaching personnel, the number of computer resources, prevailing culture (including the conduct and ethical standards upheld by both students and teachers), as well as the efficacy of school management. Additionally, class practices, which encompass classroom teaching methodologies, student assessments, study hours, and teacher supervision within the classroom, among other factors, also contribute to the overall school-level dynamics (Rivkin et al., 2005).

In contradiction, according to the study of Tor-Akwer & Chorun (2014), demographic characteristics influence the reading habits and comprehension of undergraduate students when they utilize library resources at Benue State University, Makurdi. Based on the analysis presented in the preceding sections, it can be concluded that there is no statistically significant combined influence of the independent

variables, namely gender, age, marital status, degree of study, and occupation, on the reading habits of students.

On the other hand, age, ethnic group, mothers' educational attainment, fathers' occupation, and mothers' occupation do not show statistically significant relationships with learners' reading comprehension.

The absence of a statistically significant correlation between age and reading comprehension suggests that learners' reading abilities may be similar based on their age within the sample investigated. This discovery implies that factors other than the individual's age may significantly impact their reading comprehension abilities.

There is no statistically significant correlation between ethnic groups and reading comprehension, suggesting that learners' reading abilities do not differ considerably based on their ethnic backgrounds within the investigated sample. These results indicate that ethnicity may not significantly impact reading comprehension skills in this specific situation.

The absence of a statistically significant correlation between mothers' educational attainment and reading comprehension implies that the level of education of the learners' moms may not be a reliable indicator of their reading abilities among the surveyed group. Additional variables, such as the availability of educational materials, instructional methods, and personal learning preferences, influence one's ability to understand written text.

The lack of a statistically significant correlation between fathers' occupation and reading comprehension suggests that the specific sort of job held by learners' fathers may not strongly connect with their reading abilities in the investigated population. This implies that variables other than the father's work, such as academic assistance, socioeconomic level, and the quality of the home learning environment, can significantly impact reading comprehension.

Furthermore, the absence of a statistically significant correlation between mothers' occupations and reading comprehension implies that the specific sort of job held by learners' moms may not strongly indicate their reading skills among the investigated group. Reading comprehension skills may be more significantly influenced by parental participation, learning materials availability, and home literacy habits.

These data suggest that, within the group of people surveyed, these socio-demographic factors may not have a substantial impact on determining reading comprehension ability. Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that these discoveries are limited to the examined group and may not universally apply to different situations or groups. Additional research and analysis are required to examine the potential impacts of these socio-demographic characteristics on reading comprehension in various contexts.

Overall, the findings reveal that these socio-demographic factors may be weak predictors of reading comprehension abilities among the surveyed population. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant relationship between the socio-demographic profile of respondents and the learners' reading comprehension.

However, previous research has also examined other factors influencing academic achievement, including student characteristics such as demographic variables like gender, age, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic position (S. et al. Division, 2012). The study examines various factors associated with the learning process. These factors encompass teacher-related variables, such as demographic characteristics, teaching experience, student academic expectations, and teacher support (Payandeh et al. Farid-Rohani).

Conclusion

This study was conducted to find the relationship between socio-demographic factors and learners' reading comprehension in the District of Quezon II, Division of Bukidnon, School Year 2023-2024.

Specifically, this study endeavored to determine the socio-demographic profile of respondents in terms of age, sex, ethnic group, parents' educational attainment, parent's occupation, learning resources at home and school, and internet connection; determine the learners' reading comprehension; find the significant relationship between the socio-demographic profile of respondents and the learner's reading comprehension.

This study followed the descriptive-correlation design. It was conducted in the public elementary schools of Quezon II District, Division of Bukidnon, School Year 2023-2024. The respondents were all grade six learners in the locale's big schools. Purposive sampling was used to determine the respondents. The instrument used to gather the needed data was a researcher-made survey questionnaire, which underwent a pilot test to determine its validity and reliability. The tryout garnered Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of .76, meaning the instrument passed and was valid. Descriptive statistics such as frequency count and percentage and Pearson r Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient or Pearson r were used to interpret the data.

The majority of the respondents belong to the 11 to 12-year-old age range. The majority are females, primarily identified as Bukidnon; fathers have attained education up to the elementary level, mothers have achieved education up to the high school level, and fathers and mothers are engaged in farm labor. Television emerges as the most widely utilized learning resource at home. In contrast, specific learning resources, such as television, tablets, books, and dictionaries, are universally available within the school environment. Internet connection was only available in their households. This distribution highlights the digital divide within the community, with a significant portion of respondents lacking access to the Internet.

The majority fall into the instructional reader category.

The findings demonstrate statistically significant relationships with learners' reading comprehension, precisely, sex, fathers' educational attainment, utilization of learning resources at home, utilization of learning resources at school, and internet connection exhibit positive correlations with reading comprehension, indicating that certain demographic factors and access to learning resources are associated with higher levels of reading comprehension among learners.

The following conclusions were drawn from the findings: This research offers valuable information about the polled individuals' socio-demographic characteristics and educational resource availability. The findings highlight the significance of tackling the digital gap and advocating for fair access to the Internet and other educational resources to guarantee equal possibilities for educational progress among the assessed population.

The research findings reveal that most of the individuals tested are instructional readers. This indicates that a significant proportion of the individuals polled need assistance in improving their reading comprehension abilities.

The research results emphasize the considerable influence of certain demographic factors and the availability of educational resources on learners' reading comprehension skills. The substantial statistical linkages found between gender, fathers' level of education, use of learning materials at home and school, and access to the internet highlight their positive associations with reading comprehension abilities.

Considering the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are at this moment offered:

Parents in the community may motivate their children, irrespective of their gender, to value and participate in reading activities. They may utilize reading materials such as books, newspapers, or magazines to supplement their dependence on television as an educational tool within the house. In addition, consider exploring ways to increase access to educational materials within the home, such as acquiring books, dictionaries, or tablets, to enhance your child's reading comprehension skills.

The teachers may employ differentiated instruction tactics that address the many reading comprehension levels present in the classroom. They may implement focused interventions, such as personalized instruction in small groups or individualized sessions, to effectively address the specific requirements of students who need assistance in reading and facilitate their advancement in reading proficiency. They may also employ various teaching resources, such as leveled readers, visual organizers, and scaffolded exercises, to enhance their understanding. Incorporate specific reading comprehension tactics into your classes, instructing students to utilize prior information, generate predictions, pose inquiries, and assess their comprehension.

The school heads may prioritize establishing fair and equal access to educational resources within the school setting. They may ensure that classrooms are furnished with diverse resources, including books, tablets, and dictionaries, to facilitate the advancement of pupils' reading comprehension skills. They may also contemplate implementing measures to establish internet connectivity within the school premises or spearhead the crafting of instructional materials such as SIM, small books, big books, and others to help increase the appetite for reading among the learners and develop their reading skills.

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Affiliations and Corresponding Information

Jedean Blossom A. Ligutan

Dilapa Integrated School

Department of Education – Philippines

Dr. Susan S. Olana

Valencia Colleges (Bukidnon), Inc. – Philippines