

Reading Habits and Academic Performance of Intermediate Pupils in Selected Private Schools

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Abstract

This study examined the effects of reading habits on the academic performance of intermediate pupils in selected private schools in Binangonan, Rizal, during the School Year 2025–2026. The participating schools were Binangonan Catholic College, Claremont School of Binangonan, Raises Montessori Academe–Pantok Annex, Shining Light Christian School, and Zion Hills Academy. The respondents consisted of 150 intermediate pupils described according to sex, sibling position, number of children in the family, monthly family income, parents' educational attainment, and parents' occupation. A descriptive survey research design was employed using a researcher-made questionnaire-checklist to determine the perceived effects of reading habits in terms of knowledge acquisition, vocabulary development, fluency development, and comprehension skills. Documentary analysis was conducted using the pupils' first-quarter average grades to determine their level of academic performance. Findings revealed that respondents were almost evenly distributed by sex, with males slightly outnumbering females. Most were first-born children from families with four to five children and belonged to low-income households. The majority of parents were college graduates; most fathers were entrepreneurs, while most mothers were housewives. Pupils perceived reading habits to have a high effect on their academic performance across all measured areas. No significant differences were found in the perceived effects of reading habits when grouped according to sex, sibling position, family size, parents' educational attainment, or occupation. However, monthly family income showed a significant difference across all reading habit dimensions. Pupils achieved a very satisfactory level of academic performance. The study concluded that reading habits are strongly and positively correlated with academic performance, with monthly family income emerging as a significant influencing factor. It is recommended that schools strengthen structured reading programs and that teachers and parents collaboratively promote sustained reading engagement.

Keywords: reading habits, academic performance, intermediate pupils, vocabulary development, comprehension skills, private schools

1. Introduction

Education plays a vital role in shaping individuals and societies. It promotes self-esteem, creativity, productivity, and lifelong learning, serving as a foundation for human development and national progress. In the Philippine context, education is safeguarded under Article XIV, Section 2 of the 1987 Constitution, which mandates the State to establish and maintain a complete and integrated system of education responsive to societal needs. This constitutional provision underscores the responsibility of educational institutions to implement relevant curricula and effective instructional practices that address learners' diverse needs. One of the primary goals of the Philippine education system is to ensure that every child becomes a proficient reader at the appropriate grade level. Reading is fundamental to learning, as it enables pupils to comprehend complex texts, expand vocabulary, and develop critical thinking skills. In support of this goal, the Department of Education issued DepEd Memorandum No. 64, s. 2025, implementing the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL-Reading) Program. The program aims to provide structured and responsive interventions to learners who fall below expected reading proficiency levels. Such initiatives highlight the national priority of strengthening literacy skills across grade levels.

Reading is a complex cognitive process involving decoding, comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and meaning-making. Reading habits—defined by frequency, duration, purpose, and materials read—play a crucial role in shaping academic outcomes. Pupils who engage regularly in meaningful reading activities are more likely to demonstrate improved comprehension, fluency, and academic achievement. Abid (2023), Azmi (2021), Fimas (2021), and Ali (2023) reported significant positive correlations between reading habits and students' academic achievement. Similarly, Chizoba (2024) and Ameyaw (2021) found that consistent reading practices enhance pupils' performance. Locally, Madrazo (2021), Flavier (2023), and Meliton (2024) confirmed that reading habits significantly correlate with academic success and reading

comprehension. However, some studies such as Ojetunde (2023) and Tikas (2022) revealed no significant relationship, indicating inconsistencies in findings. Despite extensive research, notable gaps remain. Many foreign studies focused on secondary, tertiary, or ESL learners, while local studies often examined public school students or flexible learning contexts. Limited research has centered on intermediate pupils in private schools, particularly within Rizal Province. Moreover, prior studies frequently incorporated teachers or mixed respondents, whereas the present study focuses solely on pupils' self-perceptions of reading habits and their direct relationship with academic performance. Additionally, while some studies examined reading comprehension, fewer investigated overall academic performance as reflected in quarterly grades.

Based on the researcher's observations, intermediate pupils in private schools demonstrate moderate engagement in reading activities, often preferring digital platforms and social media over sustained book reading. Although many pupils show satisfactory academic performance, variations in vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension are evident. Distractions from mobile devices and limited structured reading time may influence the depth of engagement with texts. These classroom observations reinforce the need to systematically examine how reading habits relate to academic outcomes among intermediate learners. In view of these considerations, this study was conceived to determine the extent of the effects of reading habits on the academic performance of intermediate pupils in selected private schools. By addressing existing research gaps and situating the inquiry within the local private school context, the study aims to contribute to evidence-based strategies that strengthen reading culture and enhance academic achievement. The researcher's classroom observations indicate that Grade One pupils exhibit varying levels of comprehension and engagement, necessitating the use of diverse instructional strategies to support learning. These observations reinforce the relevance of the present study in assessing the extent of instructional strategies applied by teachers and their relationship to pupils' academic performance. By addressing these gaps, the study aims to provide insights for professional development, curriculum implementation, and evidence-based teaching practices in public elementary schools.

2. Materials and methods

2.1 Research Design

This study employed the descriptive survey research design complemented by documentary analysis to determine the extent of the effects of reading habits on the academic performance of intermediate pupils in selected private schools.

2.2 Research Setting

The participating schools were Binangonan Catholic College, Claremont School of Binangonan, Raises Montessori Academe-Pantok Annex, Shining Light Christian School, and Zion Hills Academy.

2.3 Respondents

The respondents consisted of 150 intermediate pupils described according to sex, sibling position, number of children in the family, monthly family income, parents' educational attainment, and parents' occupation.

2.4 Research Instruments

The study utilized a researcher-made questionnaire-checklist as the primary instrument for data collection. The instrument consisted of two parts. Part I gathered information on the respondents' profile, including sex, sibling position, number of children in the family, monthly family income, parents' educational attainment, and parents' occupation. Part II measured the extent of the effects of reading habits on the performance of intermediate pupils in four areas: knowledge acquisition, vocabulary development, fluency development, and comprehension skills. Each area contained ten items, for a total of forty items. The respondents rated each statement using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Least Effect) to 5 (Very High Effect). Academic performance was interpreted based on the pupils' average grades, categorized as Outstanding (90 and above), Very Satisfactory (85–89), Satisfactory (80–84), Fairly Satisfactory (75–79), and Did Not Meet Expectations (70–74). To ensure content validity, the questionnaire-checklist was reviewed and validated by the thesis adviser, professorial lecturers, the Dean of the Graduate Studies Program, and selected teachers. Their comments, suggestions, and recommendations were incorporated into the final version of the instrument to enhance its clarity, relevance, and alignment with the objectives of the study..

2.5 Data Collection

The researcher followed the Gantt Chart of Activities in the conduct of the study. This includes the formulation of research problem up to the revision of the manuscript and submission of the final copy. After the validation of the instrument, permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent. The questionnaire-checklists was administered to the respondents through the Google Survey form and printed questionnaire checklist in compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012. After the retrieval, the data were encoded and processed through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) in the College Statistical Center. Analysis and interpretation of data followed. Based on the interpreted data, summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations were formulated. After the oral defense, suggestions made by the panel members were incorporated. The manuscript was subjected to anti-plagiarism test in the statistical center. After the final editing and revision, hardbound copies were submitted to the Office of the Dean of the Graduate Studies Program and other offices concerned..

2.6 Data Analysis

The study utilized appropriate statistical tools to analyze and interpret the gathered data. Frequency, percentage, and rank distribution were used to describe the profile of the respondents. Weighted mean was applied to determine the extent of the perceived effects of reading habits on pupils' performance across the identified aspects. One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed to test for significant differences in perceptions when respondents were grouped according to profile variables. The level of academic performance was determined using frequency, mean, and standard deviation based on pupils' average grades. Finally, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used to examine the significant relationship between reading habits and academic performance.

2.7 Ethical Considerations

The study ensured the protection of the rights and welfare of all respondents. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the study. Confidentiality and anonymity of all information provided were strictly maintained, and data were used solely for research purposes. The researcher ensured that the respondents were treated with respect and that no harm, whether physical, emotional, or psychological, would result from their participation in the study.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Profile of the Respondents

It can be seen from the table the distribution of respondents by sex shows that there are more male students comprising 77 or 51.3%, while there are 73 or 48.7% who are females. In terms of sibling position, first-born children ranked highest with 75 or 50.0% followed by second-born with 52 or 34.7%, while fourth-born children ranked last, representing only 4 or 2.7% of the respondents. Regarding the number of children in the family, households with 4–5 children ranked first with 99 or 66.0%, followed by those with 6 and above with 6 or 16.0%, whereas single-child families ranked last at just 4 or 2.7%. For monthly family income, families earning ₱20,000 and above ranked first with 55 or 36.7%, followed by those earning ₱10,000–₱14,999 with 37 or 24.6%; meanwhile, those earning below ₱10,000 ranked last with 28 or 18.7%, showing that most respondents come from relatively higher-income households. In terms of parents' educational attainment, college-graduate fathers ranked first with 115 or 76.7% followed by high school graduates with 18 or 12.0%, while high school undergraduates ranked last with 4 or 2.6%. Similarly, college-graduate mothers ranked highest with 110 or 73.3%, followed by college undergraduates at 17 or 11.4%, with high school undergraduates again ranking last at 11 or 7.3%. As for parents' occupation, entrepreneur fathers ranked first at 39 or 26.0%, followed by locally employed fathers at 37 or 24.7%, while OFW fathers ranked last at 11 or 7.3%. On the other hand, housewife/motherhood ranked first among mothers' occupations at 38 or 25.3%, followed by other occupations at 34 or 22.7%, whereas OFW mothers ranked last at 12 or 8.0%.

Table 1: *Profile of the Respondents in Terms of the Selected Variables*

Sex	f	%	R
Male	77	51.3	1
Female	73	48.7	2
Total	150	100.0	
Sibling Position			
1 st	75	50.0	1
2 nd	52	34.7	2
3 rd	19	12.6	3
4 th	4	2.7	4
Total	150	100.0	
Number of Children in the Family			
1	4	2.7	4
2-3	23	15.3	3
4-5	99	66.0	1
6 & above	24	16.0	2
Total	150	100.0	
Monthly Family Income			
₱ 20,000 and above	55	36.7	1
₱ 15,000-₱ 19,999	30	20.0	3
₱ 10,000-₱ 14,999	37	24.6	2
below ₱ 10,000	28	18.7	4

Total	150		100.0			
Educational Attainment	Father			Mother		
	f	%	R	f	%	R
College Graduate	115	76.7	1	110	73.3	1
College Undergraduate	13	8.7	3	17	11.4	2
High School Graduate	18	12.0	2	12	8.0	3
High School Undergraduate	4	2.6	4	11	7.3	4
Total	150	100.0		150	100.0	
Parents' Occupation	Father			Mother		
	f	%	R	f	%	R
Employed (Local)	37	24.7	2	31	20.7	3
OFW	11	7.3	6	12	8.0	6
Self Employed	15	10.0	5	14	9.3	5
Entrepreneur	39	26.0	1	21	14.0	4
Housewife/ Househusband	19	12.7	4	38	25.3	1
Others	29	19.3	3	34	22.7	2
Total	150	100.0		150	100.0	

3.2. Extent of Effects of Reading Habits on the Performance of Intermediate Pupils as Perceived by Themselves With Respect to the Different Aspects

The study revealed that intermediate pupils perceive their reading habits to have a high effect on academic performance, with a composite weighted mean of 4.08. Among the assessed aspects, knowledge acquisition ranked highest, followed by fluency development, vocabulary development, and comprehension skills. This indicates that reading habits most strongly enhance pupils' ability to understand new concepts, improve critical thinking, and foster creativity, while still positively influencing language skills and comprehension. These findings highlight the cognitive benefits of regular reading and emphasize its role in holistic academic development. Supporting literature reinforces these results. Flavier (2023) found that students who spend more time reading academic materials achieve higher academic performance, while Bashir (2022) emphasized that reading habits broaden knowledge and strengthen critical thinking. Similarly, Madrazo (2021) and Meliton (2024) confirmed that consistent reading practices positively correlate with reading comprehension and overall academic achievement. These studies collectively underscore the importance of structured reading programs in schools, the integration of varied reading materials by teachers, and the promotion of reading-friendly environments at home to maximize pupils' academic growth.

Table 2: Extent of Effects of Reading Habits on the Performance of Intermediate Pupils as Perceived by Themselves With Respect to the Different Aspects

Aspects	Overall $\bar{WX}$	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Knowledge Acquisition	4.21	High Effect	1
Vocabulary Development	4.04	High Effect	3
Fluency Development	4.10	High Effect	2
Comprehension Skills	3.97	High Effect	4
Composite $\bar{WX}$	4.08	High Effect	

3.3. Significant Difference on the Extent of Effects of Reading Habits on the Performance of Intermediate Pupils as Perceived by Themselves With Respect to the Different Aspects in Terms of Their Profile

The F-test results indicate that most profile variables—such as sex, sibling position, family size, parents' educational attainment, and occupation—do not significantly affect pupils' perceptions of the impact of reading habits on academic performance. This suggests that reading habits provide relatively uniform benefits across these demographic groups, with pupils experiencing similar gains in knowledge acquisition, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension regardless of these factors. In contrast, monthly family income showed significant differences across all aspects, implying that economic status influences the degree to which pupils benefit from reading habits. Higher-income families may offer greater access to books, digital resources, and educational support, creating richer reading experiences compared to pupils from lower-income households. These findings highlight the importance of equity-focused interventions to support students from lower-income families. Schools may implement strategies such as book-lending programs, reading corners, mobile libraries, and free access to digital reading platforms to bridge resource gaps. The results are supported by Abdullah (2020), who found that socioeconomic status, rather than demographic factors like gender or birth order, strongly affects reading

development. Children from higher-income households benefit from greater access to reading materials and literacy-rich environments, which enhances their reading engagement, language exposure, and overall academic performance. This aligns with the present study's observation that family income is the sole profile variable showing significant differences in the perceived effects of reading habits.

Table 3: Result of the F-test in the Significant Difference on the Extent of Effects of Reading Habits on the Performance of Intermediate Pupils as Perceived by Themselves With Respect to the Different Aspects in Terms of Their Profile

Aspects/Variables	F-value	p-value	Ho	Verbal Interpretation
Sex				
Knowledge Acquisition	0.653	0.422	Accepted	Not Significant
Vocabulary Development	1.746	0.159	Accepted	Not Significant
Fluency Development	0.725	0.587	Accepted	Not Significant
Comprehension Skills	1.453	0.439	Accepted	Not Significant
Sibling Position				
Knowledge Acquisition	1.832	0.332	Accepted	Not Significant
Vocabulary Development	0.219	0.876	Accepted	Not Significant
Fluency Development	0.532	0.679	Accepted	Not Significant
Comprehension Skills	1.109	0.087	Accepted	Not Significant
Number of Children in the Family				
Knowledge Acquisition	1.305	0.821	Accepted	Not Significant
Vocabulary Development	1.130	0.387	Accepted	Not Significant
Fluency Development	1.835	0.565	Accepted	Not Significant
Comprehension Skills	1.223	0.483	Accepted	Not Significant
Monthly Family Income				
Knowledge Acquisition	4.032	0.001	Rejected	Significant
Vocabulary Development	7.398	0.006	Rejected	Significant
Fluency Development	6.419	0.043	Rejected	Significant
Comprehension Skills	8.932	0.005	Rejected	Significant
Fathers' Educational Attainment				
Knowledge Acquisition	1.023	0.118	Accepted	Not Significant
Vocabulary Development	1.494	0.213	Accepted	Not Significant
Fluency Development	1.978	0.224	Accepted	Not Significant
Comprehension Skills	0.875	0.834	Accepted	Not Significant
Mothers' Educational Attainment				
Knowledge Acquisition	1.958	0.321	Accepted	Not Significant
Vocabulary Development	1.620	0.322	Accepted	Not Significant
Fluency Development	1.716	0.119	Accepted	Not Significant
Comprehension Skills	1.002	0.322	Accepted	Not Significant
Fathers' Occupation				
Knowledge Acquisition	0.872	0.438	Accepted	Not Significant
Vocabulary Development	1.219	0.493	Accepted	Not Significant
Fluency Development	0.287	0.398	Accepted	Not Significant
Comprehension Skills	1.121	0.443	Accepted	Not Significant
Mothers' Occupation				
Knowledge Acquisition	0.213	0.498	Accepted	Not Significant
Vocabulary Development	1.128	0.883	Accepted	Not Significant
Fluency Development	2.004	0.765	Accepted	Not Significant
Comprehension Skills	1.004	0.632	Accepted	Not Significant

3.4. Level of Academic Performance of Intermediate Pupils as Revealed by Their Average Grades in the First Quarter

The analysis of first-quarter grades reveals that the majority of intermediate pupils performed at a high academic level. Specifically, 42.7% of pupils achieved Very Satisfactory ratings (85–89), 38.7% attained Outstanding performance (90 and above), 18.0% received Satisfactory grades (80–84), and only 0.6% were Fairly Satisfactory (75–79). No pupils fell below the passing standard, and the mean grade of 87.45, interpreted as Very Satisfactory, indicates that overall performance is highly commendable. The standard deviation of 3.841 suggests moderate variability, reflecting that while some differences exist, most learners cluster within the higher proficiency bands. These findings align with Flavier (2023),

who reported that students who engage regularly in reading activities for both academic and leisure purposes tend to achieve higher general weighted averages, emphasizing the positive relationship between consistent reading habits and academic achievement. The results suggest that intermediate pupils possess a solid understanding of the curriculum and respond positively to instructional strategies, learning resources, and assessments. The concentration of high-performing learners points to effective teaching practices, including differentiated instruction, guided practice, and timely feedback, as well as a supportive school environment and foundational academic competencies reinforced at home. Similar observations were noted by Madrazo (2021), who found that pupils' reading habits positively correlate with both reading comprehension and overall academic performance, highlighting that strong literacy engagement enhances students' mastery of content. The minimal proportion of lower-performing pupils indicates isolated learning challenges rather than systemic issues. Overall, sustaining these instructional strategies and providing continued access to learning resources, structured reading programs, and supportive home environments is essential to maintain and further enhance pupils' academic performance.

Table 4: *Level of Academic Performance of Intermediate Pupils as Revealed by Their Average Grades in the First Quarter*

Grades	Verbal Interpretation	F	%
90 and above	Outstanding	58	38.7
85 - 89	Very Satisfactory	64	42.7
80 - 84	Satisfactory	27	18.0
75 - 79	Fairly Satisfactory	1	.6
below 75	Did not meet expectations	-	
Total		150	100
Highest Grade		98	
Lowest Grade		79	
Mean		87.45-VS	
Standard Deviation		3.841	

3.5. Significant Relationship Between the Perceived Effects of Reading Habits and Level of Academic Performance of Intermediate Pupils

The analysis of the relationship between reading habits and academic performance shows that all four aspects—Knowledge Acquisition, Vocabulary Development, Fluency Development, and Comprehension Skills—exhibited statistically significant positive correlations, with p-values less than 0.05. Knowledge Acquisition demonstrated the strongest correlation, while Fluency Development showed the lowest but still significant relationship. These results indicate that pupils who engage in consistent and meaningful reading tend to perform better academically, highlighting the crucial role of reading habits in fostering mastery of concepts, comprehension, and effective communication. This aligns with Abid (2023), who found a strong positive correlation between students' reading habits and their performance in core subjects, emphasizing that regular reading improves cognitive processing, vocabulary knowledge, comprehension, and critical thinking—skills essential for academic success. The findings suggest that cultivating strong reading habits should be a priority for both schools and parents. Integrating daily reading routines, guided reading sessions, exposure to diverse reading materials, and targeted strategies for vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension can enhance pupils' academic performance across all subjects. Moreover, fostering a reading culture at home complements school efforts and provides sustained cognitive benefits. These results reinforce the educational principle that reading is foundational to learning, and that systematic support for reading habits can lead to measurable improvements in academic outcomes. Supporting literature, including Madrazo (2021) and Flavier (2023), similarly emphasizes that pupils' engagement with reading materials is closely linked to higher achievement, suggesting that reading habits are a reliable predictor of academic success and overall intellectual development.

Table 5: *Computed r-Values on Significant Relationship Between the Perceived Effects of Reading Habits and Level of Academic Performance of Intermediate Pupils*

Aspects	r-values	p-values	Ho	Verbal Interpretation
Knowledge Acquisition	0.818	0.011	Rejected	Significant
Vocabulary Development	0.764	0.004	Rejected	Significant
Fluency Development	0.687	0.031	Rejected	Significant
Comprehension Skills	0.743	0.004	Rejected	Significant

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study concludes that intermediate pupils' demographic factors such as sex, sibling position, family size, and parents' educational attainment and occupation do not significantly influence their reading habits. However, monthly family income was found to affect reading habits, particularly in areas such as knowledge acquisition, vocabulary development, fluency, and comprehension skills. Overall, strong reading habits were observed to have a positive and significant correlation with academic performance, highlighting the essential role of consistent reading in students' learning outcomes. In light of these findings, it is recommended that school administrators develop structured reading programs and interventions to encourage daily reading and reading for pleasure. Teachers should integrate guided reading, text analysis, inferencing exercises, and reflective questioning across all subjects to strengthen fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Parents are encouraged to foster a reading-friendly home environment, even with limited resources. The proposed action plan should be implemented, and future studies may explore additional variables to further understand factors influencing reading habits and academic performance.

Compliance with ethical standards

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