

READING MOTIVATION AND COMPREHENSION AMONG SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN GETAFE, BOHOL

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Reading comprehension plays a key role in academic success and is shaped by teaching methods and students' motivation. This study examined the relationship between reading motivation and comprehension among 288 Senior High School students in Getafe Districts I and II, Bohol, during the 2022–2023 school year. The researchers used a descriptive correlational approach, collecting data with Wigfield and Guthrie's reading motivation questionnaire and a 60-question test that measured literal, inferential, and critical reading skills. The results showed that students had a moderate level of reading motivation, driven mainly by external rewards, while their personal interest in reading was low. Many relied on grades to keep them motivated. Most students reported frustration with their reading comprehension, indicating ongoing literacy challenges. The study found a moderate, positive, and significant link between reading motivation and comprehension ($\rho = .568, p < .01$), indicating that higher motivation is associated with better understanding. Of all the student characteristics studied, only sex showed a significant difference. Female students were more motivated and had better comprehension than male students. Year level, track, or strand had a weak



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relationship with reading results. These findings suggest that sparking students' interest in reading and offering structured comprehension training can help improve their reading skills. Programs that focus on students' interests and needs may boost engagement, improve understanding, and support long-term reading growth.

INTRODUCTION

The Philippines ranked last in reading literacy among 79 countries in the 2018 PISA. This was the first time the country had participated since K–12 began. More than 80% of Filipino pupils were not doing well in school and couldn't read well. The OECD said that 15-year-old Filipinos had an average reading score of 340, which is well below the OECD average of 487. These findings underscore the necessity to confront literacy obstacles. Huo (2019) built on these findings, arguing that motivation, whether external or internal to the learner, is very important for improving reading skills and keeping readers engaged, which is necessary for long-term literacy growth. Similarly, Ahmadi (2017) stated that motivation is essential to learning. To get better at reading, children need more than just good teaching methods; they also need to want to read. A strong desire to read makes people more interested, persistent, and able to understand what they read. Motivated learners understand more than their unmotivated classmates. Reading desire not only compels students to read but also enhances their comprehension by fostering deeper engagement with texts, underscoring the need to cultivate motivation for better understanding. Reading comprehension is a key part of learning how to read and write well. Khasawneh and Al-Rub (2020) characterized comprehension as the principal objective of reading, since it facilitates the integration of existing knowledge with new information and the application of understanding across many situations. Skills like making inferences, evaluating, and interpreting help with experience, but they improve when pupils are motivated. So, motivation and understanding work together to help people learn to read and write.

This study examines the link between reading motivation and comprehension among Senior High School students in Getafe I and II Districts (2022–2023), aiming to inspire stakeholders to develop targeted strategies that address both cognitive and motivational components of reading.

This research draws on Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which holds that meeting three core psychological needs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—shapes motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2017). Organismic Integration Theory and Cognitive Evaluation Theory are two important mini-theories within SDT. The first study examines how people absorb rules from external sources, and the second discusses how autonomy and competence may increase intrinsic motivation. Together, these theories give a complete picture of how motivation works.

Intrinsic motivation makes pupils want to read for fun and personal reasons, whereas extrinsic motivation makes them read mostly for grades or incentives.

In schools, children are more likely to read when they feel supported, have choices, and feel valued. This shows that the learning environment plays a significant role in keeping students motivated. Furthermore, research shows that motivation and comprehension are closely connected.

Extrinsic rewards can take many forms and significantly impact how students regulate their own learning, according to Yoo et al. (2012).

Yang et al. (2018) split extrinsic incentives into identification, external regulation, and integrated regulation. They found that excessive external rewards undermine comprehension and intrinsic motivation. Salehi et al. (2014) and Witri and Ansyari (2022) found girls consistently outperform boys in verbal and language skills. According to both local and international research, reading comprehension remains an issue. Maala (2022) found that many pupils in public schools struggle with basic comprehension skills, such as predicting, clarifying, and assessing texts. Nonetheless, students with strong motivation do better on comprehension tests. Ahmadi (2017) and Kuşdemir and Bulut (2018) found a substantial positive link between reading motivation and comprehension. Based on this, motivated pupils are more likely to keep reading and understand the material. Namaziandost et al. (2019) also found that complex texts can engage students and involve them. Consistent evidence shows that students with higher reading motivation demonstrate stronger comprehension and sustained engagement with texts (Ahmadi, 2017; Kuşdemir & Bulut, 2018; Namaziandost et al., 2019).

This research shows that students' motivation to read, shaped by internal and external factors, significantly affects how well they understand and connect with readings. Knowing this link helps make good literacy programs and ways to teach kids, especially those who have trouble reading.

Given the reality above, the researcher would like to study the reading motivation and comprehension of Senior High Students in Getafe, Bohol, for the school year 2022-2023. The findings and results of this study will serve as the basis for a proposed enhancement program to improve students' reading motivation and comprehension. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following queries:

1. What is the respondents' profile in terms of:
 - 1.1. sex;
 - 1.2. year level;
 - 1.3. track;
 - 1.4. strand?
2. What is the level of respondents' reading motivation in terms of:
 - 2.1. intrinsic motivation;
 - 2.2. extrinsic motivation?

3. What is the respondents' reading comprehension level?
4. Is there a significant correlation between reading motivation and the respondents' comprehension?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' profiles and the following:
 - 5.1. Reading Motivation; and
 - 5.2. Reading Comprehension?
6. Is there a significant difference in reading motivation and comprehension between male and female students?
7. What enhancement program can be proposed to address the issue?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This descriptive, quantitative correlational study surveyed Senior High School students from three schools in Getafe 1 and 2 Districts. Only Grade 11 or 12 students were included; transfers were excluded. Using simple random sampling, 288 of 1,144 students were selected (5% margin of error, 95% confidence). Wigfield and Guthrie's (1997) 33-item, four-point Likert scale survey measured reading motivation. A demographic questionnaire was also used. Motivation levels were defined as follows:

Symbol	Description	Meaning	Weight	Parameters/ Interpretation		
				Scale	Symbol	Description
SA	Strongly Agree	The condition is felt at all times.	4	3.25 – 4.00	HM	Highly Motivated
MA	Moderately Agree	The condition is felt most of the time.	3	2.50 – 3.24	MM	Moderately Motivated
SLA	Slightly Agree	The condition is felt at certain times.	2	1.75 – 2.49	SM	Slightly Motivated
D	Disagree	The condition is never felt.	1	1.00 – 1.74	NM	Not Motivated

A 60-item multiple-choice test, based on the **Massachusetts English Language Arts Curriculum Framework (2001)** and researcher-developed questions, assessed comprehension: three passages, twenty questions each (literal, inferential, critical

Legend	Interpretation	Reading Comprehension Level
90-100% correct answers	18-20 correct items	Independent Level
75-89 % correct answers	15-17 correct items	Instructional Level
Below 75 % of correct answers	Below 15 are the correct items	Frustration level

Pilot testing ensured validity; Cronbach's alphas were 0.896

(comprehension) and 0.899 (motivation). All responses were encoded, tallied, and analyzed via SPSS. Weighted means described reading motivation. Spearman's rank-order correlation was used to examine the link between motivation and comprehension. The Chi-square test examined relationships between demographics, motivation, and comprehension. The Mann–Whitney U Test examined gender differences—graphic relationships with motivation and comprehension. The **Mann–Whitney U Test** examined gender differences.

Random sampling, standardized testing, and strict criteria controlled confounding variables, ensuring internal validity and reliability.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Profile of Respondents. Among 288 respondents, 53.82% were men ($n = 155$) and 46.18% women ($n = 133$), so men were slightly more common. Most (56.25%) of the General Academic Strand (GAS) was the most significant (58.68%), followed by HUMSS. General Academic Strand (GAS) was the most important (58.68%), followed by HUMSS. TVL specializations included Cookery (12.50%), Agriculture (8.33%), Dressmaking (5.21%), and Bread & Pastry (1.39%). The site mainly offered academic strands but included various senior high school paths.

Reading Motivation. In terms of intrinsic motivation, the highest-rated indicator was “*Being a good reader is important compared to other activities*” (mean = 2.79, *Moderately Motivated*), followed by “*I read to learn new information about topics that interest me*” (mean = 2.74). The lowest-rated items, “*I enjoy reading stories to my siblings*” and “*I visit the library often*”, both fell under *Slightly Motivated* levels. The overall composite mean for intrinsic motivation (2.45) was interpreted as *Slightly Motivated*, indicating a lack of strong internal drive for reading. This finding supports Larson et al. (2016), who demonstrated that intrinsic motivation strengthens reading independence and understanding.

For external motivation, students did best on “*I read to improve my grades*” (mean = 2.91) and “*Finishing every reading assignment is important to me*” (mean = 2.88), both showing a moderate level of drive. The lowest score was for “*I like being the only one who knows an answer to something we read*” (mean = 2.21), indicating that people were less motivated to do so. The average was 2.61, indicating a somewhat high level of motivation. These results show that students are more interested in doing things for the sake of getting something in return or praise than for the enjoyment of doing them. This aligns with the findings of Yoo et al. (2012) and Kirchner and Mostert (2017).

The overall motivation composite mean was 2.53 (*Moderately Motivated*), showing that while students recognize the importance of reading, their engagement is more externally reinforced. Yang et al. (2018) observed that sustained reliance on extrinsic motivation may diminish intrinsic interest. This finding highlights the importance of designing educational environments that

foster curiosity and autonomous learning.

Reading Comprehension Levels. The average scores on all three reading tests were at the Frustration Level: Test 1 (M = 11.60), Test 2 (M = 11.44), and Test 3 (M = 8.91). These statistics show that high school students in the Getafe District have significant difficulty reading and writing. This finding is consistent with Maala (2022), which found that Filipino pupils face challenges due to inadequate vocabulary, limited contextual understanding, and inefficient reading strategies. The continually poor scores show how important it is to have structured reading programs and specialized training right away.

The statistical analysis established a significant positive correlation between reading motivation and comprehension, indicating that students with higher motivation achieved better comprehension outcomes. This corroborates Ahmadi (2017) and Kuşdemir and Bulut (2018), who reported that motivation enhances reading engagement and comprehension accuracy. Furthermore, sex emerged as a significant factor influencing motivation and comprehension, with female students generally performing better—a finding supported by Witri and Ansyari (2022), who associated gender-based neurological differences with verbal and linguistic proficiency.

Correlation between Students' Reading Motivation and Comprehension. As shown in Table 1, the computed Spearman's rho value of 0.568, with a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), indicates a moderate positive, statistically significant relationship between students' reading motivation and their reading comprehension. This result leads to rejecting the null hypothesis, confirming that reading motivation significantly influences students' comprehension performance.

Table 1. *Correlation between Students' Reading Motivation and Comprehension*
n=288

			Reading Motivation	Total Score
Spearman's rho	Reading Motivation	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.568**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
		N	288	288
	Total Score	Correlation Coefficient	.568**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	288	288

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results indicate that heightened student incentive to read correlates with enhanced comprehension of written content. On the other hand, low motivation might make people less interested in texts and less likely to read them, which can worsen comprehension. This study supports Ahmadi's (2017) claim that reading motivation is a vital determinant affecting students'

capacity to engage with and understand texts. Very motivated readers tend to engage with knowledge more thoroughly, whereas less motivated readers tend to understand it more superficially.

Namaziandost et al. (2019) also found that motivation improves learners' cognitive processing by directing their attention to essential goals and increasing their determination to read.

They further noted that motivated students approach even challenging reading materials with a positive attitude, thereby improving their learning outcomes and language development.

The current study, therefore, affirms that reading motivation is a **key predictor of reading comprehension performance**. Strengthening both intrinsic and extrinsic forms of motivation can enhance students' engagement, promote active reading habits, and foster deeper comprehension—a finding consistent with prior studies emphasizing the integral role of motivation in literacy achievement.

Relationship between Students' Profiles and Students' Reading Motivation Level

This part addresses the data analysis of the relationship between students' profiles and their reading motivation levels.

Sex and Students' Reading Motivation Level. As shown in Table 2, the analysis of the relationship between sex and students' reading motivation level yielded a Pearson Chi-square value of 7.997 with 3 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.046, which is less than the significance level of 0.05. This result indicates a statistically significant relationship between students' sex and their level of reading motivation, thereby rejecting the null hypothesis. The Likelihood Ratio ($\chi^2 = 8.049$, $p = 0.045$) and the Linear-by-Linear Association ($\chi^2 = 4.314$, $p = 0.038$) further confirm this significant association.

Table 2. Relationship between Sex and Students' Reading Motivation
n=288

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.997 ^a	3	.046
Likelihood Ratio	8.049	3	.045
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.314	1	.038
N of Valid Cases	288		

The results demonstrate that a student's sex has a significant relationship with how much they wish to read. Girls often show greater interest in reading than boys do. This pattern is similar to what other studies have shown about differences between men and women in reading and speaking skills. Witri and Ansyari (2022) also found that women usually have better verbal and language skills. These strengths may help explain why they are more interested

in reading and comprehension activities.

This outcome underscores the importance of **considering sex-based motivational differences** in the design and implementation of literacy programs. Teachers should employ gender-responsive strategies that foster reading motivation across both sexes—for instance, by providing reading materials that reflect diverse interests and promoting inclusive classroom practices that engage both male and female learners in sustained reading activities.

Reading Motivation and Reading Comprehension. Table 1 reports a **Spearman's rho of 0.568** and a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), showing a moderate, **statistically significant positive correlation** between students' reading motivation and reading comprehension. This result means the null hypothesis can be rejected. It shows that reading motivation correlates significantly with comprehension. The data suggest that students with higher motivation understand written material better. In contrast, low motivation may lead to reduced engagement and practice, weakening comprehension skills.

This result is consistent with Ahmadi (2017), who found that reading motivation is essential for students' engagement with and understanding of texts. Highly motivated students tend to process information more deeply, while those with low motivation often only understand the basics. **Namaziandost et al. (2019) also** found that motivation helps students focus on essential goals and stick with reading tasks. They observed that motivated students are more positive when facing difficult materials, which leads to better learning and language development.

This study shows that reading motivation is linked to **reading comprehension**. Building both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can help students get more involved and develop active reading habits, which leads to better understanding. This result aligns with earlier research highlighting the importance of motivation for literacy success.

The Difference in Reading Motivation and Comprehension between Male and Female Students. As presented in **Table 3**, the Mann–Whitney U test results revealed statistically significant differences in **reading motivation** and **reading comprehension** between male and female students.

Table 3. *Significant Difference in Reading Motivation and Comprehension according to sex.*

Variable	Mann–Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Reading Motivation	8185	20275	-3.013	0.003
Reading Comprehension	6609	18699	-5.253	0.00

With a p-value of 0.003 for reading motivation, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the difference between male and female students is statistically significant. This conclusion suggests that female students are more driven to read than male students, which is similar to the findings of Kuşdemir and Bulut (2018), who found that female students generally had stronger motivation for reading activities. Similarly, Salehi et al. (2014) found that gender has a substantial impact on students' performance on reading-related tasks, with females exhibiting higher engagement and comprehension of written texts such as labels, casual chat, and newspaper excerpts. Furthermore, the reading comprehension test generated a p-value of 0.000, which is also less than 0.05, showing that male and female students had significantly different comprehension levels. This indicates that female students fared better than male pupils on comprehension tests. The findings support those of Witri and Ansary (2022), who claimed that gender variations in cognitive processing contribute to discrepancies in language learning outcomes. They explained that females primarily use the left hemisphere of the brain, which is related to language and verbal activities. In contrast, males frequently rely on the right hemisphere, which is associated with spatial and logical reasoning. As a result, females develop stronger verbal and reading skills than their male counterparts.

CONCLUSION

The study finds that reading motivation is correlated with how well senior high school pupils in the Getafe District understand what they read. Overall, students are somewhat motivated. They are more motivated by external factors such as grades, recognition, and compliance than by their own interest or delight in reading. This mismatch indicates that students are more likely to read materials for external benefits than for internal growth or curiosity. The results also showed that students' reading comprehension remained at the frustration level, indicating they needed to improve their vocabulary, contextual knowledge, and reading methods. Also, sex played an important role. Female students were more motivated and understood the material better than male students, aligning with research suggesting that women are generally better at language and speech.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Strengthen Intrinsic Motivation.** Teachers should design engaging and meaningful reading activities that cultivate enjoyment and personal connection with texts. Approaches such as book choice autonomy, peer reading discussions, and project-based literacy tasks can foster intrinsic motivation.

2. **Establish Targeted Reading Interventions.** Schools should implement structured remedial and enrichment programs aligned with PHIL-IRI frameworks to address persistent comprehension challenges, especially among struggling readers.
3. **Adopt Gender-Sensitive Literacy Strategies.** Instructional approaches should account for sex-based differences in motivation and learning preferences. Reading materials that cater to both male and female interests—such as adventure or informational texts—may help bridge motivational disparities.
4. **Promote a Reading Culture.** School administrators should institutionalize literacy initiatives such as *Drop Everything and Read (DEAR)* programs, reading clubs, and inter-class reading contests to normalize and celebrate reading across the campus.
5. **Monitor Reading Progress and Motivation Regularly.** Teachers should conduct periodic assessments of both reading motivation and comprehension to inform instructional planning and ensure timely interventions.
6. **Empower Teachers through Professional Development.** Continuous training should be provided to equip teachers with research-based strategies on motivation, comprehension scaffolding, and differentiated instruction grounded in **Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan)**.
7. **Encourage Parental and Community Involvement.** Working together with parents and community partners in literacy efforts can boost students' motivation and create supportive reading environments outside of school.

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