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## **DOES READING LEVEL MATTER IN PRACTICAL SKILLS? A DESCRIPTIVE-CORRELATIONAL STUDY ON PHIL-IRI RESULTS AND TLE PERFORMANCE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study investigated the Reading Proficiency Level and Technical Skills of Grade 10 learners in Ibajay Integrated School. It was also conducted to determine whether there is a significant relationship between the two said variables. Descriptive- correlational research design was employed in this study. The total population sampling was utilized that includes the 157 learners as participants of this study. The researcher utilized a data extraction form to gather all the necessary data or record that is relevant to the research study, after the data was gathered from the Phil-IRI coordinator and TLE teacher, it was encoded and analyze using SPSS. After the data was processed, it was found out that learners' reading proficiency level was at Independent Reading Level and their technical skills were Very Satisfactory. The relationship between Reading Proficiency Level based on Phil-IRI result and Technical Skill Level of the learners in Grade 10 was significantly moderate positive relationship which signifies that as the level of learners' reading proficiency increases, their technical skill level tends to increase also. The findings of this study imply that the correlation between Phil-IRI results ad their Technical skills highlights a need to bridge the gap between literacy and practical skills of learners. Consequently, teachers must actively integrate vocabulary-building

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activities into hands-on activities in TLE. Furthermore, school administrators should utilize the Phil-IRI results to improve their intervention and enhancement programs for learners. Future researchers may expand this study by employing to larger samples from other schools.

**Keywords:** *Phil-IRI, Reading Proficiency, Technical Skills, Teachnology ad Livelihood Education*

## INTRODUCTION

In the educational system in the Philippines, reading is not only the basis of their academic performance inside the school but also the performance and skills of the learners. Within the educational context of the country, the Department of Education utilizes the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) as a standard diagnostic tool to measure the reading proficiency levels of public school learners. The primary policy for administering the Phil-IRI in public schools, including Junior High School (JHS) is DepEd Order No. 14, s 2018. This assessment system classifies students into Independent, Instructional and Frustration Level. Understanding these categories is essential for addressing the specific needs of the learners.

Reading and technical skills are two essential competencies that influence learners' academic achievement and future career readiness. Reading enables learners to understand instructions, interpret information, solve problems and communicate effectively. On the other hand, technical skills provide them with the practical knowledge and hands- on abilities

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necessary to perform specific tasks, particularly in Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE) subject.

While reading proficiency is traditionally connected to language subjects such as English and Filipino, its impact could directly affect into technical skills of the learners specifically in TLE subject. Grade 10 learners are at a critical phase where TLE subjects demand a higher degree of independent execution and technical comprehension. Consequently, a student's performance in a laboratory or workshop is fundamentally bound to their baseline text comprehension capabilities. Many students continue to experience gaps in both reading and technical skills. This gap became a growing concern among teachers because reading ability serves as the foundation for acquiring technical skills. Students who are unable to comprehend written materials may encounter difficulties in applying concepts accurately, completing technical tasks efficiently and demonstrating competence in performance-based assessment.

This study is conducted to answer the following statement of the problem: What is the level of reading proficiency based on their Phil-IRI results and technical skills in TLE based on performance assessment among grade 10 learners, and if there is a significant relationship between students' reading proficiency level and their technical skills. Hypothesis was also advanced states that there is no significant relationships between students' reading proficiency level and their technical skills in TLE. Identifying the extent of this gap can provide valuable insight for teachers, school administrators and curriculum developers in designing appropriate

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interventions that will strengthen both reading proficiency and technical skills of the learners,  
as well as improving learners' academic performance and workplace preparedness.

## Literature Review

### *Theoretical Framework*

This study was anchored in Constructivist Learning Theory by Jean Piaget. This theory states that learners actively construct knowledge through their experiences rather than passively receiving information. According to Piaget, students learn best when they engage in activities that allow them to connect new information with their existing knowledge and experiences.

In this study, reading proficiency as measured by the Phil-IRI, provides learners with the ability to understand written instructions, technical concepts and procedural texts. This understanding enables them to perform practical tasks effectively in TLE subject. This theory emphasizes learner centered approach where the student takes ownership of their knowledge and experiences, that's the reason why this theory is applicable to this study.

### *Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI)*

The Phil-IRI Language Assessment serves as a nationwide diagnostic tool for identifying learners' reading proficiency, yet its impact extends beyond measuring decoding and comprehension skills. In response to persistent concerns about reading difficulties among Filipino learners, the Philippine Department of Education institutionalized the Phil-IRI as a

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nationwide diagnostic assessment to determine learners reading levels and guide instructional interventions (Department of Education, 2022).

Recent International emphasizes that assessment practices are not neutral measurement tools but social and emotional experiences that can significantly affect learners' motivation, confidence and attitudes toward learning (Harlen, 2021). In developing contexts, including the Philippines, reading assessments often occur in classrooms characterized by large class sizes, limited instructional resources, and varying levels of teacher preparation in assessment literacy (World Bank, 2022).

Reading assessment remains a critical concern across educational systems worldwide, particularly in the context of declining literacy performance and widening learning gaps intensified by socio-economic status inequalities and post pandemic disruptions. Internationally, large- scale assessments have consistently shown that a significant proportion of learners fail to achieve age-appropriate reading proficiency, raising concerns about the effectiveness, fairness and emotional consequences of standardized literacy assessments. Reports from the World Bank indicate that learning poverty defined as the inability of children to read and understand a simple text by the age of ten has increased globally, especially in low and middle income countries where instructional resources and diagnostic support are unevenly distributed (World Bank, 2022). In this context, reading assessments are increasingly scrutinized not only for their technical validity but also for how they shape learners' motivation, emotional well-being, and engagement with literacy.

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Based on the Phil-IRI for Junior High School Manual (2024), all learners in Grade 4 to 10 shall undergo the Phil-IRI Group Screening Test in Filipino and English. Learners performing below the expected level shall undergo further assessment through the individually administered Phil-IRI graded passages. Learners who garner a raw score that is lower than 28 need to undergo further assessment, as this may be an indication that the learner is experiencing difficulty reading at level text. It is thus necessary to conduct individualized assessment in order to further describe the learners' reading performance.

The Phil-IRI reading test uses predetermined set of criteria in identifying the reading level of each learner for each passage. These criteria include the percentage of word recognition accuracy and the percentage of correct answers to comprehension questions. The three levels are Independent (97-100%) score, Instructional (90-96%), and the Frustration Level (89% and below) scores.

### ***Technology and Livelihood Education Skills***

Technology and Livelihood Education as one of the areas being studied under the basic education curriculum is geared toward the development of technological proficiency, anchored on knowledge and information, entrepreneurial concepts, process and delivery, work values and life skills. This signifies that student should acquire proper mastery of knowledge, information, skills and procedures, as well as appropriate work values and lifelong learning skills (Geraldine P. Mayuga, Dr. Wilson T. Ojales, 2021).

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In connection to that, the study conducted by Filgona et al. (2020), defined that learner mastery as an outcome combining cognitive and affective components such as performance, motivation, satisfaction and knowledge construction. Performance reflects the learners' ability to apply acquired knowledge in real tasks. Gilbert, Almusharaf and Khahro (2020) both highlighted that learners are more satisfied when instructors maintain a strong presence and provide a timely feedback which is a key concept in practical subjects. In addition, Thompson & Wu (2023) argued for a more holistic evaluation of course effectiveness by incorporating learner satisfaction alongside test scores. In TLE context, where hands-on competence is not fully reflected in exams, such comprehensive metrics are essential.

According to Kerhoff (2023), teacher competence is directly linked to student achievement. Majewska (2023) emphasized that educators must possess global competence to train learners for international labor markets. These findings are echoed locally by Garcia & Yazon (2020), who found that teacher preparedness and curriculum relevance significantly shape students' TLE performance.

Globally, technical-vocational education system struggle with uneven access to modern facilities, skills and mastery of competencies, inadequate resources, outdated teaching strategies and the unpreparedness of educators that compromise the quality of TLE programs. According to UNESCO (2022), many developing countries still lack the infrastructure necessary to provide practical training aligned with industry standards, resulting in limited student exposure to real-world applications.

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In the Philippine context, the national government continues to grapple with the long-standing issue of insufficient investment in technical- vocational education. The Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS, 2021) reported that many public schools offering TLE still rely on outdated and insufficient tools, especially in rural and low-income areas. Fabelico and Afalla (2020) emphasized that the lack of continuous teacher training and the limited industry exposure of TLE educators contribute to ineffective instruction. Additionally, despite the mandate of the K to 12 Basic Education Program to enhance employability through specialized tracks, curriculum misalignment and poor monitoring of program outcomes persist (DepEd, 2022).

### ***Role of Reading in Technical Tasks***

While TLE often emphasize hands-on skills and practical applications, the importance of reading comprehension must be reiterated. In the rapidly involving landscape of technology and entrepreneurship, the ability to understand and analyze written materials is indispensable.

According to Rutzler (2024), reading comprehension skills enable students to decipher these complexities by comprehending written materials such as technical manuals, research reports and case studies. Though close reading and critical analysis, students can grasp the underlying principles and implications of technological innovations and entrepreneurial endeavors, thereby deepening their understanding and proficiency in TLE.

Furthermore, it is essential to equip students with the skills to navigate a vast array of information sources, including textbooks, online articles and scholarly journals. By teaching students how to skim for key information, evaluate the credibility of sources and synthesize

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diverse perspectives, TLE fosters information literacy, the capacity to find, evaluate and use  
information effectively for learning and problem solving (Aileen Manalo, 2025).

As such it prompts students to question, evaluate and interpret written materials in light of their knowledge and experiences. Critical thinking is at the heart of TLE, driving innovation, problem solving and decision making (Marie, 2023) by engaging students with challenging texts and grappling with complex ideas, they develop the analytical skills and intellectual agility needed to navigate the complexities and trends of technology and livelihood, livelihood, crop production, electronics, ICT, and entrepreneurship with confidence and competence.

## METHODOLOGY

### ***Research Design***

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to investigate the relationship between the two variables, reading proficiency as independent variable and TLE skills performance as the dependent variable. Descriptive research design for determining the level of reading proficiency and Correlation for identifying the significant relationships of the variables.

### ***Participants of the Study***

The participants for this study were all Grade 10 learners of Ibajay Integrated School located at Colongcolong, Ibajay, Aklan, S.Y. 2026-2027. The study utilized the Total Population Sampling, wherein all Grade 10 with a total of 157 students served as participants. This

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technique was used because the entire target population was accessible and included in the study.

## ***Instrumentation and Data Gathering Process***

The instrument used in data gathering was the Data Extraction Form. This research instrument is a structured template created by the researchers to systematically collect specific information, study details, and numeric results from research papers during a systematic review. According to Health Sciences Library (2026), a data extraction form is essentially a template, tailored to fit the needs of your review, that you will fill out for each included study. The length and format of this form will vary based on factors such as the nature of your research questions and the number of analysis you are conducting.

In gathering the data, first was securing an approval from the school principal through a consent letter then coordinated with the concerned language teachers and Phil-IRI Coordinator and TLE teachers to have an access to the needed data. Technical skills level of learners in TLE subject was rated by the teacher using rubrics in their performances. After the data extraction form was prepared, researchers use coding as replacement for the names of the participants then all the needed data was extracted and verified. The data gathered was then processed in SPSS for statistical analysis.

## ***Data Analysis***

In analyzing the gathered data, researchers used SPSS in order to have an accurate result. To describe the data, the study used descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. These descriptive statistical tools were used to

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determine the level of the reading proficiency and practical skills in TLE of the learners. For testing the hypothesis, the Pearson's correlation coefficient or r- value was used. The study used a significant level of 0.5 to determine whether the relationship between the variables was statistically significant. The conclusion and recommendations of the study were based on the findings, which provided valuable information regarding the reading proficiency level and technical skills of the learners in TLE. The following scaling were used in this study:

## Reading Proficiency Level:

| Score  | Reading Proficiency Level |
|--------|---------------------------|
| 80-100 | Independent               |
| 59-79  | Instructional             |
| 0-58   | Frustration               |

## Technical Skill Level in TLE 10:

| Raw Score | Technical Skill Level     |
|-----------|---------------------------|
| 90-100    | Outstanding               |
| 85-89     | Very Satisfactory         |
| 80-84     | Satisfactory              |
| 75-79     | Fairly Satisfactory       |
| Below 75  | Did Not Meet Expectations |

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## Research Ethics

Researchers strictly followed the ethical considerations in conducting the study. The informed consents of the respondents were obtained and the confidentiality of the results were achieved through a letter submitted to their respective advisers. The advisers were requested to sign the letter that held information about the nature and objectives of the study. The researchers also ensured that the respondents were not physically and psychologically harmed.

## Findings and Discussion

This part presents, analyzes and interprets the data gathered to answer the statement of the problem of the study. The findings were presented in tabular form.

**Table 1**

*Reading Proficiency Level of Grade 10 Learners based on Phil-IRI results*

| Score Range   | No. of Grade 10 Learners | Percentage  | Level         |
|---------------|--------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| 80-100        | 142                      | 90.45       | Independent   |
| 59-79         | 11                       | 7.01        | Instructional |
| 0-58          | 4                        | 2.54        | Frustration   |
| Mean Score    |                          | 83.90       |               |
| SD            |                          | 9.72        |               |
| Overall Level |                          | Independent |               |
| <b>Total</b>  | 157                      | 100         |               |

**Legend:**

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| Score  | Reading Proficiency Level |
|--------|---------------------------|
| 80-100 | Independent               |
| 59-79  | Instructional             |
| 0-58   | Frustration               |

Table 1 presents the Reading Proficiency Level of 157 Grade 10 learners, based on the table, there are 142 or 90.45% of students who are in Independent Level and score 80-100 points, 11 of 7.01% of the population are in Instructional level with score of 59-79 points and there are 4 or 2.54% of the learners are in Frustration level with scores 58 and below. Overall, the mean score is 83.90 with a standard deviation of 9.72 which falls under Independent Level. This means that majority of the learners can read and comprehend grade-appropriate texts with minimal or not required teacher assistance with word recognition or reading comprehension.

**Table 2**

*Technical Skill Level of Grade 10 Learners based on their Performance in TLE 10*

| Score Range | No. of Grade 10 Learners | Percentage | Level               |
|-------------|--------------------------|------------|---------------------|
| 90-100      | 32                       | 20.38      | Outstanding         |
| 85-89       | 78                       | 49.68      | Very Satisfactory   |
| 80-84       | 36                       | 22.93      | Satisfactory        |
| 75-79       | 11                       | 7.01       | Fairly Satisfactory |

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|              |     |                   |                           |
|--------------|-----|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Below 75     | 0   | 0.00              | Did Not Meet Expectations |
| Mean         |     | 85.98             |                           |
| SD           |     | 7.32              |                           |
| Level        |     | Very Satisfactory |                           |
| <b>Total</b> | 157 | 100               |                           |

**Legend:**

| Raw Score | Technical Skill Level     |
|-----------|---------------------------|
| 90-100    | Outstanding               |
| 85-89     | Very Satisfactory         |
| 80-84     | Satisfactory              |
| 75-79     | Fairly Satisfactory       |
| Below 75  | Did Not Meet Expectations |

Table 2 shows the Technical Skill level of grade 10 learners in TLE subject. Out of 157 learners, there are 32 or 20.38% garnered an Outstanding Level which has a score between 90-100, while there are 78 or 49.68% of the population perform Very Satisfactorily and got the score of 85-89, 36 learners or 22.93% are in Satisfactory Level with 80-84 score and there are 11 or 7.01% I Fairly Satisfactory level with a score between 75-7 and lastly there are no learners who are failed or got below. In general, most of the learners are in Very Satisfactory level with the mean score of 85.98 and a standard deviation of 7.32. This results indicate that learners consistently meet the minimum standards of the subject and can perform the required technical tasks and demonstrated the expected skills in TLE subject.

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**Table 3**

*Correlation Between Students' Reading Proficiency and Technical Skill Level*

| Indicators                                              | r-value | Strength                       | Significant value | Interpretation            | Decision                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Students' Reading Proficiency and Technical Skill Level | 0.40    | Moderate Positive Relationship | 0.000             | Statistically significant | Reject the null hypothesis |

Table 3 focuses on the Correlation of the variables, Reading Proficiency and Technical Skill Level of Grade 10 learners in Ibajay Integrated School. Based on the findings presented, the Pearson Correlation analysis revealed a significant moderate positive relationship ( $r = 0.40$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) between the reading proficiency level and technical skills of the learners. This implies that as learners' reading proficiency increases, their technical skills also tend to improve. The relationship is statistically significant; therefore, the null hypothesis, stating that there is no significant relationship between the variables will be rejected.

## Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that the learners generally demonstrated an Independent Reading Proficiency Level based on the Phil-IRI Assessment and achieved a very

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Satisfactory Level of Technical Skills in TLE subject. Furthermore, the relationship between the two variables was statistically significant. This suggests that students with higher reading proficiency also tend to perform better in technical skills.

As recommendations based on the results, students should develop regular and consistent reading habits by reading books, articles, magazines and other educational learning resources. School Administrators should continue supporting reading intervention and reading enhancement programs to further improve their reading proficiency level. TLE teachers should integrate reading-based activities such as interpreting instructions into hands-on activities. Parents were also encouraged to monitor and encourage their children at home to read and comprehend texts in order for them to understand the manuals presented by the teacher. Future researchers are also encouraged to conduct similar studies involving larger samples, different grade level and subjects.

This study was subject to some limitations. First, it was conducted only among Grade 10 learners on one school, therefore, the findings may not be generalized to students from other schools. Second, the study relied on the students' Phil-IRI results and scores in TLE performances as the primary source of data, other factors that may influence technical skills were not included in the analysis. Lastly, the study employed a descriptive-correlational research design that determine the level and strength of the relationships of the variables being studied.

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