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**DETERMINANTS AFFECTING THE READING COMPREHENSION OF  
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS: BASES FOR INTERVENTION  
PROGRAM**

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**ABSTRACT**

The descriptive-qualitative study identified determinants affecting junior high school learners' reading comprehension as bases for an intervention program in Jaro National High School during the school year 2022-2023. The research method utilized in the study was qualitative method using in-depth interview to gather data and phenomenology for the research design. Based on the results of the in-depth interview the determinants observed by the teachers are learners' lack interest in reading, they lack parental support, they have poor vocabulary, they also have gadget addiction, and they lack reading materials. For parents, they identified learners to be unmotivated to read, have excessive use of gadgets, had peer group influence, and lack of support from parents. For participants, to manage determinants affecting their reading comprehension they identified that teachers used strategies like provision of reading materials, conducted guided reading, and provided encouragement for students to read. The parents imposed positive punishment, limit gadget usage and lack of parent's time.

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**Keywords:** *Determinants, Learners, Reading Comprehension Skills, Junior High School, Intervention Program*

## INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is a critical learning skill for students (Clarke, Truelove, Hulme, & Snowling, 2013; Wong, 2011) for it is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and written work. Comprehension is not just the ability to read but the ability to understand and apply what is being read. It involves critical thinking which allows people to think and imagine what they are reading. When someone reads, he should get the thought and truly understands what is written in the text in order to relate one's experiences and connect ideas and knowledge.

Understanding meaning, analyzing the authors point of view, aiming for writing, and gaining new words are all important skills that support reading comprehension (Ruiz, 2015). Learners may have the ability to read but failed to understand what is being read because of poor reading comprehension. Not being able to successfully comprehend can prevent learners from learning, retaining information that they read, and graduating from school, which will negatively damage different aspect of their lives later on (Hoeh, 2015).

In today's world, the love for learning and passion for reading has totally declined, not only due to lack of passion or interest, but mostly due to the lack of basic understanding or

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comprehension. Learners can be provided good books, but still lose their interest in reading; hence, as they open a book and scan through its pages, it's as if they are walking through an unfamiliar world. Thus, learners have very limited vocabulary, and they don't exert too much effort in searching or looking-up the meaning of the words they don't understand. They don't even know how to use dictionaries which has become almost obsolete. Therefore, it takes away the wonderful experience of being able to read and comprehend text that could help them survive the real world.

According to Senator Sherwin Gatchalian (2022), even before the pandemic struck, international large-scale assessments showed that learners were already struggling to meet the minimum required proficiency in reading. He pressed the need for programs and interventions that would improve Filipino learners' proficiency in reading. Reading is one of the youth's foundations that should be strengthened. More than ever, the focus should be on that area as education suffered a lot since the pandemic broke out.

In Asian countries, China is on top followed by Singapore in terms of reading comprehension performance. On the other hand, the Philippines is the lowest in terms of reading comprehension according to the result of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA,2018) of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The PISA further showed that only one in five Filipino learners aged 15 achieved at least the minimum proficiency level in Overall Reading Literacy.

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In 2022, The Philippines' disheartening ranking in Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA) for the second time was a "clear indication" that the education system is in its "worst state" and "much work" needs to be done.

Moreover, according to Philippine Business for Education (PBEEd)(2022), the poor performance of the learners is not just a problem of education alone, but our country as a whole," In addition, PISA showed that Filipino students remained poor performers in Mathematics, Reading, and Science.

These reading concerns urged the researcher to identify the determinants that affect learners' reading comprehension as bases for an intervention program.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Research Methodology

This chapter presents the research method, research design, participants of the study, data-gathering procedures, research instrument, and data analysis used in this study. The purpose of this study is to determine the determinants affecting the reading comprehension skills in junior high school as bases for intervention program during the school year 2022-2023.

### Research Method

The research method utilized in the study was qualitative research using in-depth interview.

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During the interview, the interviewer with the interviewees sit together in a distance and talk about the series of questions related to the study. The interviewees were expected to truthfully answer the questions provided by the interviewer. The aim was to get the the necessary views of the participants about the study.

## Research Design

The study used phenomenological research design. Phenomenology can be considered a philosophical approach to undertaking qualitative research. The goal of phenomenology is to understand how others view the world, and how this view may vary from commonly held views by focusing on a person's subjective interpretations of what she experiences. Phenomenology is done by interviewing the subjects to learn their impressions, and is frequently used in such fields as psychology, sociology, and social work.

According to Smith (2013), phenomenology is the study of structures of consciousness as experienced from the first-person point of view. The central structure of an experience is its intentionality, its being directed toward something, as it is an experience of or about some object. An experience is directed toward an object by virtue of its content or meaning (which represents the object) together with appropriate enabling conditions.

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## Participants of the Study

The participants of the study were 4 English teachers, one from each grade level and 12 parents, 3 from each grade level. All participants were from the Junior High School Department of Jaro National High School and were determined by the researcher.

## Sampling Design

Purposive sampling design was used to purposely identify participants that can provide insight to the research question (Creswell, 2014). A purposive sample is a non-probability sample that is selected based on characteristics of a population and the objective of the study. Purposive sampling is also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling.

## Research Instrument

The research instrument utilized in the study was a researcher-made interview schedule.

The interview schedule has questions focusing on the purpose of study.

Voice and video recorders were used for data gathering and documentation depending upon the permission of the participants.

## Validity of the Research Instrument

Prior to the determination of the validity of the interview schedule made by the researcher, the adviser, Dean of the Graduate School then a panel of jurors who are considered for their

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expertise in the field of research, testing and assessment, and English, were requested to validate each question for review and modification.

Validity refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness, correctness and usefulness of inferences that a researcher makes. In content-related evidence of validity, the content and format must be consistent with the definition of variables and sample of subject to be measured and is also helpful in validating the items in the questionnaire (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2007). Comments, corrections, and suggestions of the panel of validators regarding the interview schedule will be considered using the appropriate form of Good and Scates (Appendix A).

### Data Gathering Procedures

Permits from the adviser, Dean of the Graduate School, Office of the Schools Division Superintendent, Office of the District Supervisors, School Heads, and individual participants were obtained to allow the researcher to conduct the study. The researcher personally went to the schools/community/place convenient on the part of the participants to conduct the interview.

The researcher conducted an interview to the participants but prior to this, the researcher had encouraged the participants to sign a waiver or permission relative to the conduct of the study.

Using in-depth interview, a voice and video recorder were provided to completely capture the interviewee's words. The researcher consolidated all of the collected data after series of interviews.

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## Data Analyses

The information gathered were analyzed using thematic approach.

Thematic analysis is the process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data. According to Maguire & Delahunt (2017), the aim of a thematic analysis is to identify themes, such as patterns in the data that are important or interesting and use these themes to address the research or say something about an issue. This is summarizing, analyzing and interpreting the data gathered and making sense of it.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study was conducted to identify determinants affecting learners' reading comprehension in junior high school as bases for intervention program for Jaro National High School during the school year 2023-2024.

The research method utilized in the study was descriptive using in-depth interview.

The study used phenomenology under qualitative research design.

The participants of the study were four English teachers, and twelve parents from the junior high school department of Jaro national high school.

The research instrument utilized in the study was a researcher-made interview schedule. Voice and video recorder were also used for data gathering and documentation depending upon the permission of the participants.

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A panel of experts validated the interview schedule and the researcher considered all comments and suggestions relative to the validation of the tool.

Permits from the individual participants were obtained to allow the researcher to conduct the study. The researcher personally went to the schools/community/place convenient on the part of the participants to conduct the interview and virtual instruction was done prior to the interview.

Using in-depth interview, voice and video recorders were provided to completely capture the interviewee's words or responses. The researcher consolidated all the collected data after series of interviews.

The information gathered was analyzed using thematic approach.

The following are the findings of the study:

Based on the results of the in-depth interview with the participants as to their observation on the reading comprehension of the learners, the determinants observed by the teachers are lack of interest in reading, lack of parent support, poor vocabulary, gadget addiction and lack of reading materials. The parents identified unmotivated to read, excessive use of gadgets, peer group influence and lack of support from parents. Based also on the results of the in-depth interview with the participants as to managing determinants affecting learners' reading comprehension, it was found out that teachers used strategies like provision of reading materials,

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guided reading, and encouragement for students to read. The parents imposed positive punishment, limit gadget usage and lack of parent's time.

Based on the findings, the following insights were drawn:

Learners are directed to a lot of leisure activities in their environment that trigger them to lose their interest in reading.

Learners' poor vocabulary development makes it harder for learners to comprehend texts which results in poor reading practice and lack of enthusiasm in reading.

Opportunity to enjoy reading and improve reading abilities are adversely impacted by internet/gadget addiction. Gadgets such as cellphones and laptops consume most of the learners' time and attention which impedes them from doing other activities like reading.

Reading materials are necessary to improve the learners' ability to read. They play an important role in honing learners' reading ability and provide opportunity for learners to expand their knowledge.

Peers or "barkadas" can influence learners' inclination toward reading. The more learners spend their time outside with their peers, the greater the possibility that it veers away the focus of learners in studying and even in reading.

Parental support has a great impact in the reading interest of learners. The more parents are involved; the more learners are drawn to love reading.

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Teachers are great factors to help build learners' interest in reading. They provide learners with the opportunity to practice and improve their reading abilities.

### CONCLUSION

In the light of the findings and insights arrived in this study, the following recommendations are forwarded:

Teachers should lend extra time to talk to learners and discover their interest.

Teachers should provide additional classroom reading activities which cater learners' interest that could stimulate their reading practices.

Regulation of the use of gadgets should be incorporated in student's handbook.

Parents and learners should be oriented about the prohibition of the use of gadgets inside the classroom during the Parent's Orientation program.

Teachers should provide a reading corner that has a lot of reading materials in each classroom to encourage learners to read during their free time.

Teachers should organize a book donation drive to collect used/new books to be distributed for the reading corner.

Reading materials and activities should be prepared and assess according to learners' interest.

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Parents and teachers should constantly remind learners the importance of reading as well as encourage them to manage their time with their friends.

Parents should be capacitated on how to extend support to their children at home and be engaged in the reading development of their children.

Teachers should be innovative and creative in planning reading programs purposely for the good of the learners.

A copy of the intervention programs should be given to the Schools Division Office, Regional Office, and Central office for them to approve and implement.

If a copy of this recommended remediation and enrichment programs would not be approved, school heads are encouraged to implement these in a local arrangement bases only.

A similar study is also encouraged to be conducted in the future and consider other variables not used nor mentioned in the study.

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