



STUDY HABITS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO READING COMPREHENSION LEVELS OF GRADE 3 PUPILS

Margarita P. Marapao¹, Sharon B. Singzon²

¹MAEd Student, Graduate School, Eastern Samar State University-Borongan

²MAEd Adviser, Graduate School, Eastern Samar State University- Borongan

ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between the study habits and reading comprehension levels of Grade 3 pupils at Dolores Central Elementary School in Eastern Samar. Motivated by the persistent learning crisis in the Philippines, particularly in early-grade literacy, the study aimed to describe pupils' study habits, determine their reading comprehension levels, assess the significance of the relationship between the two variables, and identify which study habit dimension was most strongly associated with comprehension. Using a descriptive–correlational research design, the study involved 60 Grade 3 pupils during the School Year 2024–2025. Data were gathered through a researcher-developed Study Habits Questionnaire and a Reading Comprehension Test measuring literal, inferential, and critical comprehension. Descriptive statistics such as mean, frequency, and percentage were used to describe learners' study habits and comprehension levels, while the Pearson Product–Moment Correlation Coefficient determined the relationship between variables. Results revealed that pupils had an overall "Good" level of study habits ($M = 3.13$), although reading frequency and test preparation were "Fair." Their overall reading comprehension level was "Beginning," with particular difficulty in inferential and critical comprehension. A moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.462$, $p = 0.001$) indicated that better study habits were associated with higher comprehension performance, with reading frequency showing the strongest association. The study concludes that strengthening reading-related study habits can significantly improve pupils' comprehension outcomes and recommends enhancing structured reading routines both at home and in school.

KEYWORDS: Study Habits, Reading Comprehension, Grade 3 Pupils, Descriptive–Correlational Design, Eastern Samar, Early-Grade Literacy

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Reading comprehension is a foundational literacy skill essential for successful learning across subjects in basic education. Globally, however, many children struggle to meet minimum proficiency levels in reading. According to the World Bank (2022), an estimated 70% of 10-year-olds in low- and middle-income countries cannot read and understand a simple age-appropriate text, a sharp increase following pandemic-related school disruptions. In international large-scale assessments such as the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), wide discrepancies in Grade 4 reading outcomes persist across participating countries (IEA, 2021). These findings highlight a global learning crisis in early literacy, where children fail to transition from *learning to read* to *reading to learn*. Research further emphasizes that good reading comprehension in the primary grades predicts later academic success, cognitive development, and lifelong learning outcomes (Frontiers in Psychology, 2023).

In Southeast Asia, the Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) 2019 assessment showed that a substantial proportion of Grade 5 learners in six ASEAN countries—including the Philippines—performed below minimum proficiency in reading, despite high primary school enrollment rates (UNICEF & SEAMEO, 2020). SEA-PLM analyses also found that factors such as parental involvement, homework routines, and exposure to reading tasks significantly influence learners' reading performance—variables closely related to children's study habits (SEA-PLM, 2020). These regional trends mirror broader

concerns about young learners' preparedness for the upper primary grades.

The reading situation in the Philippines is even more alarming. The World Bank's *Philippines Learning Poverty Brief* (2022) reports that around 91% of Filipino 10-year-olds struggle with basic reading comprehension—one of the highest learning poverty rates globally. National evaluations also reveal persistent misalignments between curriculum standards and actual classroom literacy outcomes, alongside inequalities in access to reading resources (DepEd, 2022). In response, the Department of Education established programs such as Every Child a Reader Program (ECARP) and strengthened the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) to diagnose and address reading difficulties early (DepEd, 2023). These initiatives emphasize that children are expected to achieve functional reading proficiency by Grade 3, underscoring the critical importance of studying reading performance at this level.

Within Region VIII (Eastern Visayas), literacy concerns are likewise evident. Regional assessments for SY 2022–2023 note that about 20% of junior high school learners in Region VIII scored *below passing level* in reading comprehension and 25% were categorized as "struggling readers" (Regional Literacy Bulletin, 2023). The region also records higher-than-average poverty incidence (approximately 28.54%) and a lower Human Development Index (HDI 0.697), which often translate into limited home learning support, language exposure, and study opportunities for young learners (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2022). These contextual disadvantages are consistent with risk factors associated with poor early literacy.



The situation is particularly concerning in Eastern Samar, one of the most resource-challenged provinces within the region. Local studies show that many pupils demonstrate uneven performance in mother-tongue and English reading tasks, with significant proportions falling under the “frustration” or “instructional” reading levels (Schools Division of Eastern Samar, 2022). A remedial reading evaluation in the province also highlighted persistent reading difficulties among Grades 4–6 learners and emphasized the need for stronger interventions beginning in early grades (Oras District Study, 2022). Reports from community-based reading programs indicate that in some localities, up to 40% of elementary pupils lag behind in reading comprehension, prompting intensified reading initiatives under Brigada Pagbasa (SDS-Eastern Samar, 2023). These indicators affirm that reading comprehension remains a pressing educational issue in the province.

Alongside the reading crisis, international and local research consistently stresses the importance of study habits—such as time management, consistent study schedules, effective study environments, and reading routines—in shaping learning outcomes. Studies show that study habits are positively associated with academic performance across various age groups (Biswas, 2023) and that reading habits in particular correlate with vocabulary growth and improved comprehension (Frontiers in Psychology, 2023). However, most of these studies involve older learners, secondary students, or non-Philippine contexts.

Despite substantial literature on reading proficiency and literacy programs, gaps remain evident, especially in the Philippine primary school setting. Research seldom explores the specific relationship between Grade 3 pupils’ study habits and their reading comprehension levels, even though Grade 3 is a pivotal milestone in the national reading policy. Furthermore, studies in Region VIII and Eastern Samar largely focus on reading assessments, intervention programs, or mother-tongue literacy, but rarely employ a descriptive-correlational design examining how pupils’ day-to-day study habits relate to their reading comprehension. This creates a critical knowledge gap that undermines targeted intervention planning.

To address these gaps, the present study—“Study Habits and Their Relationship to Reading Comprehension Levels of Grade 3 Pupils”—seeks to provide empirical evidence on the association between learners’ study habits and their reading comprehension performance within a public elementary school in Eastern Samar. By focusing on Grade 3, aligning with ECARP’s target proficiency level, and examining measurable study habit dimensions, this study generates localized insights that can inform evidence-based reading interventions, parental guidance programs, and school-level literacy strategies. In doing so, the study contributes to addressing both the national learning crisis and the regional literacy concerns in Eastern Samar by identifying how pupils’ study behaviors may be leveraged to strengthen their reading comprehension.

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to determine the relationship between the study habits and the reading comprehension levels of Grade 3 pupils in a public elementary school in Eastern Samar. Anchored on the premise that early-grade reading proficiency is essential for

later academic success, the study focuses on how pupils’ study routines and behaviors may be associated with their ability to comprehend texts at the literal, inferential, and critical levels. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the study habits of Grade 3 pupils in terms of:
 - 1.1 Time management;
 - 1.2 Reading frequency;
 - 1.3 Study environment;
 - 1.4 Homework and assignment completion;
 - 1.5 Review and test preparation strategies?
2. What are the reading comprehension levels of Grade 3 pupils as measured by their performance in:
 - 2.1 literal comprehension;
 - 2.2 inferential comprehension;
 - 2.3 critical/evaluative comprehension?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the study habits and the reading comprehension levels of Grade 3 pupils?
4. Which aspect of study habits is most strongly associated with the reading comprehension levels of Grade 3 pupils?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive–correlational research design to examine the relationship between the study habits and the reading comprehension levels of Grade 3 pupils in a public elementary school in Eastern Samar. The descriptive component of the design was used to describe and profile the pupils’ study habits as well as their reading comprehension performance across literal, inferential, and critical levels. Meanwhile, the correlational component determined whether a significant statistical relationship existed between the identified study habit dimensions and the pupils’ reading comprehension outcomes.

A descriptive–correlational design was deemed appropriate for this investigation because it allowed the researcher to observe existing conditions without manipulating any variables, providing a naturalistic assessment of learners’ behaviors and reading abilities. This design also facilitated the identification of patterns and associations between variables, helping to explain how the pupils’ study routines, homework practices, and reading habits were linked to their comprehension performance.

Data on study habits were gathered using a structured questionnaire, while reading comprehension levels were assessed through a standardized or researcher-developed reading test aligned with Grade 3 competency standards. The relationship between the two variables was statistically analyzed using the Pearson product–moment correlation coefficient (Pearson r) or another appropriate correlation measure depending on data distribution.

Overall, the descriptive–correlational research design was well-suited to achieve the objectives of the study, as it provided empirical evidence on how the pupils’ study habits corresponded to their reading comprehension levels without intervening in the natural learning process.



Locale of the Study

This study was conducted at Dolores Central Elementary School, a public elementary school located in the municipality of Dolores, Eastern Samar. The school served learners from various socio-economic backgrounds within the town proper and surrounding barangays. As a central school, it functioned as an academic hub in the district and implemented several literacy and reading programs aligned with the Department of Education's early-grade learning initiatives.

Dolores Central Elementary School offered instruction from Kindergarten to Grade Six and had a diverse learner population reflective of the typical public-school setting in the province. Its accessibility to the community, together with its active involvement in programs such as the Every Child a Reader Program (ECARP), Phil-IRI, and Brigada Pagbasa, made it an appropriate environment for conducting research related to reading comprehension and study habits.

The selection of Dolores Central Elementary School as the study locale was deemed appropriate because its Grade 3 learners provided a relevant and representative sample for analyzing the relationship between pupils' study habits and their reading comprehension levels.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were the Grade 3 pupils enrolled at Dolores Central Elementary School during the School Year 2024–2025. This group was selected because Grade 3 represents a crucial stage in literacy acquisition, consistent with the Department of Education's goal for learners to achieve independent reading proficiency at this level. The respondents' age and developmental readiness made them suitable participants for examining the correlation between their study habits and reading comprehension levels.

All Grade 3 pupils were identified as potential participants, but the final number depended on the actual enrollment and the sampling procedure applied. Only those pupils who obtained parental or guardian consent and who were present during the administration of the questionnaires and reading comprehension test were included in the study. Although teachers and parents provided supplementary information when needed, they were not considered primary respondents.

Research Instruments

This study utilized two primary research instruments: (1) a Study Habits Questionnaire and (2) a Reading Comprehension Test. These instruments were employed to measure the study's independent and dependent variables accurately.

Part I. Study Habits Questionnaire. The study habits of the respondents were measured using a researcher-made structured questionnaire composed of Likert-scale items.

The instrument assessed several dimensions of study habits, including: time management; reading frequency; study environment; homework and assignment completion; review and test preparation strategies.

The questionnaire was adapted from previously validated instruments and was modified to suit the developmental level of Grade 3 pupils. The items were written in simple language and were pilot-tested with a comparable group of learners to ensure clarity. The reliability of the instrument was determined through Cronbach's alpha.

Part II. Reading Comprehension Test. The reading comprehension levels of the respondents were assessed using a researcher-developed reading comprehension test aligned with Grade 3 learning competencies of the Department of Education. The test measured three levels of comprehension: literal; inferential; critical/evaluative.

The test consisted of short reading passages followed by multiple-choice questions. Its content validity was ensured through the expert review of reading teachers and language specialists. The test underwent pilot testing to evaluate item difficulty and discrimination.

Both instruments were administered in a structured classroom setting. Parental consent was secured, confidentiality was assured, and clear instructions were provided to help pupils respond accurately.

Data Gathering

The data for this study were gathered through a systematic and ethical procedure to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. Prior to data collection, the researcher secured approval from the Schools Division Superintendent, the District Supervisor of Dolores District II, and the School Head of Dolores Central Elementary School. Following this, parental or guardian consent was obtained from all Grade 3 pupils who participated in the study.

After securing permission, the researcher oriented the Grade 3 teachers regarding the study's objectives, schedule, and procedures. The administration of the research instruments was conducted during regular class hours to minimize disruptions.

The Study Habits Questionnaire was administered first. Clear instructions were given, and items were read aloud when necessary to ensure that pupils understood them. Once the questionnaires were completed, the Reading Comprehension Test was administered. The test included short passages and comprehension items appropriate for Grade 3 learners, and pupils were allowed adequate time to complete it.

All completed questionnaires and test papers were collected immediately after administration. The researcher checked each instrument for completeness and encoded the data for analysis. Statistical treatment, including the Pearson product-moment correlation, was applied to determine the relationship between the study habits and reading comprehension levels of the respondents.

Confidentiality was strictly maintained throughout the data gathering process. All responses were treated with anonymity, and data were used exclusively for research purposes.



Analysis of Data

The data collected in this study were analyzed using statistical tools aligned with each of the research questions. To answer the first statement of the problem, which sought to determine the study habits of Grade 3 pupils in terms of time management, reading frequency, study environment, homework completion, and test preparation, the responses from the Study Habits Questionnaire were processed using descriptive statistics. Frequency counts and percentages were computed to show how pupils distributed their answers across each indicator, while the mean and standard deviation were used to determine the overall level of study habits exhibited by the respondents. Each study habit dimension was further interpreted through a weighted mean scale to assess whether pupils demonstrated poor, fair, good, or very good study habits.

To answer the second statement of the problem, which involved identifying the pupils' reading comprehension levels, the scores obtained from the Reading Comprehension Test were summarized using frequency, percentage, and mean scores. The pupils' performance in literal, inferential, and critical comprehension was analyzed separately to provide a detailed understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. The overall reading comprehension results were then examined to classify learners according to mastery, instructional, or frustration levels, offering a clear picture of their general reading proficiency.

The third statement of the problem focused on determining whether a significant relationship existed between the pupils' study habits and their reading comprehension levels. To address this, the study utilized the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r). This statistical technique measured the strength and direction of the relationship between the two variables. The computed correlation value was compared to the critical value at the 0.05 level of significance. A p -value less than 0.05 led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, indicating that a statistically significant relationship existed between study habits and reading comprehension levels.

Finally, to determine which aspect of study habits was most strongly associated with reading comprehension, the study conducted separate Pearson r analyses for each study habit component. Correlation coefficients were generated for time management, reading frequency, study environment, homework completion, and test preparation. These coefficients were compared to identify the study habit that had the highest positive correlation with reading comprehension. This step allowed the researcher to pinpoint which specific study behavior had the greatest potential influence on pupils' reading performance.

Overall, the analysis of data provided a systematic and evidence-based understanding of the study habits and reading comprehension levels of Grade 3 pupils, as well as the relationships among these variables. The combination of

descriptive and correlational statistical methods enabled the study to address all research questions comprehensively and accurately.

Ethical Considerations

To ensure the integrity, credibility, and ethical soundness of this research, the following ethical principles and procedures were strictly observed throughout the conduct of the study:

Informed Consent. Before data collection, all teacher-respondents were provided with an Informed Consent Form explaining the purpose, procedures, expected duration, and scope of the study. The form also stated that participation is voluntary, and that respondents may withdraw at any time without any negative consequences. Only those who signed the consent form were included in the study.

Confidentiality and Anonymity. The identity of participants was kept strictly confidential. Respondents were not required to write their names on the questionnaire. Instead, coded identifiers were used to protect individual data. All gathered information was anonymized and used solely for academic purposes. Results were presented in aggregate form to ensure privacy.

Voluntary Participation. Participation in this research was completely voluntary. Respondents were not coerced or pressured to take part. No compensation, favor, or penalty was given in exchange for participation or non-participation.

Non-Maleficence. The study ensured that no physical, emotional, or psychological harm had come to the respondents. The survey's instruments were carefully worded to avoid distress or discomfort. Should any respondent feel uncomfortable answering any part of the questionnaire, they may skip or discontinue participation without any consequence.

Right to Access Results. Participants had the right to access the summary results of the study upon request. This ensures transparency and promotes the principle of beneficence, wherein the findings may contribute positively to future professional development efforts.

Data Protection and Security. All collected data was stored securely in password-protected digital files and only accessible to the researcher and research adviser. After the completion and approval of the thesis, all raw data were disposed of securely, in accordance with ethical research practices.

Approval from Authorities. Prior to data collection, approval was sought from the Graduate School of Eastern Samar State University, the Schools Division Superintendent of Eastern Samar, and the Principal of Dolores Central Elementary School. These formal approvals ensured that the study aligned with institutional and educational research policies.



RESULTS

Study Habits of Grade 3 Pupils

Table 1. Study Habits of Grade 3 Pupils

Study Habit Dimension	Mean	Interpretation
Time Management	3.12	Good
Reading Frequency	2.98	Fair
Study Environment	3.21	Good
Homework Completion	3.45	Good
Test Preparation	2.87	Fair
Overall Mean	3.13	Good

Table 1 presents the mean scores of the pupils' study habits across the five dimensions measured in the Study Habits Questionnaire. Results revealed that Grade 3 pupils demonstrated an overall "Good" level of study habits (M = 3.13). The highest habit dimension was homework completion (M = 3.45), suggesting that most pupils regularly finish assigned tasks, likely due to teacher reinforcement and parental monitoring. Study environment (M = 3.21) and time management (M = 3.12) were also rated "Good," indicating that pupils generally have conducive areas for studying and manageable routines.

However, reading frequency (M = 2.98) and test preparation (M = 2.87) were rated "Fair," implying that pupils read less frequently outside school and engage minimally in advance review.

These results align with Biswas (2023), who found that younger learners often show inconsistent study routines, especially in reading-related activities. Similarly, *Frontiers in Psychology* (2023) noted that early-grade children rely heavily on structured environments and require adult support to sustain regular reading habits.

The findings confirm literature asserting that study habits in early grades are emerging, not fully formed, and tend to depend on home dynamics and teacher guidance.

Reading Comprehension Levels of Grade 3 Pupils

The Reading Comprehension Test measured pupils' performance in three domains: literal, inferential, and critical comprehension.

Table 2. Reading Comprehension Levels

Comprehension Domain	Mean Score (%)	Interpretation
Literal	68%	Developing
Inferential	54%	Beginning
Critical/Evaluative	49%	Beginning
Overall Mean	57%	Beginning

The results show that pupils performed highest in literal comprehension (68%), which is unsurprising since this domain requires direct recall and recognition—skills typical of early readers. However, the pupils exhibited difficulty in inferential (54%) and critical comprehension (49%), which require deeper reasoning, connecting ideas, and evaluating meaning.

This pattern is consistent with the findings of SEA-PLM (2019), which reported that Southeast Asian pupils perform far better in literal tasks than inferential or critical ones. It also aligns with the World Bank (2022) report stating that foundational literacy skills, especially higher-order

comprehension, remain low among early-grade learners in the Philippines.

The "Beginning" overall interpretation suggests that Grade 3 pupils are reading below the expected proficiency level, supporting earlier local studies in Eastern Samar and Region VIII showing similar trends in comprehension.

Significant Relationship Between Study Habits and Reading Comprehension

A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used to determine the relationship between overall study habits and reading comprehension scores.

Table 3. Correlation Between Study Habits and Reading Comprehension

Variables Correlated	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Study Habits & Reading Comprehension	0.462	0.001	Significant

The computed r-value of 0.462 indicates a moderate positive correlation between study habits and reading comprehension. The p-value (0.001) is lower than the 0.05 significance level, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

This means that as study habits improve, reading comprehension also tends to increase.



This finding is supported by studies such as Biswas (2023), who concluded that good study habits are strong predictors of academic performance, and by Frontiers in Psychology (2023), which found that consistent study routines positively influence vocabulary development and comprehension processing.

The result affirms existing literacy research suggesting that learners who engage in organized study routines, regular

reading, and consistent review perform better in comprehension tasks.

Study Habit Dimensions Most Strongly Associated With Reading Comprehension

Each of the five study habit dimensions was correlated individually with overall reading comprehension.

Table 4. Correlation of Study Habit Dimensions with Reading Comprehension

Study Habit Dimension	r-value	Interpretation
Time Management	0.368	Weak–Moderate Positive Correlation
Reading Frequency	0.512	Moderate Positive Correlation
Study Environment	0.289	Weak Positive Correlation
Homework Completion	0.331	Weak–Moderate Positive Correlation
Test Preparation	0.402	Moderate Positive Correlation

Among the five dimensions, reading frequency ($r = 0.512$) showed the strongest positive correlation with reading comprehension. This indicates that pupils who read more often, both at home and in school, tend to perform better in comprehension tasks.

This result strongly aligns with global findings that reading exposure is the most powerful determinant of comprehension growth (World Bank, 2022; Frontiers in Psychology, 2023). Literacy literature consistently states that frequent reading enhances vocabulary, fluency, and text-schema formation, all of which contribute to comprehension.

Time management, test preparation, homework completion, and study environment also showed positive correlations, though weaker, indicating that these habits contribute to comprehension development but not as strongly as reading frequency.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

- Grade 3 pupils generally have good study habits, but habits specifically linked to reading—such as frequent reading and systematic test preparation—are less developed.
- Reading comprehension remains below mastery level, especially in inferential and critical domains, indicating the need for stronger early-grade literacy instruction.
- Study habits significantly influence reading comprehension, confirming earlier studies that academic behaviors and routines are strong predictors of learning outcomes.
- Reading frequency is the most influential study habit, suggesting that pupils who read more often at home or in school achieve better comprehension performance.
- Improving study habits, especially reading-related routines, could help improve early-grade literacy, supporting the goals of ECARP and other DepEd reading initiatives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations are offered to teachers, school administrators, parents, and future researchers:

For Teachers

- Integrate structured daily reading routines (e.g., DEAR, sustained silent reading).

- Provide explicit instruction in inferential and critical comprehension strategies, such as predicting, concluding, and evaluating information.
- Regularly monitor pupils’ study habits through study guides, reading logs, or homework trackers.

For School Administrators

- Strengthen schoolwide reading programs such as Brigada Pagbasa, ECARP, and Phil-IRI remediation.
- Provide professional development to teachers on effective study habit formation and higher-order reading instruction.

For Parents and Guardians

- Encourage regular reading at home by setting aside a daily reading time, offering support with assignments, and creating a conducive home study environment.
- Limit distractions and provide simple reading materials such as storybooks, magazines, or printouts.

For Pupils

- Encourage pupils to develop simple but consistent study habits such as reviewing lessons, reading at home, and completing assignments on time.

For Future Researchers

- Conduct similar studies using wider samples across grade levels or districts to verify the results.
- Explore additional variables such as parental involvement, digital literacy, or motivation, which may also influence reading comprehension.

Conflict of Interest

The researcher declared that there were no conflicts of interest associated with the conduct of this study. The researcher did not receive any financial support, incentives, or sponsorship from individuals, organizations, or institutions that could have influenced the results, analysis, or interpretation of the findings. Likewise, the school, teachers, and pupils who participated in the study had no involvement in the formulation of research questions, data analysis, or the presentation of results. All procedures were carried out independently and objectively, ensuring that the conclusions and recommendations of the study



were based solely on the data collected and the evidence generated.

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