

Socioeconomic Background that Affects the Reading Comprehension of Grade 2 Pupils in Selected Elementary Schools in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija

Leslyn D. Barbasa¹, Camille B. Dela Pena², Justine Joy P. Galang³, Rinzelle Kate J. Solis⁴, Jessa Mae C. Sombrero⁵, Jenny Q. Estingor⁶

¹²³⁴⁵⁶*Bachelor in Elementary Education, Polytechnic University of the Philippines – Cabiao Campus, Nueva Ecija*

leslynbarbasa413@gmail.com, camille.delapena0209@gmail.com, justinejoygalang00@gmail.com,

soliskate93@gmail.com, jessamae.sombrero.5@gmail.com, jquestingor@pup.edu.ph

Leslyn D. Barbasa- ORCID: 0009-0003-7090-3299

Camille B. Dela Peña- ORCID: 0009-0003-9222-9282

Justine Joy P. Galang- ORCID: 0009-0007-4482-625X

Rinzelle Kate J. Solis- ORCID: 0009-0004-6398-3590

Jessa Mae C. Sombrero - ORCID: 0009-0004-1430-6139

Jenny Q. Estingor- ORCID: 0000-0003-2068-3251

Abstract	Article Info
<p>This study explored how the socioeconomic background of parents affected the reading comprehension of Grade 2 pupils in selected elementary schools in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija. It focused on two main factors: parental support and financial capability. The researchers used a quantitative descriptive method and gathered data through validated survey questionnaires answered by 114 parents or guardians. These respondents came from seven schools that were part of the extension program of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines – Cabiao Campus. Statistical tools such as weighted mean and Pearson correlation coefficient were used for data analysis. The results showed that both parental support and financial capability were rated as “rarely” practiced. Most pupils were found to be at the “instructional” level in reading comprehension. However, the Pearson correlation test showed no significant relationship between the socioeconomic background of parents and the reading comprehension of their children. Although no strong statistical link was found, the study revealed that limited parental support and financial difficulties might still affect children’s literacy. Other potential elements, such as the caliber of the teachers, the resources available at school, and the home environment, were likely more significant. The study found that the respondents’ socioeconomic background had no significant influence on their children’s reading comprehension. However, the results highlight the need to extend greater support to low-income families in order to strengthen reading development among pupils in the early grades.</p>	<p>Keywords: <i>Socioeconomic Background, Reading Comprehension, Parental Support, Financial Capability</i></p>

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INTRODUCTION

The academic performance of students, particularly in early reading comprehension, was significantly influenced by their socioeconomic status. Based on some studies, it's really more-harder for kids who came from poor families to learn new words and understand stories because they didn't grow up in places where people use a lot of words or talk about many things (Sullivan et al., 2021). Because of these early problems, the gap in learning gets wider as time passes by. Students from low-income families have more difficulty improving their reading since they don't always have enough books, proper school materials, or good classrooms (Sullivan et al., 2021). Socioeconomic status or SES really affects how well kids in the Philippines read, especially in the areas where Grade 2 pupils live in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija.

The Philippine Institute for Development Studies (2019) also said that kids find it hard to read well because their families don't have enough money, there is lack of reading materials, and parents sometimes are not much involved in their learning. In the U.S., the American Psychological Association (2017) did a study and they found out that having money problems can make kids have weak language skills and can also affect how they do in school.

OECD (2023) said that one of the reason why students' reading scores are not the same in different countries is because of the economic background of the family. In general, those who came from rich families usually get better scores than the poor ones. This is attributed to their greater opportunities to visit enriching environments or engage in new experiences that foster additional learning (PLOS ONE, 2023).

The researchers believed it is very important to study reading comprehension. The goal is to understand the problems that students face and create better ways to help them get better in both reading and writing. This study is aiming to improve how students learn and also to make teaching more effective. The researchers also applied some teaching techniques that are proven by other studies to support students who are struggling in reading, and use it during actual classroom teaching using the results from this study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Children's academic performance, particularly in reading, is substantially influenced by a variety of interconnected factors, including socioeconomic status, parental support, financial resources, and reading comprehension, as indicated by a study. Research from both domestic and international sources, such as PISA, Sirin, and the Philippine Institute for Development Studies, shows that early literacy exposure, parental involvement, and resource accessibility all considerably improve the academic achievement of children from wealthy homes. Children in rural areas, such as Cabiao and Nueva Ecija, exhibited diminished reading competence due to problems including insufficient education, overcrowded schools, and a scarcity of resources. Research indicates that early vocabulary, fluency, and cognitive skill development significantly improve understanding. Reading performance has been shown to improve with programs such as Bawat Bata Bumabasa (BBBP), particularly when implemented regularly and tailored to meet the needs of each student. Although many parents faced difficulties due to their limited time, financial resources, and literacy skills, even a small amount of parental support made a significant difference in promoting literacy. Despite that, Jeynes, Capotosto, and Andalajao's study showed that regular parental involvement enhanced reading results. Their financial situation directly impacted students' access to books and other educational resources, and families in poverty frequently lacked the resources necessary to meet their children's academic obligations. Government and private sector initiatives such as "Tara, Basa!" and "Pages for Progress," along with Reading Club 2000, demonstrated that these obstacles could be overcome with community support. The research primarily supports increased parental involvement, specialized reading interventions, and the provision of easily accessible resources in order to improve reading comprehension in students from underprivileged backgrounds.

METHODOLOGY

To investigate the relationship between the socioeconomic background of Grade 2 students in particular institutions in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija—more especially, their financial capacity and parental support—and their reading

comprehension, our research methodology was carefully planned. The methodology employed a methodical approach to ensure dependability, ethical compliance, and relevance to the educational setting:

1. Research Design

This study used a quantitative descriptive-correlational design to explore the link between socioeconomic background and the reading comprehension of Grade 2 pupils. This approach was considered suitable because it not only described the socioeconomic conditions of the participants but also tested whether these factors were significantly related to pupils' comprehension performance.

2. Participants

The study involved **114 parents of Grade 2 pupils** drawn from seven elementary schools in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija: Concepcion Elementary School, Maligaya Elementary School, San Fernando Sur Elementary School, Jose Rico Cruz Elementary School, San Roque Elementary School, Cabiao Central School, and Sta. Rita Elementary School. A **quota sampling technique** was applied to ensure balanced representation from each school. Prior to data collection, the researchers secured approval from school heads and obtained **informed consent from parents**, in line with standard ethical procedures.

3. Research Instrument

Two main sources of data were used: a **researcher-made Socioeconomic Background Questionnaire** and the pupils' **reading comprehension scores** from district-administered assessments. The questionnaire covered three key areas: parental support, financial capacity, and literacy-related resources at home.

Validation: The instrument was reviewed by five education experts (five Master Teachers) to confirm content validity. Suggestions on wording, clarity, and item relevance were incorporated into the final version.

Reliability: The questionnaire achieved a **Cronbach's Alpha of 0.751**, which reflects an acceptable level of internal consistency.

4. Step-by-Step Execution

Introduction: Parents/guardians were informed about the purpose of the study, their voluntary participation, and the confidentiality of their responses.

Feature Showcase: The survey measured how frequently parents supported reading activities and how financial capacity affected access to learning resources.

Interactive Engagement: Parents were assisted by teachers in understanding and completing the questionnaires to ensure accuracy.

5. Data Collection

- Grade 2 teachers assisted with the survey, which occurred from March 3 to 26, 2025.
- There were 114 valid answers obtained from parents or guardians.
- Results from pre-reading assessments and demographic information were included in the supplemental material.
- The data had been cleaned, structured, and coded to enable statistical analysis.

6. Evaluation and Iteration

The statistical significance of the relationship between the variables was ascertained by analyzing the responses using Pearson's r correlation coefficient and Jamovi software.

The questionnaire's clarity and reliability were improved through a pilot test and expert validation (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.751, regarded as good).

7. Conclusion and Next Steps

The methodology confirmed that although parental support and financial capability were often lacking, no significant correlation was found with pupils' reading comprehension levels.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The study revealed vital information that demonstrated the importance of examining how a child's socioeconomic background affected their ability to comprehend what they read in Grade 2. According to parents, the majority of households "rarely" provided their kids with educational resources like books and transportation, or helped them with reading.

Notwithstanding these drawbacks, there was no discernible relationship between these socioeconomic characteristics and reading comprehension levels in the statistical analysis employing Pearson's correlation coefficient. Despite having a reasonable level of text comprehension, the majority of students were classified as "instructional," meaning they required some assistance from their teachers. The results suggest that school-based programs and help from teachers might have helped lessen the problems caused by low socioeconomic status.

Some parts of the findings could still be improved. Like, even though many families don't have enough books or reading materials at home, there are still parents who help their children in school. This shows that better teamwork between home and school is possible. The results were also the same as what Gunnerud et al. (2022) and Capotosto et al. (2017) found — that parents' actions, how much resources they have, and how much language kids hear at home can affect how well they learn to read even when their family is poor.

The findings also showed that money problems don't always affect a child's reading skills in the same way. The results showed that teaching plays a big part and that students can adjust well even if they come from different family backgrounds. This agrees with DepEd's "Bawat Bata Bumabasa" (2019), which says that schools should give all learners enough help in reading no matter what their financial status is.

In general, the results showed that it was really important to study how being poor or having less affects reading. It also showed that more research is needed to check other things like how good the teachers are, the condition of the schools, and the reading programs in the community. These ideas help in making reading programs that are more complete and easy to access, especially for far places like Cabiao, Nueva Ecija.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study indicated that the socioeconomic background of the respondents generally showed a rarely level of parental support and a rarely degree of financial capability. Generally speaking, their kids' reading comprehension abilities were categorized as instructional, which meant that even though they could read, they still needed help fully understanding the content. Additionally, the results indicated that the socioeconomic background of the respondents and their children's reading comprehension did not show a significant correlation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The researchers suggested that teachers actively assist families in obtaining educational or financial aid through local government units (LGUs) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) at the time. It is advised that educators start collaborations with alum associations or non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to organize book drives.

2. The researcher recommended that the school head, principal, and admins continued and strengthened the partnership with local government units, parent-teacher associations, and literacy-focused organizations to implement an extension program that actively involved parents in improving students' reading comprehension.

3. The researcher suggested that future research improve the tools used to measure socioeconomic background and reading comprehension, as well as increase the sample size to improve statistical power and representation. In order to address the limitations of this study, researchers were also urged to examine the methodology, specifically the sampling and data-gathering processes.

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