

# Literacy Skills and Academic Performance of Junior High School Learners: Basis for a Learning Strategic Plan

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**Abstract**—Literacy skills are recognized as one of the most critical components in enhancing a student's academic performance. By 2025, UNESCO further emphasized literacy's transformative role in reducing poverty, nurturing individual potential, and empowering citizens, especially children, to actively contribute to a better society. Historically, efforts have been made to improve literacy rates in the country, yet challenges remain. A concerning indicator of the literacy gap is the Philippines' performance in international assessments. The 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), administered by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), ranked the Philippines 77th out of 80 countries. Alarmingly, no significant improvement was noted compared to the 2018 PISA results, highlighting persistent issues in literacy development. Using a correlational quantitative approach research design, the researcher surveyed the Grade 9 respondents utilizing the Phil IRI test and the TOEFL test. Results revealed that although a significant portion of respondents (over 70%) demonstrated commendable academic performance, falling within the 89–99 GWA range, major gaps in literacy skills were evident. Notably, all schools across both districts rated within the "Frustration" level for reading comprehension, suggesting that respondents struggle to understand and process textual information independently. This result is consistent with national and international assessments, such as PISA 2022, which show Filipino learners underperforming in reading literacy. In vocabulary, most respondents performed at a "Low-Intermediate" level, with some slightly exceeding this at "High-Intermediate", falling behind at the "Basic" level. Writing skills, meanwhile, were rated "High-Intermediate" overall. The results echoed past findings that while respondents may have the basic mechanics of writing, issues such as poor grammar, limited vocabulary, and lack of coherence, require structured instructional support. In contrast, respondents fared better in reading fluency, with most performing at the "Instructional" level and some even reaching the "Independent" level. Additionally, significant differences were found between male and female respondents in the areas of vocabulary and writing, with female respondents outperforming males. Lastly, the study established a statistically significant relationship between literacy skills and academic performance in English, affirming the critical role of foundational literacy in overall scholastic achievement.

**Keywords**— Literacy skills, academic performance, frustration level, instructional level, and independent level.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly evolving world, literacy is more than just the ability to read and write; it is a gateway to lifelong learning, critical thinking, and meaningful participation in society. For learners, particularly in foundational years, literacy skills

serve as the cornerstone of all academic success. Without a solid grasp of reading comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, and writing, students are likely to face academic challenges that may hinder their educational progress and limit their future opportunities. As educators continue to emphasize 21st-century skills, strengthening literacy becomes not only a pedagogical responsibility but a national priority. Globally, literacy is acknowledged as a fundamental human right and a key driver of sustainable development. UNESCO (2025) defines literacy as the ability to read, write, and use numbers in daily life, skills that empower individuals to engage in society and the economy. Bachore (2022) affirms its importance in students' educational journeys, while Baile (2019) and Begum (2018) recognize literacy as a critical measure of academic quality and life Preparedness.

In the Philippine context, literacy has long been a focus of education policy. The Department of Education (DepEd) recognizes reading and writing as fundamental to student achievement, as evidenced by initiatives like the "Hamon: Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative)" under DepEd order No. 173, s—2019, which aims to ensure that every learner can read with comprehension at their grade level. Earlier, DepEd Order No. 45, s.2002, the "Every Child A Reader" program was implemented, reinforcing the importance of school-based reading interventions to strengthen literacy from the elementary level. Following this program is the "Tara, Basa" program of the Department of Social Works and Development, which was launched in 2023. This program encourages college students to Support elementary pupils who are struggling and non-readers. These national efforts show the country's commitment to developing foundational literacy skills among Filipino learners.

Despite such initiatives, literacy remains a major concern. The 2022 Programme for International Reading Fluency, in particular, has gained renewed attention in recent studies as a key predictor of comprehension and academic performance. As noted by Rasinski et al. (2019), reading fluency, defined as the ability to read with speed, accuracy, and appropriate expression, is essential for enabling students to focus on understanding the text rather than struggling with decoding. Students who are fluent readers are more likely to comprehend texts efficiently and engage deeply with academic content. Likewise, Taufiq and Wahyuni (2020) highlight that fluency bridges the gap between word recognition and comprehension,

ultimately supporting students' ability to critically synthesize and evaluate information. Bouguebas (2019) also emphasizes that fluent readers move beyond basic decoding to read with genuine understanding and expression, which reflects true comprehension. Literacy skills are recognized as one of the most critical components in enhancing a student's academic performance. In the Philippines, literacy is not only viewed as the ability to read and write but as a set of essential life competencies. The Philippine News Agency (2022) defines literacy as encompassing skills and knowledge necessary for future societal participation. UNESCO (2024) broadens this definition, describing literacy as the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, and compute using printed and written materials in diverse contexts. By 2025, UNESCO further emphasized literacy's transformative role in reducing poverty, nurturing individual potential, and empowering citizens, especially children, to actively contribute to a better society.

Historically, efforts have been made to improve literacy rates in the country, yet challenges remain. A concerning indicator of the literacy gap is the Philippines' performance in international assessments. The 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), administered by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), ranked the Philippines 77th out of 80 countries. According to OECD (2023), the country recorded one of the lowest mean scores in reading performance, with most students failing to reach even the minimum proficiency level (Level 2), far below the highest proficiency level (Level 5).

Alarmingly, no significant improvement was noted compared to the 2018 PISA results, highlighting persistent issues in literacy development. Several scholars and institutions have explored possible causes of low literacy performance. Mullin (n.d.) notes that reading fluency and comprehension are key benchmarks of proficient readers, and deficiencies in these areas hinder overall academic progress. Gatcho and Gutierrez (2020) point to societal changes as a contributing factor to declining literacy trends, suggesting that other components of literacy, such as vocabulary, fluency, and grammar, may be increasingly overlooked in classroom instruction. Furthermore, a study by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS, 2024) reveals that despite structural improvements in the education system, significant learning gaps persist. Less than 20 percent of Filipino students demonstrate minimum reading proficiency, while approximately 90 percent are categorized as experiencing learning poverty, severely limiting their acquisition of essential skills for future success.

Subsequently, writing and vocabulary contribute to overall literacy development. Clara and Ratnaningsih (2021) emphasize that vocabulary underpins all language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Agazzi (2022) and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2023) similarly note that a strong vocabulary supports reading comprehension and effective communication.

Writing, as Chan (2022) observes, is a productive process in which students use prior knowledge to express ideas, while the International Literacy Association (2020) and the New

York State Department of Education (2024) highlight writing as a tool for deeper text understanding and knowledge construction.

Recent studies highlight the strong correlation between literacy skills such as reading comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, and writing and overall academic achievement (Slameto, 2018; Taufiq and Wahyuni, 2020). However, existing research tends to concentrate on early grades or higher education, leaving a gap in studies addressing the literacy skills of junior high school students, particularly those in Grade 9. This stage is critical as students transition into more complex academic demands that require advanced literacy abilities. Despite recent national efforts to improve literacy through curriculum reforms, few localized studies have been conducted in the Philippine context, especially in urban settings like the City of Taguig. Addressing this gap can inform more targeted and effective interventions to strengthen foundational skills and improve overall academic performance at this crucial level of schooling.

### *1.1 Statement of the Problem*

1. *What is the profile of the student respondents in terms of the following:*
  - 1.1 *age; and*
  - 1.2 *sex?*
2. *What is the academic performance of the respondents based on their GWA in English, school year 2024-2025?*
3. *What are the level of literacy skills of the respondents in terms of:*
  - 3.1 *vocabulary;*
  - 3.2 *writing;*
  - 3.3 *reading comprehension; and*
  - 3.4 *reading fluency?*
4. *Are there significant differences in the respondents' level of literacy skills when grouped by profile?*
5. *Is there a significant relationship between literacy skills and the academic performance of the respondents?*

## II. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a comparative correlational quantitative research design to analyze the relationship between variables and compare differences across groups. A correlational quantitative design is used to determine whether and to what extent relationships exist between two or more variables, using statistical tools to establish patterns of association (Creswell & Creswell, 2021). By incorporating a comparative element, the design not only examines relationships but also identifies variations among groups, thereby offering a broader understanding of the dynamics between the variables (Rahman & Singh, 2023).

In the context of this study, the approach was deemed appropriate since the researcher aimed to determine the relationship between Grade 9 learners' English literacy skills and their academic performance in selected schools within the Division of Taguig and Pateros. At the same time, the comparative component allowed for the analysis of potential

differences across groups of learners based on their demographic characteristics and performance levels.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of data based on the instruments used by the researcher. The results are organized according to the specific questions stated in the statement of the problem.

TABLE 1.1. *Frequency and Percentage of the Learners' Profile in Terms of Age*

Age	Frequency	Percentage
13-14	172	49.41
15-16	252	50.35
17-18	1	.2
TOTAL	425	100.0

The table shows that most student-respondents are between 15 and 16 years old, accounting for 50.35% of the total sample (n = 252 out of 424). A significant portion of the sample also falls within the 13 to 14 age group, comprising 49.41% (n = 172). In contrast, only a single respondent (0.24%) belongs to the 17 to 18 age group, indicating a negligible representation in this bracket. The age distribution suggests that the sample is clustered in early to mid-adolescence, particularly within the junior high school range. This distribution is important to consider, as age can significantly influence cognitive and literacy development.

Concerning the study of Lofranco and Luzano (2023), poor reading comprehension remains a problem with students with low engagement inside the classroom. The study also noted that age and grade level can affect the comprehension of the students.

TABLE 1.2. *Frequency and Percentage of the Learner's Profile in Terms of Sex*

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	182	42.8
Female	243	57.2
TOTAL	425	100.0

The table indicates that most of the student-respondents are female, comprising 57.2% of the total sample (n = 243 out of 425). This is slightly higher than the number of male respondents, who account for 42.8% (n = 182). Although the difference is not higher, most female participants may have implications for the study, particularly in areas related to literacy skills such as reading comprehension, vocabulary, writing, and reading fluency.

Thus, the gender distribution in the sample reveals a higher proportion of female respondents, which could potentially influence the findings of the study, particularly in areas where gender differences are known to affect literacy-related skills. In agreement with the study conducted by the Philippine Statistics Authority (2023), the study stated that females have a higher literacy rate than males.

The table reveals that most student-respondents, representing 39.00% of the total sample (n = 167), achieved a weighted average grade ranging from 89 to 93. This is followed by 34.00% of students who obtained grades within the 94 to 99

range, indicating a high level of academic performance. Additionally, 20.00% of the respondents earned grades between 83 and 88, reflecting a moderately satisfactory performance. In contrast, only 7.00% of the sample, or 28 students, had grades in the 77 to 82 range, suggesting a small proportion of learners who may need further academic support.

TABLE 2. *Frequency and Percentage of the Learners' Profile in Terms of Academic Performance*

General Weighted Average	Frequency	Percentage
Outstanding (94- 99)	143	34
Very Satisfactory (89-93)	167	39
Satisfactory (83-88)	87	20
Fairly Satisfactory (77-82)	28	7
Did Not Meet Expectations (76 and below)	-	-
TOTAL	425	100.0

The distribution indicates that the academic performance of most learners in English 8 is generally above average, with over 70% obtaining grades between 89 and 99. This suggests effective overall performance in the subject. However, the small percentage of students with lower grades (77–82) may benefit from targeted interventions or strategies to improve their proficiency.

In correlation with the data presented in Table 2, which shows that the majority of Grade 8 learners scored within the 89–99 range in English, aligns closely with existing literature on literacy and academic performance. Mendoza (2023) emphasized that students with higher English proficiency tend to excel in other academic areas due to their improved comprehension and analytical abilities. This supports the strong performance of over 70% of learners in the table. Furthermore, Xiaoxia et al. (2022) found a significant correlation between language literacy and academic achievement, reinforcing the idea that the development of literacy skills is crucial for scholastic success. Notably, 38.70% of learners scored in the 89–93 range, indicating solid performance but with room for growth into the highest tier. Meanwhile, the 34.00% who scored in the 94–99 range demonstrate excellent proficiency, suggesting that a significant portion of students are achieving mastery in English 8, possibly due to effective instruction and literacy support programs. However, the presence of students scoring within the 77–82 range, although a small portion (7.00%), highlights the need for targeted interventions. Mariano (2024) recommended school-based reading programs to address such gaps in comprehension and performance, particularly for low-achieving learners. In addition, Espia and Cortezano (2022) affirmed that improved reading comprehension skills contribute directly to higher academic performance, underscoring the importance of enhancing literacy instruction to raise overall student achievement in English.

Table 3.1 reflects the level of literacy skills of the respondents based on the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI), focusing on Reading Comprehension. In terms of Reading Comprehension, a majority of the

respondents, or 225 students (52.9%), are classified under the independent level, indicating that they can understand reading materials on their own without assistance. Meanwhile, 115 students (27.1%) fall under the instructional level, suggesting that they require some support to comprehend what they read effectively. A concerning 85 students (20.0%) are at the frustration level, meaning they struggle to understand texts even with help, and are likely to need intensive intervention.

TABLE 3.1. Level of Literacy Skills of the Respondents in Terms of Reading Comprehension

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Independent	225	52.9
Instructional	115	27.1
Frustration	85	20.0
TOTAL	425	100.0

Note: Scale Range: 97.01 - 100 = Independent, 89.01 - 97.00 = Instructional, 89.00 and below = Frustration

TABLE 3.2. Level of Literacy Skills of the Respondents in Terms of Reading Fluency

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Independent	284	66.8
Instructional	125	29.4
Frustration	16	3.8
TOTAL	425	100.0

Note: Scale Range: 97.01 - 100 = Independent, 89.01 - 97.00 = Instructional, 89.00 and below = Frustration

Table 3.2 presents the level of literacy skills of the respondents based on the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI), focusing in Reading Fluency. When it comes to reading fluency, the results are slightly more encouraging. A larger portion of the respondents, 284 students (66.8%), are at the independent level, demonstrating that they can read text smoothly and accurately without assistance. About 125 students (29.4%) are at the instructional level, needing some guidance to read fluently. Only a small fraction, 16 students (3.8%), are at the frustration level in fluency, indicating that very few students have severe difficulties with basic reading accuracy and speed.

Supported by the study of Quimen (2024), where it was observed that most learners scored within the “instructional” range in reading comprehension, indicating a need for structured intervention, Villanueva’s (2025) study also emphasized that improving reading skills could significantly boost learners’ midterm performance across subjects. Siahaan and Simanjuntak (2024) further argued that improving reading fluency and accuracy directly enhances reading comprehension. Ryu and Lee (2024) recommended that instructional strategies account for students’ varying levels of fluency. Tailored interventions, particularly for those at advanced reading levels who continue to struggle, are essential. As both fluency and comprehension are critical for academic success, especially in English language learning, Lorenza et al. (2022).

For Vocabulary proficiency, the data reveal a significant concentration of individuals in the lower bands. First, the largest group, Low-Intermediate, accounts for 40.9% (174 individuals), indicating a substantial portion of the respondents have foundational but not yet strong vocabulary. Second, this

is closely followed by the Basic level at 30.6% (130 individuals). Combined, these two categories represent a substantial 71.5% of all respondents, meaning nearly three-quarters of the group possesses only foundational or slightly above-basic vocabulary knowledge. Conversely, high proficiency is quite limited: Third, only 17.6% (75 individuals) are at the High-Intermediate level, and finally, a mere 2.4% (10 individuals) demonstrate Advanced vocabulary skills, underscoring the scarcity of deep vocabulary mastery in this population. While concerning, the Below-Basic group is relatively smaller at 8.5% (36 individuals), suggesting severe deficiencies affect a minority. Overall, this distribution points to a widespread need for vocabulary development, as current levels could constrain comprehension and expression in various contexts.

TABLE 3.3. Level of Literacy Skills of the Respondents in TOEFL in Terms of Vocabulary

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Advanced	10	2.4
High – Intermediate	75	17.6
Low – Intermediate	174	40.9
Basic	130	30.6
Below – Basic	36	8.5
TOTAL	425	100.0

Note: Scale Range: 8.00 – 10.00 = Advanced, 6.00 – 7.99 = High-Intermediate, 4.00 – 5.99 = Low-Intermediate, 2.00 – 3.99 = Basic, 0.00 – 1.99 = Below-Basic

This aligns with the study of Lukas et al. (2020), which states that vocabulary acts as the foundation for communication and is more important than mastering other language skills. Additionally, with the findings of Quines (2023), who found that students with low vocabulary sizes tend to perform poorly in reading and writing, highlighting the importance of vocabulary in academic success.

The findings are aligned by Quines (2023), who emphasized that the strength of vocabulary is a crucial predictor of success in both reading and writing. Niyibiz et al. (2024) established that the performance in writing can be greatly enhanced through the use of structured teaching methods. In addition, Olalekan (2021) also pointed out the essential role of writing skills to academic success in all subject areas.

TABLE 3.4. Level of Literacy Skills of the Respondents in TOEFL in Terms of Writing

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Advanced	104	24.5
High – Intermediate	146	34.4
Low – Intermediate	90	21.2
Basic	53	12.5
Below – Basic	32	7.5
TOTAL	425	100.0

Note: Scale Range: 8.00–10.00= Advanced, 6.00 – 7.99 = High-Intermediate, 4.00 – 5.99 = Low-Intermediate, 2.00 – 3.99 = Basic, 0.00 – 1.99 = Below-Basic

This table provides a clear snapshot of the proficiency levels in writing for a group of 425 individuals. Writing proficiency among the individuals assessed is notably stronger, showing a significant concentration in the higher bands.

Specifically, the High-Intermediate level represents the largest group for writing at 34.4% (146 individuals), indicating that more than one-third of the respondents are competent writers. Furthermore, a substantial 24.5% (104 individuals) fall into the Advanced category, showcasing strong indicators of their ability to write effectively, coherently, and perhaps with stylistic finesse. Collectively, the Advanced and High-Intermediate levels account for a solid 58.9% of the total respondents, meaning over half the group possesses admirable writing skills, ranging from solid to excellent. Conversely, the percentages for lower writing proficiency levels are considerably smaller than those observed for vocabulary: Low-Intermediate makes up 21.2% (90 individuals), while the Basic group is even smaller at 12.5% (53 individuals). Finally, a minimal 7.5% (32 individuals) are in the Below-Basic category, suggesting that severe writing deficiencies affect only a very limited number of individuals. Overall, this data indicates that the group generally possesses commendable writing skills, likely stemming from effective instruction, consistent practice, or natural aptitude in this domain.

The results shown in Table 3.4 are aligned with the findings of Barayuga et al. (2024), who conducted a study that aimed to assess the writing skills of senior high school students in Lorenzo S. Sarmiento National High School, a school in Davao de Oro, Philippines, as a basis for an intervention program. The study discussed several challenges faced by learners, such as unfamiliarity with relevant topics, grammar errors, and limited vocabulary, and why some learners excel in writing while others do not, despite undergoing the same program.

The data paints a clear picture: the respondents assessed are generally proficient in writing, with a significant proportion demonstrating high-intermediate to advanced skills. However, their vocabulary knowledge lags

considerably, with the majority possessing only basic to low-intermediate understanding. This highlights vocabulary as a key area for potential development or intervention if the goal is to improve overall language proficiency.

Table 4.1 reveals that female respondents had greater mean ranks in vocabulary (225.17) and writing (231.05) compared to male respondents, whose mean ranks were 195.65 and 187.84, respectively. The P-values were 0.013 in vocabulary and 0.000 in writing. These are below the standard significance of 0.05. This means that there is a statistically significant difference between male and female respondents in these areas, with females performing strongly and leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis for certain literacy skill indicators, and suggesting that sex has a statistically significant influence on literacy skills related to vocabulary and writing.

Conversely, the data show no significant difference in reading comprehension and reading fluency between male and female respondents. The mean rank for reading comprehension was 213.76 for males and 211.55 for females. The p-values, 0.852 for reading comprehension and 0.865 for reading fluency, are both above 0.05, indicating that gender does not significantly affect performance in these two areas. Overall, the findings suggest that sex is a significant factor affecting certain literacy skills, particularly vocabulary and writing, among respondents. However, it does not appear to influence reading comprehension and reading fluency.

This supports the study of Xiao, T., & Zhao, Y. (2020), which found that females consistently obtained higher essay scores, composed more fluently, edited their texts more, and paused less compared to males. It also suggests that girls' superiority in writing fluency and text quality might be a consequence of their superiority in English proficiency and earlier mastery of lower-level transcription skills (e.g., spelling).

TABLE 4.1. Significant Differences on the Level of Literacy Skills of the Respondents when Grouped According to their Sex

Literacy Skills	Sex	Mean Rank	U-value	p-value	Decision on H0	Conclusion
Reading Comprehension	Male	213.76	21792.5	0.852	Fail to Reject H0	Not Significant
	Female	211.55				
Vocabulary	Male	195.65	18956.0	0.013	Reject H0	Significant
	Female	225.17				
Writing	Male	187.84	17533.5	0.000	Reject H0	Significant
	Female	231.05				
Reading Fluency	Male	213.62	21818.0	0.865	Fail to Reject H0	Not Significant
	Female	211.66				

Note: "If p-value is ≤ the level of significance (0.05), reject Ho, otherwise fail to reject Ho."

TABLE 4.2. Significant Differences in the Level of Literacy Skills of the Respondents when Grouped according to their Age

Literacy Skills	Age	Mean Rank	H - value	p-value	Decision on H0	Conclusion
Reading Comprehension	13 to 14	216.82	10.756	0.005	Reject H0	Significant
	15 to 16	210.34				
	17 to 18	17.00				
Vocabulary	13 to 14	211.72	0.921	0.631	Fail to Reject H0	Not
	15 to 16	212.68				
	17 to 18	300.00				
Writing	13 to 14	204.06	2.852	0.240	Fail to Reject H0	Not
	15 to 16	217.48				
	17 to 18	399.50				
Reading Fluency	13 to 14	221.30	10.132	0.006	Reject H0	Significant
	15-16	206.72				
	17-18	164.50				

Note: "If p value is ≤ the level of significance (0.05), reject Ho, otherwise fail to reject Ho."

Table 4.2 reveals significant differences in both Reading Comprehension and Reading Fluency across the specified age groups. For Reading Comprehension, the calculated H-value of 10.756 with a p-value of .005 (which is less than the typical significance level of .05) led to the decision to reject the null hypothesis, indicating a statistically significant difference in reading comprehension performance among the age groups. Similarly, for Reading Fluency, an H-value of 10.132 and a p-value of .006 (also less than .05) resulted in the rejection of the null hypothesis, confirming significant differences in reading fluency across the age groups. The mean ranks suggest potential patterns in which age groups perform better, but further post-hoc analysis would be needed to pinpoint exactly which specific age groups differ significantly from each other.

In contrast, the study found no statistically significant differences in Vocabulary and Writing skills across the age groups, as assessed by TOEFL. For Vocabulary, the H-value

was .921 with a p-value of .631. Since this p-value is greater than .05, the null hypothesis was not rejected, signifying that the observed differences in vocabulary scores among the age groups are likely due to random chance and not a true effect. Likewise, for Writing, an H-value of 2.852 and a p-value of .240 (again, greater than .05) led to a failure to reject the null hypothesis, indicating no significant differences in writing performance across the 13-14, 15-16, and 17-18 age brackets.

The finding supports the observations of Lofranco and Luzano (2023), who pointed out that, like age, grade level, and family structure, may influence reading comprehension, their effect is not always consistent or direct. In the present study, the data show that literacy skill development appears steady across the different age brackets, suggesting that other factors—such as instructional quality or learning environment—may be more influential.

Table 4.3. Significant Differences on the Level of Literacy Skills of the Respondents when Grouped according to their Academic Performance

Literacy Skills	Academic Performance	Mean Rank	H-value	p-value	Decision	Remarks
Reading Comprehension	Outstanding	237.74	62.625	.000	Reject Ho	Significant
	Very Satisfactory	248.76				
	Reading Satisfactory	244.84				
	Fairly Satisfactory	298.93				
	Did Not Meet					
Reading Fluency	Expectations	334.50	27.159	.000	Reject Ho	Significant
	Outstanding	247.90				
	Very Satisfactory	247.25				
	Satisfactory	221.19				
	Fairly Satisfactory	191.39				
	Did Not Meet					
Vocabulary	Expectations	231.91	83.287	.000	Reject Ho	Significant
	Outstanding	153.88				
	Very Satisfactory	188.60				
	Satisfactory	229.24				
	Fairly Satisfactory	279.00				
	Did Not Meet					
Writing	Expectations	297.20	43.743	.000	Reject Ho	Significant
	Outstanding	100.50				
	Very Satisfactory	155.10				
	Satisfactory	214.11				
	Fairly Satisfactory	210.69				
	Did Not Meet					
	Expectations	246.29				

Note: "If p value is ≤ the level of significance (0.05), reject Ho, otherwise fail to reject Ho."

This table illustrates the results of statistical tests (likely Kruskal-Wallis H-tests) used to determine if there are significant differences in various literacy skills across different levels of academic performance, ranging from "Outstanding" to "Did Not Meet Expectations." The analysis consistently reveals statistically significant differences across all four measured literacy skills: Reading Comprehension, Reading Fluency, Vocabulary, and Writing. For Reading Comprehension, a very low p-value of .000 (which is less than the standard significance level of 0.05) and a high H-value of 62.625 led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, indicating that respondents categorized by these performance levels have genuinely different reading comprehension abilities. Similarly, Reading Fluency also showed significant differences, with an H-value of 27.159 and a p-value of .000,

again leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Furthermore, in the TOEFL assessments, Vocabulary demonstrated a highly significant difference across performance levels, evidenced by an H-value of 83.287 and a p-value of .000. Finally, Writing skills, with an H-value of 43.743 and a p-value of .000, also exhibited significant variance among the performance groups, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The consistent finding that the p-value is less than or equal to the significance level of 0.05 for all literacy skills strongly suggests that an individual's academic performance category is indeed associated with statistically distinct levels of proficiency in reading comprehension, reading fluency, vocabulary, and writing.

TABLE 5. Test of Significant Relationship between the Literacy Skills and the Academic Performance in English 8

Variable	Rho-value	Interpretation	t-value	p-value	Decision on Ho	Conclusion
Reading Comprehension	0.019	Negligible Correlation	0.390	0.689	Fail to Reject H0	Not Significant
Vocabulary	0.265	Low Correlation	5.645	0.000	Reject H0	Significant
Writing	0.248	Low Correlation	5.258	0.000	Reject H0	Significant
Reading Fluency	0.046	Negligible Correlation	0.946	0.349	Fail to Reject H0	Not Significant

Note: "If p value is ≤ the level of significance (0.05), reject Ho, otherwise fail to reject Ho."

Table 5 presents the results of the Spearman Correlation Coefficient, which was used to assess the strength and direction of the relationship between respondents' academic performance in English 8 and their literacy skill levels. To assess the statistical significance of these relationships, corresponding *t*-values were calculated from the correlation coefficients and tested against the *t*-distribution.

The analysis shows that the Spearman correlation coefficients for Vocabulary ( $r = 0.265$ ) and Writing ( $r = 0.248$ ) indicate a low but positive association between these literacy skills and academic performance in English 8. Corresponding *t*-values for these indicators were: Vocabulary and Writing. Since both *p*-values are below the significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a statistically significant, though fairly small, relationship between these literacy skills and academic performance.

On the other hand, Reading Comprehension ( $r = 0.019$ ) and Reading Fluency ( $r = 0.046$ ) showed negligible correlations, indicating little to no relationship. Their corresponding *t*-values and *p*-values were for Reading Comprehension and Reading Fluency. Both *p*-values exceed the significance level, leading to a failure to reject the null hypothesis. This suggests that these indicators do not have a statistically significant relationship with academic performance in English 8.

Overall, the results indicate that among the assessed literacy skills, vocabulary and writing show statistically significant, though low, correlations with students' academic performance in English 8. In contrast, reading comprehension and reading fluency do not exhibit significant associations.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the results obtained, the study led to the following conclusions:

1. Regarding the profile of the student respondents in terms of age and sex. The study revealed that the majority of the Grade 9 students were aged 15 to 16 years and predominantly female. This demographic distribution reflects the typical composition of junior high school learners in Taguig City. While these characteristics did not significantly influence all areas of literacy, they provided useful context for understanding patterns in academic and language performance, particularly the observed gender-related differences in vocabulary and writing proficiency.
2. In terms of academic performance, their performance levels varied considerably. A substantial proportion obtained General Weighted Averages (GWA) within the above-average range, indicating a generally high level of academic performance. However, a smaller subset of students fell within the lower acceptable range, underscoring the necessity for ongoing academic support

and the implementation of differentiated instructional strategies to address diverse learning needs.

3. In terms of literacy skill levels, the majority of respondents were classified at the independent level in both reading comprehension and reading fluency, indicating that more than half of the students were capable of reading and understanding texts with minimal support. However, a considerable number of students remained at the instructional and frustration levels, particularly in reading comprehension. This suggests that a segment of the student population continues to face challenges in independently constructing meaning from texts, thereby highlighting the need for targeted interventions to support struggling readers.

In light of the study's findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Junior high school learners must take an active role in improving their literacy skills. They are encouraged to read independently daily, engage in vocabulary enrichment exercises, and participate in writing tasks that go beyond classroom assignments. Joining school literacy programs such as reading clubs, essay contests, and peer study groups can help reinforce these skills while building academic confidence.
2. The Department of Education, together with regional and division-level Education Program Supervisors, should develop and implement a standardized and research-based literacy intervention program tailored to junior high school students. This program must focus on the monitoring of literacy skills enhancement. The researcher also highly recommends implementing the Phil-IRI program and other literacy, numeracy programs in private schools, same with public schools.
3. Teachers, especially those teaching English, are encouraged to always integrate literacy-enhancing strategies in their daily instruction. These include explicit vocabulary instruction, guided reading, and scaffolded writing exercises. It is also recommended that teachers use gender-responsive strategies, particularly in vocabulary and writing, to bridge the performance gap identified between male and female students.

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