Contextual Variables Affecting Frustration Level in Reading: An Integral Inquiry

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Abstract—This study employs a sequential explanatory mixed method. Quantitatively it investigated the profile of grade VII students. Qualitatively, the prevailing contextual variables that affect their frustration-level were sought based on their perspective and that of their parents and teachers. These students were categorized as frustration-level in reading based on the data on word list of the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI). The researcher-made reading factor instrument translated to local dialect (Hiligaynon) was subjected to cross-cultural translation to address content, semantic, technical, criterion, or conceptual equivalence, the open-ended questions, and one unstructured interview was utilized. In the profile of the 26 participants, the 12 males are categorized as grade II and grade III frustration-levels. The prevailing contextual variables are personal-"having no interest in reading", "being ashamed and fear of having to read in front of others" for extremely high frustration level; social environmental-"having no regular reading schedule at home" for very high frustration level and personal- "having no interest in reading" for high frustration level. Kendall Tau inferential statistical tool was used to test the significant relationship in the prevailing contextual variables that affect frustration-level readers when grouped according to perspective. Result showed that significant relationship exists between students-parents perspectives; however, there is no significant relationship between students' and teachers', and parents' and teachers' perspectives. The themes in the narratives of the participants on frustration-level readers are existence of speech defects, undesirable attitude, insufficient amount of reading materials, lack of close supervision from parents, and losing time and focus on task. Intervention was designed.

Keywords—Contextual variables, frustration-level readers, perspective, inquiry.

I. INTRODUCTION

READING difficulties are common and are associated with long-term poor academic achievement. Reference [5] pointed out that difficulty with reading skills emerges very early in a given child's development, and if not addressed early becomes difficult to remediate. It tends to fall on word lists, passage readings, and miscue analysis, word recognition, decoding, and lack of efficient word identification which can seriously interfere with comprehension [15], [13]. Further, reading failure risk is often caused by social environmental factors such as poverty, low parental education, unstimulating home environment, inadequate instruction; and organic risk factors as retardation, low IQ score [75 to 90], and hearing impairment [12].

Studies found out that less than one-third of eight graders read at a proficient level and more than 8 million in grade IV-grade XII read below grade level (National Assessment of Education (NAEP) [21].

It is apparent in every classroom that student's low reading ability provides them the difficulty to understand simple instruction, and they become inactive in class participation because of fear to speak and to read. Students find it hard to pronounce three to five syllable words well and become reluctant to read.

The Department of Education reiterated through DepEd Memo. No. 143, s. 2012, that "reading is the foundation for all academic learning" [25]. This memorandum is further supported by the country's 10–point agenda that stresses on every child a reader by grade I; the policy that every child should be a reader by grade III; and the no pupil shall be promoted to the next higher grade unless he/she manifested mastery of the basic literacy skill [8], [9]. Yet, the level of reading skill among students is continuing to decline even with the existence of the Reading Recovery (RR) program that gives to children beginning to fall behind in reading and writing a second chance. Concomitant to these policies, DepEd developed "Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI)", which determines the students' reading strengths and weakness needed in making instructional decisions for reading skill development. It was evident that the grade VI pupils enrolled as grade VII to Handumanan National High School for SY 2013-2014, mostly in the frustration level that 75.19% of 528 pupils were in the frustration-level in reading, wherein 7.54% of whom failed in the initial reading of the word list. Among others is the 19.87% instructional with 4.73% independent level.

This study determined the prevailing contextual variables that affect the Frustration-level in reading among the Grade VII students of Handumanan National High School and to analyze the prevailing contextual variables that affect their frustration-level reading skill. Specifically, this study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the Grade VII students categorized as frustration-level in reading based on the word list rating sheet of the Phil-IRI?
2. What are the prevailing contextual variables that affect the frustration-level readers based on students, parents, and teachers perspective when the students are grouped according to: a.) Extremely High Frustration Level (primer, grade I, grade II), b.) Very High Frustration Level (grade III), c.) High Frustration Level (grade IV, grade V, grade VI)?
a. Is there a significant relationship in the prevailing contextual variables that affect frustration-level readers in

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the Phil-IRI when grouped according to: a. students' perspective; b. parents' perspective; c. teachers' perspective?
3. What are the significant personal experiences in reading of the frustration-level readers?
4. What insights and implications to the reading practices in school may be derived from the students', parents', and teachers' perspective?

II. METHODOLOGY

This study employed sequential explanatory mixed method design characterized by the collection and analysis of quantitative data followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data. In sequential explanatory method the priority typically was given to the quantitative data and the two methods were integrated during the interpretation phase of the study.

The quantitative phase of this study focused on the profile of the students categorized as frustration-level readers among grade VII students based on the grade VI Phil-IRI post-test result. The prevailing contextual variables that affect the frustration-level reader based on students', teachers', and parents' perspective using Reading Factor Survey Questionnaire were determined.

Descriptive analysis process was employed as basis of the researcher to purposely select the participants in the next phase of the study, the qualitative phase.

The qualitative phase of this investigation focused on the prevailing personal experience of the frustration-level reader and on the formulation of insights and implications to reading practices in school which derived from these experiences to more detailed result.

Empirical Phenomenological research design was used to describe and understood the essence of the personal experiences of students who belong to low reading skills and of the perspective of the parents and teachers of the respective students [16].

Hermeneutical process was used in the interpretation of textual material or language to come up with the meaning of the experiences of low reader students, since hermeneutic is the interaction or link between the researcher and what is being interpreted [16]. The aim was to determine what the experience means for the people who have had the experience.

With careful consideration to mixed method – descriptive analysis then qualitative empirical phenomenology, the researcher extended the findings on the prevailing contextual variables that affect the grade VII students categorized as frustration-level readers of Handumanan National High School, Bacolod City.

A. Participants

Quantitatively, the participants of this study were the 30 students who were categorized as frustration-level reader based on the Phil-IRI word list out of 528 grade VI pupils who were enrolled as grade VII students of Handumanan National High School for school year 2013-2014.

They failed to read the complete list of words in their respective levels in the Phil-IRI reading test. They were the 7.54% of 75.19% frustration-level readers, mostly 13 years old. Automatically the 26 parents and 12 English teachers and section counselors with regular contact with the student participants were purposefully selected. However, out of 30 student participants, only 26 participated in the survey with their 26 respective parents. Four students quit from school and transferred to other schools since the beginning of the first quarter due to personal reasons.

Qualitatively, the participants were 11 frustration-level readers who were identified using purposeful extreme case sampling, wherein, the researcher intentionally select the participants and sites to learn or understand the central phenomena. They were clearly defined for specific reason. It was a purposeful extreme case sampling from which a researcher studied an outlier case or one that displayed extreme characteristics [7]; specifically, the characteristic of students who belong to the frustration-level reading skills. This was one learning about the case that was particularly troublesome or enlightening, or a case that was noticeable for its success or failure [24], [6], [4].

TABLE I
THE QUANTITATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS PARTICIPANTS

Reading level	F	Percentage distribution	Status	Verbal Interpretation
Primer	1	3%	Extremely high frustration-level	Not able to read within the norm of 8 words out of 10 word in six (6) sets of word list.
Grade 1	2	7%		Not able to read within the norm of 13 words out of 15 words in five (5) sets of word list.
Grade 2	14	47%		Not able to read within the norm of 17 words out of 20 words in the four (4) sets of word list.
Grade 3	10	33%	Very high frustration-level	Not able to read within the norm of 17 words out of 20 words in three (3) sets of word list.
Grade 4	1	3%	High level-frustration	Not able to read within the norm of 17 words out of 20 words in two (2) sets of word list.
Grade 5	1	3%		Not able to read within the norm of 17 words out of 20 words in one (1) set of word list.
Grade 6	1	3%		Can read within the norm 17 words and above out of 20 words in respective grade level.
Total	*N=30*	*100%*		

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TABLE II
THE DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS' PARTICIPANTS IN EACH READING LEVEL PURPOSELY SELECTED FOR THE FOCUSED GROUP INQUIRY

Reading level	N	n	Verbal Interpretation
Primer	1	1	Not able to read within the norm of 8 words out of 10 word in six (6) sets of word list.
Grade 1	2	2	Not able to read within the norm of 13 words out of 15 words in five (5) sets of word list.
Grade 2	14	3	Not able to read within the norm of 17 words out of 20 words in the four (4) sets of word list
Grade 3	10	2	Not able to read within the norm of 17 words out of 20 words in three (3) sets of word list.
Grade 4	1	1	Not able to read within the norm of 17 words out of 20 words in two (2) sets of word list.
Grade 5	1	1	Not able to read within the norm of 17 words out of 20 words in one (1) set of word list.
Grade 6	1	1	Can read within the norm 17 words and above out of 20 words in respective grade level.
Total	N=30	n=11	

B. Instruments

In the collection of the quantitative data to determine the reading Profile of the participants, the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) was utilized, a standardized assessment tool utilized to evaluate the reading ability of pupils; it consisted of three parts, the word list, oral reading passage, and comprehension skill.

A translated 12 items survey questionnaire clustered into two groups, and personal and social-environment factors were used to gather the quantitative data on the prevailing contextual variables that affect the frustration-level reader. The questions were taken from the initial survey conducted to determine the possible factors that affect their inability to read. It was designed to gather information from the three perspectives-students, parents and teachers.

It was translated to *Hiligaynon* to ensure high level of comprehension on the reading factors questionnaire and to gather quantitative data. It was subjected to cross-cultural translation to address content, semantic, technical, criterion, or conceptual equivalence [10], [11]. The Flaherty's 3-point scale Brislin Model was employed by the translator and was subjected to face and content validation and tested for reliability [18], [14].

The reliability result of the instrument was 0.969 using Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test [3].

Open-ended questions and interview were used to gather the qualitative information from the participants' experience. The participants' own words, in their voice, with their language and narrative [16] were gathered to record their lived experience without predetermining and/or influencing the perspectives to be generated [23], [10]. Interview Protocol with Hiligaynon translation was used.

Individual in-depth interview process was conducted to the participant's first language [*Hiligaynon*] and was taped recorded and written. "Trustworthiness" of the data was ensured using the three qualitative research methodologies namely: transferability, dependability, and *confirmability* [17].

C. Procedures

1. Data Gathering

The sequential explanatory mixed method started with the gathering of Quantitative data and Qualitative data, respectively. Permission from the school principal was asked for the data gathering and conduct of the study.

Using the Phil-IRI results, the researcher identified the specific participants of the study and an analysis of their reading level was conducted. Reading Factor survey questionnaire was administered. Orientation was done to ensure the relevance of research ethics and clarified the issues on confidentiality of the information gathered from them, the protection of their right of privacy and information on the utilization of the result for school intervention. Important personal information of the participants such as gender, age, address, name of parents, and teachers were gathered for reference.

The Reading Factor questionnaire was administered to the 26 student participants. The same instrument was administered to the (26) respective parents of the students, then to the (12) respective English teachers and section counselors of the students to determine the prevailing variable that affects the low reader among students participants; and the data were tabulated and analyzed using *rank*.

Using the Kendall's tau, the significant relationship between students, parents and teachers perspective was determined. *Kendall's tau* was the appropriate tool for significant relationship when data are in ranks. Upon determining the prevailing contextual variables, the researcher began the empirical phenomenological design with the gathering of qualitative data.

The qualitative research started with the identification and orientation of the participants for the interview. The unstructured interview session focused on probing and culling of the contextual variables that affect the frustration-level reading skill of the students. In each interview, the responses were taped-recorded, and written down. The facial expression, and the body language displayed by the participants were observed. The researcher also employed the standard probes like: *Can you tell me about that? What do you mean by that? What else?* And continued to listen to the participants and allowing them to share their feelings, thoughts and experiences freely, without disruption.

After every interview, audio tapes were transcribed verbatim including the facial expressions and gestures that contributed to the meaning of data. The written transcripts were analyzed to identify areas for probing. Once the qualitative data analysis was completed, the participants were asked to examine the patterns obtained in the data.

D. Data Analysis

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to determine the quantitative data.

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To determine the profile of the students categorized as frustration-level reader among the Grade VII students when grouped using the Phil-IRI Assessment tool word list, descriptive analysis was used. Likewise, descriptive analysis was used to determine the prevailing contextual variable that affects frustration -level readers in the Phil-IRI from students, teachers, and parents perspectives when grouped according to: Extremely high frustration-level (primer, grade I, grade II), Very high frustration-level (grade III), High frustration-level (grade IV, grade V, grade VI).

To determine the significant relationship in the prevailing contextual variables that affect frustration-level readers in the Phil-IRI when grouped according to: a) Students' perspective; b) Parents' perspective; c) Teachers' perspective, comparative analysis was used.

To analyze the qualitative data which aimed to determine significant personal experiences in reading of the frustration-level readers and to determine the insights and implication from their experiences in the reading practices of the school, empirical phenomenology was used since the study requires the thick description of the participants' experience for analysis of findings.

E. Statistical Treatment

Quantitatively, the profile of the students categorized as frustration-level reader using the Phil-IRI Assessment tool word list, was determined using frequency count [3].

In determining the prevailing contextual variable that affects frustration-level reader students from the three perspectives when group according to extremely high frustration-level, very high frustration-level and high frustration-level, rank was appropriately used for data are ordinal [3]. However, Kendall's Tau was used in determining the significant relationship in the prevailing contextual variables that affect frustration-level reader students in Phil-IRI when group according the different perspective. It is the appropriate tool in finding the significant relationship for non-parametric, ordinal data.

In determining the personal experiences in reading of the low reader students and the insights and implications to reading practices in school derived from this experience, iterative textual data analysis process was utilized in the qualitative inquiry.

The analysis involved organization, classification, categorization, search for patterns, and synthesis to achieve an in-depth, holistic understanding about a topic of concern.

The insight which was gathered from the interview was subjected to sifting process in thematizing.

To examine the essence of human experiences in determining the factor affecting reading as described by the participants, the researcher observed bracketing or epoché [19].

The researcher adapted the modified schema from Litchman's Phenomenological research approach, the Three Cs of Data Analysis. Raw interview data was transcribe, Coded conversation and text into meaningful chunks [16]. Categorized coded data and relevant ideas were put into concept or formulate themes.

Eidetic insight/s was culled out to examine the themes in the light of existing research. Composite description of the meanings and the essences of the experiences was done [6], [16].

III. RESULT

This is the presentation of findings of the study through the use of statistical tools in the treatment of the descriptive and inferential data, and phenomenal analysis of the thick descriptions of the significant personal experiences including the discussion with regard to the respective results.

A. Descriptive Results

Result on the profile of the Grade VI students categorized as frustration-level in reading based on the word list rating sheet of the Phil-IRI.

The majority of participants are males with grade II and grade III frustration-level. Further, the total distribution of participants shows that majority are the four males in the frustration level. The result also shows that majority of the participants both males and females in grade II frustration-level.

TABLE III
PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Frustration Level	n	Gender	
		Male	Female
Primer	1	1	0
Grade 1	2	1	1
Grade 2	12	6	6
Grade 3	8	6	2
Grade 4	1	1	0
Grade 5	1	1	0
Grade 6	1	1	0
TOTAL	26	17	9

The prevailing contextual variables among the extremely high frustration level, 26.67% claimed *having no interest in reading* and are *ashamed and have fear to read in front of others*. Of the very high frustration level, 25% claimed that they *have no regular reading schedule at home* as a major reason for their frustration level in reading, and 66.67% of the high frustration level claimed that they *have no interest in reading*. The table also shows that "*having no interest in reading*" is the prevailing variable among them.

B. Inferential Result

Using the *Kendall Tau* results, we show the relationship between parent-student perspective, between student-teacher perspective, and between parent-teacher perspectives. Result shows that the level of disconcordance or disagreement between students and parents ranks is average yet significant at 0.05 alpha level. This implies that the ranking of these two groups are somewhat contradictory. On the contrary, the ranking between the parent and the teacher got the lowest disconcordance level and is not significant at 0.05 alpha level. This implies that these groups have the most similar ranking.

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Similarly, the result between students and teachers also show a non-significant result which means these group also have similar average ranking.

TABLE IV
PREVAILING CONTEXTUAL VARIABLES THAT AFFECT THE FRUSTRATION-LEVEL READERS BASED ON STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND TEACHERS PERSPECTIVE

FRUSTRATION LEVEL	N	%	PREVAILING CONTEXTUAL VARIABLE
EXTREMELY HIGH	15	26.67% 26.67%	Personal Having no interest in reading Being ashamed and having fear to read in front of other people
VERY HIGH	8	25.0%	Social-Environmental Having no regular reading schedule at home
HIGH	3	66.67%	Personal Having no interest in reading

TABLE V
SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP IN THE PREVAILING CONTEXTUAL VARIABLES

PERSPECTIVE	N	T	P-VALUE	INTERPRETATION
STUDENTS	26	0.455	0.008	Significant at 0.05
PARENTS	26			
STUDENTS	26	0.321	0.218	Not Significant at 0.05
TEACHERS	12			
TEACHERS	12	0.198	0.395	Not Significant at 0.05
PARENTS	26			

1. Students Personal Significant Experiences in Reading of the Frustration –Level Readers

The emerging themes from student-participants' significant experiences covered *existence of speech defects, undesirable attitude, and insufficient amount of reading materials, lack of close supervision from parents, and losing time and focus on task.*

2. Parents Personal Significant Experiences in Reading of the Frustration –Level Readers

The narrative of the participants' on their personal significant experiences unveiled themes on the reading factors of the frustration-level readers. These emerging themes covered *the loosen interest to learn and love for reading mirrored by multifaceted instance that arise in the course of the students' life may it be the presence of physical imperfections, undesirable attitude, scarcity of books to read, diverse priorities and limited supervision from a significant person.*

3. Teachers Personal Significant Experiences in Reading of the Frustration –Level Readers

The narrative of the participants' on their personal significant experiences unveiled themes on the reading factors of the frustration-level readers. These emerging themes covered the *manifestation of reading problem, arising presence of faulty utterances of words due to inadequacy of reading materials which can be mended by the assistance extended by the teachers employing the different strategies for intervention and the teachers' desire of to help despite the circumstances with the touch parents' cooperation.*

C. Eidetic Insight

1. Personal and Social Environmental Factors: Indicators of Success and Failure of Reading

It can be gleaned from the narratives of the participants that multiple physical and social environment factors affect students reading to be in the frustration-level. That their personal well-being-physical, mental and emotional characteristic, home environment and the school contribute to the way they respond to reading.

2. The Insights and Implications to the Reading Practices in School May Be Derived from the Students', Parents', Teachers' Perspective

The results of the investigation of the study provide insights that there were students enrolled to grade VI that were deficient in reading. Thus, the school should strictly adhere to DepEd Policy on "No Read No Move." In addition, the school should create its policy to refuse non-reader to enroll in secondary level and to refer them back to the elementary school where they came from.

Another insight was that students who belonged to frustration-level reading skill needed extra attention in their reading development activities. They should be provided with an intervention program to answer their needs. However, these students need attention from both their parents at home and their teachers in school to assist them to develop their interest in reading. Therefore, the school should have a reading teacher to handle the reading program for this purpose. Furthermore, there were parents of the frustration level readers, who admitted they could not teach their children, for they lack the skill to provide their reading needs. Thus, parents should be included in reading program in order to provide them training in reading and on how to assist their children in their reading development.

Inadequate books and other instruction reading materials lessen students' interest to read. Thus, the school should provide reading material for each student to facilitate development of independent reading.

IV. DISCUSSION

The descriptive investigation on the profile of the frustration-level students in terms of gender revealed that majority were males, and mostly of 13 years old.

Reference [21] showed that girls consistently outperformed boys in reading achievement. Research indicated that students who struggled with reading at a young age will continue to fall further and further behind without guidance [22]

On the prevailing contextual variable among level of

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frustration, the result revealed that personal variables such as "having no interest in reading," "being ashamed and having fear to read in front of other people" were at the level of Extremely High Frustration; Environmental variable such as "having no regular reading schedule at home" were at Very High Frustration level; and the personal variable such as "having no interest in reading" rated as High Frustration level prevailed among others. The result also revealed that each level of frustration was associated with specific variables that affect their reading skill.

In finding the significant relationship in the prevailing contextual variables that affect frustration-level readers in the Phil-IRI when grouped according to perspective, between the parent and student, the data revealed that there was significant relationship in their perspectives. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, though the level of disconcordance or disagreement was average. This implies that even parents who were present at home with their child have less knowledge of their child's reading activity. On the other hand, on the student-teacher and teacher-parent perspectives, the relationship was not significant, and had somewhat similar ranking; therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted. It implies that student-teacher contact in school provided them a little idea of their reading experiences. Similarly, parent-teacher interaction and conference somewhat gave one another an idea of the evaluation of the child's reading activity.

The empirical investigation demonstrated that frustration-level readers were affected by their personal- social environment. The personal variables such as having no interest, being ashamed and having fear were the result of the personal attitude and the influence of child's social environment. References [1], [23], asserted that attitude towards reading defined as individual feelings about reading caused learners to approach or avoid a reading situation.

Reference [23] stressed that what parents do at home (their literacy environment) significantly affected the development of positive and negative attitude toward reading, According to Spiegel (1994), home literacy environment included several components such as artifacts (books, newspaper, pencil, paper, letters, junk mail and other print-related material) and events (reading to children) also affect in the development of attitude toward reading [27].

Parent participation is very critical in the learning processes of the child, for they are considered the first teacher that provides a child's learning. They serve as the role model in reading at home every time they read. Parents' positive attitude to reading promotes child's positive outlook to reading. Not only that, it also improves other areas in reading such vocabulary, and verbal skills [2]. Moreover, home of less reading activity is more likely result to poor reading environment due to lack of resources.

Reference [26] stressed that teachers too have the responsibility to help students to improve and succeed to overcome reading failures. Further, an intervention that focuses on student's individual needs and learning style should be provided by teachers to improve reading skill [20].

V. CONCLUSION

Development of reading skill is indeed a challenging task of every Filipino learner, parent, school, and community. With reference to the findings derived from the study, the researcher came up with the conclusion that Very high Frustration – level readers are common to boys. Moreover, factors as having no interest in reading, being ashamed and having fear to read in front of others, and having no regular reading schedule at home are the prevailing context variables that affect frustration-level in reading among grade VII students. Furthermore, negative personal and social-environmental factors significantly affect students' poor reading skill.

Finally, opportunity to recover the interest to read in order to improve word recognition skill among learners must be given priority and be provided not only in school but also at home and in the community.

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