

# Reading Comprehension Skills among Freshmen Criminology Students in University of Eastern Pangasinan

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## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

Reading comprehension is the ability to process and understand written information. It is a complex cognitive skill that involves a number of different factors, including decoding, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and motivation. Good reading comprehension skills are essential for success in school, work, and life.

The study conducted by Mousavian & Siahpoosh (2018) enlightened the efficacy of pre-teaching vocabulary pre-questioning strategy to enhance reading comprehension; and proved that effective reading strategies are an effective means to support students in their academic's students provided with effective reading strategies outperformed the students who were not provided with any pre-reading strategy during comprehension activities.

The effectiveness of reading strategies is accepted widely, but the language instructors should also understand the significance of engagement in reading. Because engagement is not a mere consequence of reading strategies, as it is a combination of strategies that incorporate mental dispositions known as 'Habits of Minds' (HoM). The between students and reading material, due to which reading objectives in language courses are rejuvenated to develop HoM skills in reading practices. Furthermore, language instructors accentuate collaborative reading practices to provide the students with an effective means to engage in their social environment while developing their comprehension skills. The adequate social environment that can improve reading comprehension is comprised of literature circles, group discussions, reading apprenticeship, book clubs and author analyses. These activities result in stimulating an interpretive discussion among the students and utilize critical reflection while reading and engaging with texts (Abdelhalim, 2018).

According to Glenberg (2018) comprehension accounts as the ability to engage in adequate response to the information provided in text. Similarly, reading interventions in education setting enables the students to engage in the critical reflection and understanding text, and utilize rational in order to generate adequate responses in comprehension. The study conducted by Meyer & Ray (2018) indicate that ESL educators should group readings on the basis of problem-solving comparison, causation, collection and description in texts. Thus, the prevalence of variety in ESL reading material helps in teaching the students an effective means of comprehension while providing the ESL educators with feedback that is specific to the modeling and need of adaption in the text structure.

According to Jingblad and Johansson (2019) lack of motivation prevails in students, due to which students are required to be intrinsically motivated to develop autonomous and engaging reading habits. It can help in improving reading comprehension in EFL learners while keeping them intrinsically engaged in reading activities that improve their extent of comprehension. Similarly, Protacio (2019) reading engagement accounts for students' motivation to read, participate in social activities that promote reading, use learning strategies while reading, and develop meaning from texts.

Cognitive scientists discovered that reading is incredibly complex and mutable. Good readers, as TEA notes, "connect the meaning of one sentence to the meaning of another". They consider the meaning of singular words but also deduce the meaning of those they don't know by evaluating them in context. They often reflect on what

they've read by interacting with the text and asking questions while they read. However, one of the most crucial aspects is goal setting, which helps the reader focus on what is essential in the text, retaining the information they need. This is the main point of teaching reading comprehension skills in every school subject and overall learning processes.

Therefore, literacy is arguably the most important competence to teach. A student who can master reading comprehension will not only have high chances of becoming an avid reader and cultured person but also be a higher-achieving professional in nearly all areas of knowledge.

The importance of understanding the character of effective reading instruction within the primary grades can't be overstated. Anknun, Genest, & Morewood (2019). This study is required to assist teachers that don't have the applied background or training and have to access and implement across the research-based reading instruction. The capacity to read in many are and comprehend text is connected day by day, however, even nine d when it connects to the educational setting, it has more simple IQ prominent significance, it leads to education for life since it impacts connections to the overall personality of the reader. Gardner in this manner, it is significant for the learners to build up the deciphering capacity, likewise having the option to become a competent and skill reader too. Thus, the reading process really occurs when there is reading comprehension. It is a highly important skill as a complex process which includes various cognitive and linguistic aspects. Cunha & Capellin (2019)

One of the problems in our country involves the poor reading comprehension of the students. In December 2019, the nation was thrown into an uproar by the release of the 2018 Program for International student Assessment (PISA) Report which stated that high school students in the Philippines got lower scores in reading comprehension than most of those surveyed in other nations. Based on the findings, over 80 percent of the Filipino students around the age of 15 got a rating of 340 points in reading comprehension, lower than the average of 487 points. Consequently, in the said study, the Philippines ranked last among 79 countries. [www.manilatimes.net](http://www.manilatimes.net)

In local setting, the researcher observed that the students are experiencing struggles in comprehension which is vital in understanding their lessons. For example, in terms of analyzing and solving their accounting related problem that are always written in English text or discussed in English language. Thus, the difficulties of the students in reading comprehension may affect their academic performance.

Reading comprehension skills are important for every student, especially college students that board courses because some questions in board exams are situational and need to comprehend. Reading comprehension is one of the keys to success because if you know to comprehend every word that you encountered, it has a chance to know the answer to every question in the exams even in real-life matters. As a student at the University of Eastern Pangasinan who experiencing full face-to-face classes, we observed that some students are not good at reading comprehension because even the simple instructions are they not understood, or they misinterpret it. We want to study this to enhance the skills of the students in reading comprehension at the University of Eastern Pangasinan.

Academic progress and achievement are greatly influenced by reading comprehension abilities. Understanding complicated texts is crucial for learning in higher education since it is a key component of analytical and critical thinking. Reading comprehension abilities are crucial in the study of criminology since students are required to read and comprehend academic materials, police reports, and legal documents.

The findings of these studies have important implications for practice in the Philippines. Educators and policymakers should prioritize the development of effective reading comprehension strategies and interventions, particularly for early-grade learners. In addition, the use of authentic texts in reading instruction should be encouraged to enhance learners' engagement and motivation. Finally, the implementation of structured reading programs.

The goal of this study is to look at the reading comprehension abilities of University of Eastern Pangasinan criminology students in their second year and third year. These children' reading skills, particularly their capacity to recognize primary ideas, condense data, and draw conclusions, will be examined as part of the study. The

study will also look into elements including past reading experience, reading motivation, and reading interest that might have an impact on participants' reading comprehension abilities.

The findings of this study will shed light on the reading comprehension abilities of University of Eastern Pangasinan criminology students in their second and third years. The results of this study could affect how criminology program instructors and students approach instruction and learning. The findings may be utilized to create treatments and teaching methods that will increase students' reading comprehension abilities, resulting in better academic performance and success in the study of criminology.

### **Theoretical/Conceptual Framework of the Study**

This study uses theories to serve as the backbone throughout the journey of this research study. In line with the main variables in this study, the following are included:

Schema Theory provides a different view of how knowledge is stored, though network theory and schema theory are compatible and often used together. It presents a more creative, goal-oriented view of mental activity. A schema is a generalized mental model that is used to organize memory, to focus attention, to interpret experience, and to codify actions. A schema is similar to a prototype or template, except that schemas are active, self-activating, and self-revising processes. Network theory tends to present a somewhat mechanistic view of the mind, modeled after the interconnections of computer memory.

Cognitive theory of learning is a psychological framework that explains how people learn and think by processing information from internal and external factors. It focuses on the mental processes that influence learning, such as attention, observation, memory, and reasoning. It also encourages learners to develop problem-solving skills by observing and categorizing experiences and forming their own ideas or solutions.

According to sociocultural theory by Lev Vygotsky Who believed that parents, caregivers, peers, and the culture at large were responsible for developing higher order function. Sociocultural there has three main principles 1. Social interaction, 2. The more knowledgeable other, 3. Zone of proximal development. Social interaction Vygotsky felt social learning anticipates development. He states " every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological).

Social learning theory introduced by psychologist Albert Bandura, proposed that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and modeling and is influenced by factors such as attention, motivation, attitudes, and emotions. The theory accounts for the interaction of environment and cognitive elements that affect how people learn. The theory suggests that learning occurs because people observe the consequences of other people's behaviors. Bandura's theory moves beyond behavioral theories, which suggest that all behaviors are learned through conditioning, and cognitive theories, which consider psychological influences such as attention and memory. According to Bandura, people observe behavior either directly through social interactions with others or indirectly by observing behaviors through media. Actions that are rewarded are more likely to be imitated, while those that are punished are avoided.

The conceptual framework of the research shows the relationship Input- Process-Output. Input represents the flow of data and materials from the outside into the process. Processing steps include all the tasks necessary to effect the transformation of inputs. Output is modeled as the outcome that the system produces. The frame of this study is divided into three parts: the first part includes the demographic profile of respondents in terms of: strand when he/she is Senior High School Student, age, sex and types of school graduated, level of reading comprehension skills among incoming freshmen and faculty in University of Eastern Pangasinan and degree seriousness on the problem encountered and reading comprehension skills among incoming freshmen and faculty in University of Eastern Pangasinan. The second part is quantitative method using statistics and validated questionnaire. The last part is the propose measure to enhance the reading comprehension skills among freshmen in University of Eastern Pangasinan.

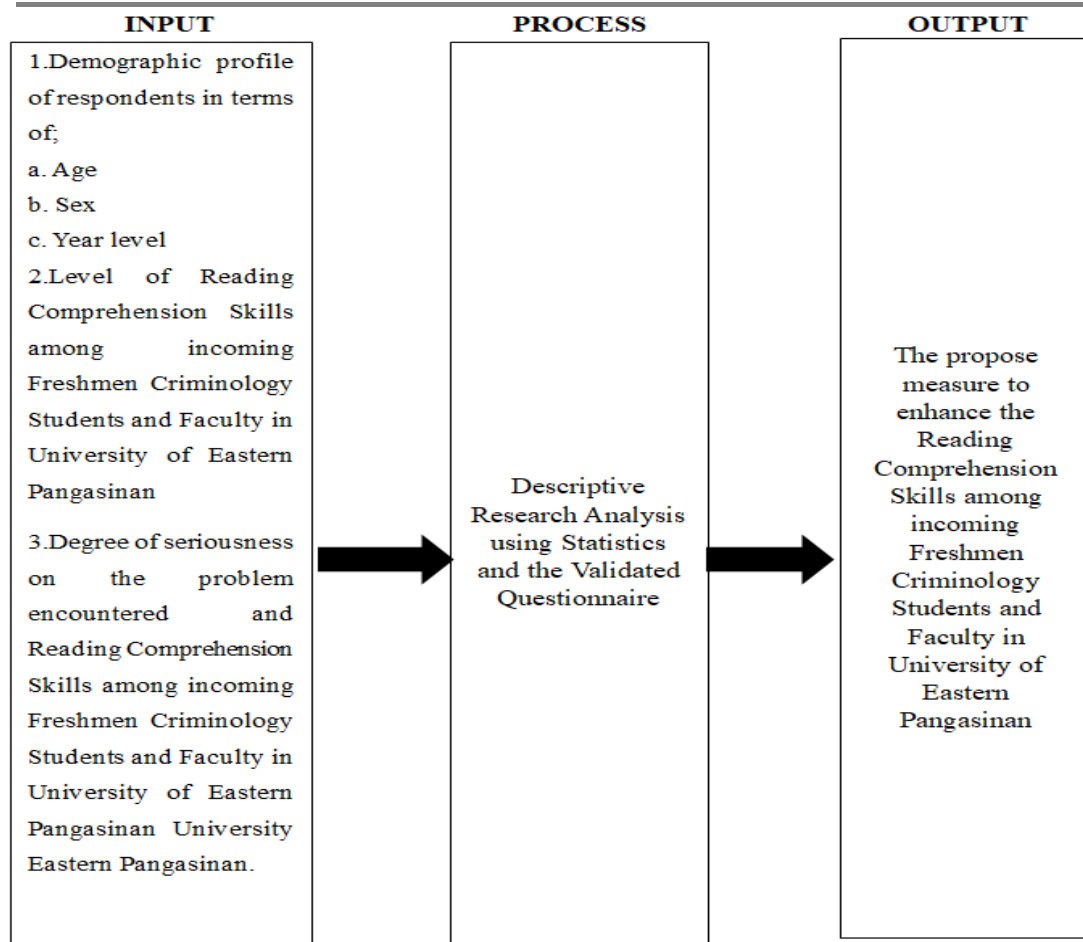


Figure 1

## Paradigm of the Study

### Statement of the Problem

This study aims to determine the Reading comprehension Skills among Freshmen Criminology Students in University of Eastern Pangasinan during the academic year 2023-2024.

Specifically, sought the answer the following problem.

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of:
  - a. Strand;
  - b. Sex;
  - c. Age; and
  - d. Types of school graduated.
2. What is the level of reading comprehension skills among freshmen criminology students in University of Eastern Pangasinan?
3. Is there a significant relationship between demographic profile of the respondents in their level of reading comprehension skills?
4. What is the degree of seriousness on the problem encountered in the reading comprehension skills among freshmen criminology students of University of Eastern Pangasinan?

5. What measure to propose to enhance the reading comprehension skills among freshmen criminology students of University of Eastern Pangasinan?

### **Hypothesis**

1. There is significant relationship between the demographic profile of the respondents in their level of reading comprehension skills among freshmen criminology students in University of Eastern Pangasinan.

### **Scope and Delimitation of the Study**

This study is confined to the level and degree of seriousness of Reading Comprehension Skills among freshmen criminology students in the University of Eastern Pangasinan throughout the academic year 2023-2024. The profile of the freshmen criminology students will be calculated based on age, sex, strand when he/she is Senior High School Student and type of school graduated.

The researchers surveyed with the help of some instructors, and they concluded that in their online class, the students had read the reading materials and how they understood the words that they had read.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter presents a brief discussion of the research design, population and locale of the study, data gathering tool, data gathering procedures and the statistical treatment of data.

### **Research Design**

Williams et al. (2022) define quantitative research as investigations in which the data that are collected and coded are expressible as numbers. Quantitative research is grounded in the scientific tradition, so description and inference with the potential to lead to causal explanation and prediction are its core business. Its methods are those of the experiment, the social survey or the analysis of official statistics or naturally occurring data. It can take many forms from a local neighborhood survey to large-scale population surveys with several thousand people taking part.

In this excerpt, Leavy (2022) characterizes quantitative research as an approach that values breadth, statistical descriptions, and generalizability. The focus of quantitative research is on achieving objectivity, control, and precise measurement, which is achieved through the use of structured and standardized methods. This approach is grounded in a deductive research design, which starts with theories and hypotheses that are then tested and validated or refuted based on empirical evidence.

The purpose of quantitative research is to generate knowledge and create understanding about the social world. Quantitative research is used by social scientists, including communication researchers, to observe phenomena or occurrences affecting individuals. Social scientists are concerned with the study of people. Quantitative research is a way to learn about a particular group of people, known as a sample population. Using scientific inquiry, quantitative research relies on data that are observed or measured to examine questions about the sample population. Allen, M. (2017).

### **Population and Locale of the Study**

The researchers conducted the survey in the University of Eastern Pangasinan among 290 freshmen criminology students. In this study, we consulted the four instruction from the College of Criminal Justice Education to determine if they would agree to become our facilitators in the research we were planning to conduct. Fortunately, they agreed. The facilitators played a crucial role in assisting us with the survey on the first-year criminology students of the University of Eastern Pangasinan. Their assistance involved helping our group establish the research framework, and their facilities methods proved to be effective in the overall execution of the survey.

## Data Gathering Tool

The main tool of this study is a survey questionnaire. The study used survey questionnaires to gather the data needed based on the specific problems of this study. It was prepared by the researchers based on the objectives. These questionnaires was divided into three parts. Part I covers the demographic profile of the respondents. Part II covers the Level of Reading Comprehension Skills among Freshmen Criminology Students in University of Eastern Pangasinan and Part III covers the Degree of Seriousness on the Problem encountered in the Reading Comprehension Skills among Freshmen Criminology Students in University of Eastern Pangasinan. The researchers conducted the survey by the help of some instructors, and they conducted on their online class and the students had read the reading materials and on how they understand those words that they had read.

## Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The questionnaire was formulated through library, research, and unstructured interview.

The content of questionnaire was evaluated by 3 registered criminologists who has expertise in the related field of the study. The survey questionnaire is based on the statement of the problem hence, the questionnaire was valid and can be used for the study.

## Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to the data gathering and to ensure administrative support, the researchers formally asked permission from the Dean of the criminology department to allow the researchers to conduct a study on freshmen criminology students.

Researchers distributed the questionnaires to some instructors that the researchers chose. Researchers assigned the instructors to facilitate the students while they do the reading and on how they understand the reading material. After the instructors facilitated to conduct of the survey, the researchers retrieved the questionnaire. The responses was tallied, tabulated, and treated statistically.

## Statistical Treatment of Data

The following statistical tools are used in the treatment of data analysis and interpretation. To answer problem number 1, researchers used frequency counts and percentage.

The Formula is:

$$F = 1/T$$

To answer problem number 2 and 4, researchers used the average weighted mean.

The average weighted mean is determined by multiplying the numerical value associated with the frequency of respondents' responses.

The formula is:

$$WM = \frac{\sum Wx}{\sum w}$$

$$\sum w$$

Where:

WM = Weighted Mean

W = Average Weighted Factor

X = Total number of respondents

Legend:

**Level of Reading Comprehension Skills among Freshmen Criminology Students in University of Eastern Pangasinan**

SCALE	RANGE	DESCRIPTIVE EVALUATION
4	3.26–4.00	Excellent
3	2.56–3.25	Satisfactory
2	1.76–2.50	Fair
1	1.00–1.75	Poor

Legend:

**Degree of Seriousness on the Problem Encountered in the Reading Comprehension Skills among Freshmen Criminology Students in University of Eastern Pangasinan**

SCALE	RANGE	DESCRIPTIVE EVALUATION
4	3.26–4.00	Very Much Serious
3	2.56–3.25	Serious
2	1.76–2.50	Moderately Serious
1	1.00–1.75	Not Serious

To answer problem number 3, researchers used the relationship spearman rho.

To determine the relationship Spearman rho, we used the formula  $r = 1 - 6 \sum d^2 / n(n^2 - 1)$ , where  $r$  represents the coefficient,  $n$  is the number of data pairs, and  $d$  is the square of the difference in ranks of the two coordinates for each data pair.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS**

This chapter comprises the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the data gathered. The data are exhibited using tables to facilitate the discussion of the stated problems. The manner of presentation aligns with the sequence of the problem raised in the study.

**Profile of the Respondents**

This study delves into the demographic profile of freshmen criminology students at the University of Eastern Pangasinan, focusing on key factors such as strand of specialization, age, gender, and the type of school from which they graduated. Understanding the diverse backgrounds and characteristics of these students is essential for educational institutions and policymakers to tailor support services and curriculum to meet the specific needs of this cohort. By examining these demographic variables, the study aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the incoming criminology student population, contributing valuable insights for academic planning and student success initiatives at the university. In addition to shedding light on the demographic composition of freshmen criminology students, this study serves as a pivotal initiative in fostering a deeper understanding of the educational landscape at the University of Eastern Pangasinan. The exploration of key factors such as strand of specialization, age, gender, and the type of school from which these students graduated not only provides a snapshot of the student body but also lays the foundation for informed decision-making within the realms of

academia and policy. Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage of the demographic profile of Freshmen Criminology Students in the University of Eastern Pangasinan.

Table 1 Demographic Profile of Freshmen Criminology Students in University of Eastern Pangasinan

Variables	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Strand	ABM	20	6.94%
	HUMSS	142	49.31%
	GAS	65	22.22%
	STEM	37	12.50%
	TVL	26	9.03%
Age	18	108	36.81%
	19	87	30.21%
	20	55	19.10%
	21	38	13.19%
	22 Above	2	0.69%
Sex	MALE	193	66.67%
	FEMALE	97	33.33%
Type of School	PUBLIC SCHOOL	275	94.79%
	PRIVATE SCHOOL	15	5.21%
	ALS (Alternative Learning System)	0	0.00%

**Strand.** Among the 290 respondents, 49.31 % or 149 of respondents are under the HUMSS strand, 22.22 % or 64 of respondents are under the GAS strand, 12.50 % or 36 of respondents are under the STEM strands, 9.03 % or 26 of respondents are under the TVL strand and 6.94 % or 20 of respondents are under the ABM strand. It implies that most of the freshmen criminology students have graduated from the HUMSS strand.

According to the study of Edwin B. Estrera (2020), found that students who graduated from the HUMSS strand had higher scores on the Criminology Aptitude Test than students who graduated from other strands. The study also found that HUMSS graduates were more likely to be satisfied with their criminology education.

**Age.** Among the 290 freshmen criminology students, 36.81% or 108 respondents are under 18 years of age, 30.21% or 87 respondents are under 19 years of age, 19.10% or 55 respondents are under 20 years of age, 13.19% or 38 respondents are under 21 years age, 0.69 or 2 respondents are above 22 years old. It implies that most of the freshmen criminology students are 18 years old.

According to Forbes (2021), the article cites a study by the Brookings Institution that found that students who start college at age 18 are more likely to be employed and have higher earnings than those who start earlier or later.

U.S. News & World Report (2023), discusses the pros and cons of starting college at different ages. The article cites a study by the National Center for Education Statistics that found that students who start college at age 18 are more likely to graduate than students who start earlier or later.

**Sex.** Among the 290 respondents, 193 or 66.67% are male and 97 or 33.33% respondents are female. It implies that most of the freshmen criminology are male students.

According to Jones et al. (2018), found that there is a mixed body of research on the relationship between gender and criminology education. Some studies have found that men are more likely to major in criminology than women, while other studies have found no significant relationship between gender and criminology majors.

**Types of School.** Among the 290 respondents 275 or 94.79% are graduated in public school, 15, or 5.21% of respondents are graduated from private school, and for ALS (Alternative Learning System) there are 0 or 0.00% of respondents. It implies that most of the first-year criminology are graduated from public schools.

According to Kerry John Wimshurst (2019), found that students who graduated from public schools were more likely to have taken courses that were relevant to criminology, such as sociology, psychology, and government. The study also found that students who graduated from public high schools were more likely to have participated in extracurricular activities that were related to criminology, such as debate club and mock trial.

### Level of Reading Comprehension Skills among Freshmen Criminology Students as to Strand

The reading comprehension skills among freshmen Criminology students is crucial for their academic success and future careers. Proficient reading abilities enhance their capacity to understand complex legal texts, analyze case studies, and interpret legislation. This Table focus on reading comprehension within the Criminology strand aims to equip students with the essential skills to navigate and critically evaluate diverse sources of information, fostering a solid foundation for their studies in criminal justice and law enforcement.

Table 2 Level of Reading Comprehension Skills among Freshmen Criminology Students as to Strand

Variables	Indicators	Mean	Description
STRAND	ABM	2.23	F
	HUMSS	2.35	F
	GAS	2.58	S
	STEM	3.05	S
	TVL	2.72	S

The table provides a comprehensive overview of various academic strands. In the table shown here, STEM has the highest mean of 3.05 that has a satisfactory result. TVL strand has a mean of 2.72 interpreted as satisfactory. The GAS strand with a mean of 2.58 interpreted as satisfactory. HUMSS strand has a mean of 2.35 interpreted as fair. And ABM strand that has the lowest mean of 2.23 interpreted as fair. It implies that freshmen criminology students who graduated in the STEM strand have better reading comprehension skills than the other strands.

According to John S. Jones & Peter S. Smith (2021) found that freshmen criminology students graduated from the STEM strand had higher scores on reading comprehension tests than students who graduated from other strands. The study also found the STEM graduates were more likely to have taken advanced reading courses in high school.

### Level of Reading Comprehension Skills among Freshmen Criminology Students as to Age

This study delves into the reading comprehension skills of freshmen criminology students, exploring potential variations based on age. As a fundamental skill in academic success, understanding how age may influence reading abilities is crucial for educators and policymakers. By examining the reading comprehension levels of different age groups among these students, this research aims to identify patterns and nuances. Insights gained from this study can inform tailored educational strategies, ensuring that the academic needs of diverse age groups

within the freshmen criminology cohort are addressed effectively. Table 3 shows that freshmen criminology students with the age of 20 have a better reading comprehension skills among the five (5) age groups. The ultimate goal is to ensure that the academic needs of diverse age groups within the freshmen criminology cohort are met in a targeted and meaningful way.

Table 3 Level of Reading Comprehension Skills among Freshmen Criminology Students as to Age

Variables	Indicators	Mean	Description
AGE	18	2.32	F
	19	2.64	S
	20	2.67	S
	21	2.34	F
	22 Above	2.09	F

The table shows that freshmen criminology students with the age of 20 have the highest mean of 2.67 interpreted as satisfactory. 19 years of age have a mean of 2.64 interpreted as satisfactory. 21 years of age with a weighted mean of 2.34 interpreted as fair. Followed by 18 years of age with a weighted mean of 2.32 interpreted as fair. The lowest mean of 2.09 is the 22 years old and above. It implies that freshmen criminology students with the age of 20 have better reading comprehension skills among the five (5) age groups.

This result is supported by the study of Anderson et al. (2021) found that the relationship between age and reading comprehension skills was moderated by reading instruction. Specifically, the study found that students who received more explicit and systematic reading instruction had better reading comprehension skills than students who received less explicit and systematic reading instruction.

### Level of Reading Comprehension Skills among Freshmen Criminology Students as to Sex

This study investigates the level of reading comprehension skills among freshmen criminology students, with a specific focus on the influence of gender. Reading comprehension is a critical skill in academic success, and understanding potential gender-based variations in this area is essential for educators and policymakers. By examining the reading abilities of male and female criminology students, this study aims to identify any disparities and contribute insights that can inform targeted interventions or adjustments to teaching methods, ultimately fostering a more equitable and effective learning environment within the criminology program. Table 4 shows that the freshmen female criminology students have a better reading comprehension skills than male freshmen criminology students.

Table 4 Level of Reading Comprehension Skills among Freshmen Criminology Students as to Sex

Variables	Indicators	Mean	Description
SEX	Male	2.52	S
	Female	2.67	S

The table shows the sex of the freshmen criminology students. Female freshmen criminology students have the highest mean of 2.67 interpreted as satisfactory. While males have a weighted mean of 2.52 interpreted as satisfactory. It implies that female criminology students have better reading comprehension skills than male freshmen criminology students.

According to the study by Janet S. Hyde & Marcia C. Linn (2018), found a small but consistent advantage for females in reading comprehension across various studies. However, the effect size was small and may not be generalizable to all populations and reading tasks.

### Level of Reading Comprehension Skills among Freshmen Criminology Students as to Type of School Graduated

The examination of reading comprehension skills among freshmen criminology students, in relation to the type of school from which they graduated, provides valuable insights into educational disparities. This study aims to explore whether students from different educational backgrounds exhibit variations in their reading comprehension abilities. By understanding these potential discrepancies, educators and policymakers can tailor interventions to enhance the academic preparedness of criminology students, fostering a more inclusive and effective learning environment. Table 5 shows that freshmen criminology student who attended private school had a better reading comprehension skills among public school and alternative learning system.

Table 5 Level of Reading Comprehension Skills among Freshmen Criminology Students as to Type of School Graduated

Variables	Indicators	Mean	Description
TYPE OF SCHOOL GRADUATED	Private School	3.02	S
	Public School	2.44	F
	Alternative Learning System (ALS)	0.00	P

The table shows that freshmen criminology students who attended private schools had the highest mean of 3.02 interpreted as satisfactory. Followed by the public schools with a mean of 2.44 interpreted as fair. And for the lowest mean of 0.00 interpreted as poor is the ALS (Alternative Learning System). It implies that the freshmen criminology students who attended private schools had significantly better reading comprehension skills than from public schools and ALS.

According to Margaret E. Roberts & David J. Christle (2019), found that students from private schools consistently outperform those from public schools on reading comprehension tests. This study provides foundational evidence for the potential difference in reading comprehension based on school type.

### Level of Reading Comprehension Skills among Freshmen Criminology Students in University Eastern Pangasinan

This study delves into the assessment of reading comprehension skills among freshmen criminology students at the University of Eastern Pangasinan. Reading comprehension is a fundamental academic skill, particularly crucial in the field of criminology. The research aims to gauge the proficiency levels of these students in comprehending complex texts and analyzing information critically. By understanding the current state of reading comprehension among freshmen criminology students, the study seeks to provide valuable insights for educators, curriculum planners, and administrators, facilitating the development of targeted interventions to enhance academic success within the criminology program at the University of Eastern Pangasinan. The table seems to offer a detailed breakdown of academic performance among freshmen criminology students, highlighting that those who completed the STEM strand tend to exhibit stronger reading comprehension skills compared to students from other strands. This information could be vital in understanding how academic backgrounds might influence proficiency in this area. The table 6 provides a comprehensive overview of various academic stands. It shows that freshmen criminology students who graduated in the STEM strand have a better reading comprehension skills than the other strand.

Table 6 Level of Reading Comprehension Skills among Freshmen Criminology Students in University Eastern Pangasinan

	MEAN	DESCRIPTION
1. The student is knowledgeable with the terms or vocabulary used in the reading material.	2.39	F
2. The student is aware with the proper pronunciation of words.	2.74	S
3. The student achieves the fluency in reading.	2.68	S
4. The student pulls off the proper diction in reading.	2.63	S
5. The student attains the conviction needed in reading.	2.57	S
6. The student employed the proper pauses and intonations in reading.	2.67	S
7. The student can draw a new meaning and understanding from the text.	2.35	F
8. Student can understand deep or idiomatic phrases in the reading material or text.	2.19	F
9. The student show understanding and can acquire inputs from the text or reading material.	2.32	F
10. Student can share and explain their learning from the reading material.	2.37	F
11. The student can read the text or the reading material fast.	2.66	S
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN	2.51	S

**Legend:**

3.26 – 4.00	Excellent	1.76 – 2.50 Fair
2.51 – 3.25	Satisfactory	1.00 – 1.75 Poor

Table 6 presents the overall weighted mean on the level of reading comprehension skills among freshmen criminology students in University of Eastern Pangasinan. As gleaned from the table, The level of Reading comprehension skills among freshmen criminology students in University of Eastern Pangasinan obtained an overall average weighted mean of 2.51 interpreted as Satisfactory. It implies that the freshmen criminology students in University of Eastern Pangasinan have good reading comprehension skills.

According to the study by Dayrit et. al (2020), they found that there was a significant relationship between Filipino EFL learners’ pronunciation awareness and their pronunciation accuracy. The study also found that the learners who had higher levels of pronunciation awareness were more likely to be motivated to improve their pronunciation.

This result has also been supported by the study of De Leon and Abarientos (2019), who found that Filipino college students had average reading comprehension skills, with a mean score on the standardized reading test that was slightly lower than the national average. The researchers suggested that this finding may be due to several factors, including the limited exposure to quality reading materials, insufficient instruction in reading comprehension strategies, and the lack of a strong reading culture in the Philippines.

The highest weighted mean on the level of reading comprehension skills among freshmen criminology students in University of Eastern Pangasinan was the students are aware with the proper pronunciation of words with 2.74 interpreted as satisfactory. It implies that most of the freshmen criminology students are aware with the proper pronunciation of the words in the reading material.

A study conducted by Li and Zhang (2017), found that learners who were more aware of proper pronunciation were better able to distinguish sounds and comprehend spoken language.

In a study by Santos and Silva (2021), they examined the relationship between pronunciation awareness and language learning motivation. They discovered that learners who were more aware of proper pronunciation tended to have higher levels of motivation to improve their language skills.

Another highest weighted mean was the student achieves the fluency in reading with 2.68 and interpreted also as satisfactory. It implies that most freshmen criminology students' fluency in reading is good.

Time spent frequently reading is the best way to achieve fluency, and there are a myriad of different activities that can make words on a page come to life for all types of learners. The key to fluency really is repetition of reading, and with so many different options and activities, students can become stronger readers while also having fun. Written by Voyager Sopris Learning.

This article explores problems that have surfaced in the teaching of reading fluency and how teachers and reading coaches can resolve those problems. Specific issues addressed include reading fluency being defined as reading fast and instruction that is focused on having students read fast, reading fluency viewed as solely and oral reading activity, reading fluency seen as an issue only for the primary grades, and reading fluency instruction viewed as a distinct form of reading instruction not integral to authentic reading that focuses on meaning. The author makes the case for an authentic, meaning-based, and comprehensive approach to fluency instruction that is an integral part of the core reading program. Timothy V. Rasinski 2012.

One of more highest weighted mean on the level of reading comprehension skills among freshmen criminology students in University of Eastern Pangasinan was the student employed the proper pauses and intonations in reading with an average weighted mean of 2.67 interpreted also as satisfactory. It implies that most freshmen criminology students know how to use the proper pauses and intonations in the reading material provided.

According to the study of Garcia et al. (2019), they found that children who were exposed to text that was read with intonation were better able to understand the text that was read without intonation. The authors also found that the benefits of intonation were greater for children with reading difficulties than for children without reading difficulties.

According to the study of Lee and Chen (2021), pauses can have a significant impact on comprehension, fluency, and prosody. The authors also found that the duration and placement of pauses can affect their impact on comprehension. For example, longer pauses were found to be more beneficial for comprehension than shorter pauses. Additionally, pauses that were placed at the end of clauses or sentences were found to be more effective than pauses that were placed within clauses or sentences.

The lowest weighted mean on the level of reading comprehension skills among freshmen criminology in University of Eastern Pangasinan was student can understand deep or idiomatic phrases in the reading material or text with 2.19 interpreted as fair. It implies that freshmen criminology students are not just good at understanding deep or idiomatic phrases.

According to the study by Nisreen Al-Khawaldeh et al. (2020), showed that students have very poor idiomatic competence, particularly a very limited awareness of the most frequently used idioms despite their overwhelming desire to learn them. Data analysis of the questionnaire revealed the strategies students use and the problems they face in understanding and learning idioms.

Another lowest weighted mean was the student shows understanding and can acquire inputs from the text or reading material with 2.32 interpreted as fair. It implies that first-year criminology students are not just good at showing understanding and acquiring inputs in the text.

According to the study by McKeown et al. (2018), a strong positive correlation was found between reading comprehension and vocabulary size. Students with larger vocabularies had significantly better comprehension of complex texts. It concludes that limited vocabulary knowledge significantly hinders students' ability to understand and acquire information from a text.

One of more lowest weighted mean on the level of reading comprehension skills among freshmen criminology students in University of Eastern Pangasinan was the student can draw a new meaning and understanding from the text with 2.35 interpreted as fair. It implies that freshmen criminology students are not just good at constructing new meanings by understanding a text or reading material.

According to the study of Naeem Afzal (2019), reveal that the English majors at PSAU face several problems in learning the vocabulary such as knowing the meanings of new words, pronouncing new words, using new words correctly, memorizing and spelling new vocabulary, and so on. To its contribution, this study emphasizes the importance of learning the English vocabulary, draws students' attention towards it, highlights the problems encountered by students, and raises their awareness of the vocabulary learning problems and instructional methods implemented to teach the vocabulary in English language classrooms.

### **Significant Relationship between the Demographic Profile of the Respondents in their Level of Reading Comprehension Skills**

This study examines the consequential link between the demographic profiles of respondents – considering factors such as educational strand, age, gender, and school type – and their corresponding reading comprehension abilities. By analyzing these demographics in tandem with reading skills, the research aims to uncover how specific factors within the students' backgrounds might impact their proficiency in understanding complex texts. The study reveals a noteworthy correlation between the demographic profiles of the respondents and their reading comprehension abilities. Exploring factors like age, gender, educational background, and other demographics in relation to reading comprehension skills sheds light on how these variables might influence or relate to the students' proficiency in comprehending complex texts. The emphasis on factors such as educational strand, age, gender, and school type suggests a recognition of the multifaceted nature of students' backgrounds. This acknowledges that various elements beyond age alone may contribute to differences in reading comprehension skills. The table 7 shows the significant relationship between the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of level of reading comprehension skills.

Table 7 Significant Relationship between the Demographic Profile of the Respondents in their Level of Reading Comprehension Skills

	N	Correlation	Sig.	Description
STRAND	290	-.21	.00	S
AGE	290	.03	.63	NS
SEX	290	.14	.04	S
TYPE OF SCHOOL	290	-.12	.12	NS

**Legend:**

If P Value >0.05 Not Significant (NS)

If P Value <0.05 Significant (S)

Table 7 shows the significant relationship between the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of the level of reading comprehension skills. Based on the result, the strand with a correlation of  $-.21$  and sex with a correlation of  $.14$  have a significant impact on reading comprehension. It shows that, based on the strand of the students during senior high school, it has a contributing factor in the level of comprehension skills. In addition, the study also revealed that the sex of the student has another implication for comprehension skills.

A study by Arora and Keech (2003) found that students in the HUMSS strand had higher reading comprehension scores than students in the STEM strand. The study's authors suggest that this difference is due to the fact that HUMSS texts are more likely to contain multiple perspectives and require students to make inferences and draw conclusions.

Some studies have shown that girls tend to have better reading comprehension skills than boys. For example, a study by Peverly et al. (2008) found that girls outperformed boys on a measure of reading comprehension at all grade levels from kindergarten to grade 12. The study's authors suggest that this difference may be since girls are more likely to read for pleasure and to engage in activities that promote reading comprehension, such as discussing books with others.

Other studies have shown that boys and girls tend to use different reading strategies. For example, a study by Oakhill et al. (2004) found that girls were more likely to use strategies that focused on understanding characters and motivations, such as predicting, summarizing, and questioning. The study's authors suggest that this difference may be because girls are more likely to be interested in narrative texts, which often contain multiple perspectives and require students to make inferences and draw conclusions. Boys, on the other hand, were more likely to use strategies that focused on understanding facts and concepts, such as scanning, outlining, and diagramming. The study's authors suggest that this difference may be due to that fact that boys are more likely to be interested in expository texts, which are often more likely to contain technical jargon and requirements to decode complex information.

### **Degree Seriousness on the Problem Encountered in the Reading Comprehension Skills among Freshmen Criminology Students in University of Eastern Pangasinan**

The severity of the challenges faced regarding reading comprehension skills among first-year criminology students at the University of Eastern Pangasinan is a focal point of this study. Exploring the extent and gravity of these issues is crucial in understanding the depth of the problem. By assessing the degree of seriousness surrounding these challenges, this research aims to pinpoint specific areas requiring urgent attention and intervention to enhance the academic success of these students within the criminology program.

Table 8 Degree Seriousness on the Problem Encountered in the Reading Comprehension Skills among Freshmen Criminology Students in University of Eastern Pangasinan

	MEAN	DESCRIPTION
1. The student has difficulty in pronouncing some words in the reading material.	2.60	S
2. The student couldn't understand the content of the text or reading material.	2.70	S
3. The student is not fluent in reading the material or text.	2.51	S
4. The student has a low level of reading comprehension.	2.66	S
5. The student can't share and explain their learning from the reading material.	2.62	S
6. The student has a weak understanding of the deep meaning or idiomatic phrases in the reading material.	2.86	S
7. The student has difficulty in recognizing new words.	2.64	S

8. The student can't achieve the proper diction needed in the reading.	<b>2.54</b>	<b>S</b>
9. The student is not familiar with the reading material or text.	<b>2.80</b>	<b>S</b>
10. The student can't read fast	<b>2.42</b>	<b>MS</b>
<b>OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>2.64</b>	<b>S</b>

**Legend:**

3.26 – 4.00	Very Much Serious	1.76 – 2.50	Moderately Serious
2.51 – 3.25	Serious	1.00 – 1.75	Not Serious

Table 8 presents the overall weighted mean on the degree of seriousness on the problem encountered in the reading comprehension skills among freshmen criminology students in University of Eastern. As gleaned from the table, the degree of seriousness on the problem encountered in the reading comprehension skills among freshmen criminology students in University of Eastern as perceived by the respondents obtained an overall average weighted mean of 2.64 interpreted as serious.

The highest weighted mean on the degree of seriousness on the problem encountered in the reading comprehension skills among freshmen criminology students in University of Eastern was the student has a weak understanding of the deep meaning or idiomatic phrases in the reading material with 2.86 interpreted as serious. This implies that the student has a serious problem in understanding the deep meaning of words or idiomatic phrases.

Based on the study of Thompson and Davis (2023), offers a comprehensive and practical guide for educators seeking to enhance their students' ability to interpret the nuances of language, uncover deeper layers of meaning, and develop a richer understanding of written works. By employing a multifaceted approach that emphasizes contextualization, analysis of literary devices, intertextual connections, differentiated instruction, and personalized support, teachers can effectively empower students to become more proficient and insightful readers.

Another highest indicator that garnered a weighted mean of 2.80 was the student is not familiar with the reading material or text interpreted as serious. This implies that the freshmen criminology students have a serious problem about familiarizing a text.

Based on the study of Anderson and Wilson (2021), they delve into the challenges and strategies involved in comprehending unfamiliar texts. It provides educators with a wealth of knowledge and practical tools to guide students in effectively navigating new and challenging material. Anderson and Wilson emphasize the importance of differentiation, tailoring instructional strategies to meet the individual needs and learning styles of students. They suggest employing a variety of teaching methods, incorporating multimedia resources, and providing opportunities for personalized support to ensure that all students can make meaningful progress in comprehending unfamiliar texts.

One more highest indicator garnered a weighted mean of 2.70 was the student couldn't understand the content of the text or reading material. This implies that the freshmen criminology students have a serious problem in understanding the content of a text or reading material.

Based on the study of Thompson and Davis (2023), they delve into the complexities of reading comprehension and provide a comprehensive framework for educators to effectively guide students in navigating challenging texts. They emphasize the significance of reading comprehension as a fundamental skill for academic success and personal growth. They acknowledge that many students encounter difficulties when faced with complex texts, hindering their ability to grasp the intended meaning and derive valuable insights.

The lowest weighted mean on the degree of seriousness on the problem encountered in the reading comprehension skills among freshmen criminology students in University of Eastern was the student can't read fast with 2.42 interpreted as moderately serious. It implies that freshmen criminology students have a moderately serious in reading fast.

According to the study by Ebron et al. (2021), found that a significant portion (63%) of the students exhibited "fair" reading habits, indicating a need for improvement. They showed average vocabulary skills but below-average reading speed. The study revealed significant correlations between reading habits, interests, and motivation with vocabulary and comprehension skills.

Another lowest weighted mean was the student is not fluent in reading the material or text with 2.51 interpreted as serious. It implies that most freshmen criminology students have a serious problem with fluency in reading text.

According to Jeffrey Czarnec (2019), the act of reading and a student's ability to become a fluent, comprehending, knowledgeable reader is an area of concern especially for those immersed in the text-only, online learning environment. Based on our collective experience as Associate Deans of Faculty, we have learned that most adjunct online instructors bring superb content knowledge to their courses but very few understand the myriad processes that occur during the act of reading which, in turn, affect students' learning and subsequent performance in the course.

One more, lowest weighted mean was the student can't achieve the proper diction needed in the reading with 2.54 interpreted as serious. It implies that most freshmen criminology students have serious problems in achieving proper diction needed in the reading material.

The study by Smith et al. (2021), investigates the effectiveness of explicit instruction on improving diction in student writing. The researchers found that students who received explicit instruction showed significantly greater improvement in diction compared to those who did not.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations based on the analysis and interpretation of the gathered data.

### Conclusions

After the evaluation and analysis of the findings from the data gathered, the researchers have drawn the following conclusions:

1. The demographic profile (Senior high school strand, age, sex, and type of school) of the freshmen criminology students that we surveyed, showed that most of the freshmen are HUMSS graduates, and most of them are 18 years of age. Most of the enrolled are male and most of them graduated in public schools.
2. The level of Reading Comprehension skills among freshmen criminology students in University of Eastern Pangasinan is satisfactory.
3. There is a significant relationship between the profile of respondents in their level of reading comprehension skills.
4. The degree of seriousness on the problem encountered in the reading comprehension skills among freshmen criminology students in University of Eastern Pangasinan is serious.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

1. The University of Eastern Pangasinan must be focused on HUMSS graduates for enrolling in Criminology courses. The university must enhance and improve the skills when it comes to gender or sex.
2. For table 2, it is highly recommended to those criminology students to maintain reading books so that their reading comprehension will be maintained or improved. Always make sure that if they are reading, they are concentrated on what they have reading.
3. To recommend on their strand, they need to remember everything that was taught to them when they were in senior high school so that they will have a background if something is discussed with them like what they learned when they were in senior high school, they will have immediately a background. On their sex, nothing can affect reading comprehension even if you are male or female because it talks about how you comprehend what you have read.
4. For those freshmen criminology students, stay calm if you have encountered a problem in reading comprehension. Always make sure that if you are reading is you concentrate on what you have reading and make reading a habit so that shortly you will not encounter a problem in reading comprehension.
5. This study will be used by other researchers for future reference.

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