

Exploring the Relationship Between Literary Appreciation Skills and Academic Performance Among Students

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the relationship of literary appreciation skills and academic performance of students in Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in English at Jose Rizal Memorial State University-Main during the academic year 2023-2024. A quantitative descriptive-correlational research design was employed as the research method. There were 182 student respondents involved. Frequency count, percentage, weighted mean, standard deviation, Kruskal-Wallis H-Test, Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Coefficient were used as the statistical tools. The study revealed that the perceived level of literary appreciation skills of the respondents was high with an overall mean of 4.15. They demonstrated particularly strong understanding in recognizing author's point of view, character introduction, purpose of the title, parts of the plot, tone/mood/style, and relating stories to their lives. Areas where students showed slightly lower proficiency but still considerable understanding included recognizing imagery, judging texts, recognizing evidence, finding solutions in stories, recognizing personal philosophy, and generating enrichment activities. Majority of the students achieved grades categorized as "good" ranging from 1.6-2.5. Moreover, there were no significant differences in perceived literary appreciation skills based on age, year level, and gender. The age and gender also did not indicate a significant difference with the academic performance, however there is an observed significant difference in academic performance based on year level. In terms of the link between the two variables, the results in the study showed that there was no significant relationship observed between perceived literary appreciation skills and academic performance, suggesting that factors other than literary appreciation skills may influence academic outcomes. Hence, it was recommended that future researchers would explore other variables that could be correlated with literary appreciation skills to expand the body of knowledge in literature.

Keywords: literary appreciation skills, academic performance, literature

Introduction

Literary appreciation skills are significant for academic success and personal growth (Zaidin & Karumpa, 2022). Developing these skills helps individuals become more sensitive and self-aware. According to Qassem and Majul (2023), the capacity to appreciate literature enables learners to embrace their identity and foster better understanding of the human experience. Recognizing the significance of literary appreciation is essential for fostering well-rounded and insightful learners.

The study of literature is an essential aspect of the curriculum that provides students the avenue to form significant contexts full of descriptive language interpretation and interesting characters (Magulod Jr,

2018). In the Philippines, literature is included in the basic education curriculum and some higher education programs such as the Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in English. Literature is recognized as pivotal in facilitating the learning development of students, allowing them to broaden their perspectives.

In educational context, academic performance is nurtured through various skills and competencies, which include literary appreciation. Academic performance refers to the outcomes of students' cognitive abilities, skills, knowledge, and efforts. The study of Sugiarti and Prihatini (2019) highlights that literary appreciation skills impact academic performance by enabling students to engage critically and imaginatively with literary content. This implies that a positive learning attitude towards literature helps increase academic performance. Similarly, the study of Baba (2022) indicates that students with positive learning experiences in literature achieve satisfactory academic performance, enhancing their literary skills and expanding their understanding of literary contexts further contributing to their overall academic success.

The essence of literature is undebatable however, it is also evident that in today's generation, there seems to be a lack of recognition on the value and relevance of literature subjects especially in secondary and tertiary schools. The reason for this lack of interest is attributed to the literature subjects being boring, difficult, and irrelevant to their future careers (Anjoring-Ojewole, 2023). On the other hand Kassem (2022) exclaimed that this matter is attributed to factors such as the inability to understand literature due to the deficient proficiency in English and poor reading skills, the remoteness of literary texts and the use of odd language, the change of people's reading habits and overdependence on the new technologies and Internet. These concerns give birth to the idea that to effectively deliver the purpose of literature, one must have the sufficient interest towards it.

As commonly observed in the target setting, students undertaking literature courses are more focused on language development as evidenced in their research endeavors which they favor choosing language-related topics compared to literature. It is believed that this study deserves recognition especially in the field of research as literature subjects is not only contributory to one's individual growth but also in the history, culture, and pride of Filipinos. The less literature is discussed, the more people will forget its value.

This study aimed to determine the literary appreciation skills and their relationship to academic performance in literature courses of students in Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in English at Jose Rizal Memorial State University-Main. The lack of scholarly literature in the local setting on the correlation between literary appreciation skills and academic achievement among tertiary students serves as the premise for this undertaking.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to determine the literary appreciation skills and their relationship to academic performance in literature courses of students in Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in English at Jose Rizal Memorial State University-Main during the academic year 2023-2024.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1 age;
 - 1.2 gender; and
 - 1.3 year level?

2. What are the respondents' perceived level of literary appreciation skills?
3. What is the respondents' level of academic performance?
4. Is there a significant difference in the respondents' perceived level of literary appreciation skills when analyzed according to profile?
5. Is there a significant difference in the respondents' level of academic performance when analyzed according to profile?
6. Is there a significant relationship in the perceived level of literary appreciation skills and level of academic performance?

Related Literature

Literary Appreciation Skills

Literary appreciation skills refer to the process of assessing one's interpretive response as a reader to a literary work. The teacher's decision to incorporate literature-based learning activities in the classroom is motivated by the goal of exposing students to familiar texts, thereby enhancing their literary appreciation skills (Magulod Jr, 2018). Literary appreciation skills encompass cognitive, aesthetic, and re-creation activities. The emotions expressed in modern literary works and emphasizes that there is no easy way to enhance one's ability to appreciate literature. It is a lengthy process that has been accumulated over an extended duration (Li, 2022).

Understanding the author's perspective is necessary for students to develop their literary analysis skills. It enables them to grasp the author's intention behind writing the story, whether it is explicitly or implicitly expressed in the text (Magulod, 2017). Literary appreciation skills refer to the recipient's activities of analyzing and evaluating a specific literary text after engaging with it intellectually and emotionally. The various manifestations of behavior are those that can be reliably measured and the degree of value can be quantitatively and objectively evaluated based on it (Qassem & Majul, 2023).

Zaidin and Karumpa (2021) states that the students' appreciation fosters their awareness of the importance of engaging with literary works to cultivate character. Students' literary appreciation skills require them to recognize the author's point of view, which enables them to comprehend the author's purpose in writing the story, either explicitly or implicitly expressed in the text. Meanwhile, the teacher should enhance the students' ability to judge the text that forms generalizations, assumptions, hypotheses, theories, and arguments. The significance of cultivating literary appreciation skills among learners at every educational level is important. The capacity to appreciate and derive pleasure from the aesthetic aspects of literature is crucial and indispensable for the learner's character to assimilate and relish their humanity, contrary to the erroneous belief that modern civilization solely revolves around the natural and technological sciences. Developing literary appreciation skills is important for achieving a literary learning objective, particularly through the cultivation of time management, meticulousness, lucidity, and perseverance.

Angilan (2021) stresses that the procedure for teaching literature encompasses more than just instructing students on literary interpretation and analysis. It also fosters the growth of sensitivity, self-awareness, and a deeper comprehension of the world and its inhabitants. Students studying literature must acquire specific skills and strategies that enable them to interpret the written words of a literary piece in a literary context. This ability is referred to as literary appreciation skills. The students can discern the chronological order of events in a literary masterpiece, a skill important in fostering the growth of students' literary appreciation skills.

Ngag Jr. (2023) stresses that the appreciation of literature is crucial for maintaining cultural heritage and identity. Such skills enable students to build a strong connection and deeper understanding towards their community's roots and aspirations. These insights enhance educational practice that honor the cultural heritage of a certain community empowering learners to express their literary talents while showing cultural pride and identity.

Febrianty (2019) exclaims that literary appreciation involves not just reading and enjoying literary works but also sincerely appreciating them to understand the moral messages within, fostering empathy, tolerance, and sensitivity towards humanity. More so, the author underscores that literary appreciation is not a mere reading and appreciation activity, the most significant part is how the values and messages of literary works are internalized and applied in one's life.

Literature and the Teaching of Literature

Merriam-Webster's defines literature as writings having excellence of form or expression and expressing ideas of permanent or universal interest while Oxford articulates literature as written works, especially those considered of superior or lasting artistic merit. Literature embraces a spectrum of characteristics such as excellence, aesthetics, creativity, imagination, expressiveness, value, and universality and inherently relies on language as its essential tool and ultimate medium for conveying its essence and attributes.

According to Maharsi (2016), the term literature encompasses various meanings, contingent upon the specific context in which it is employed. It may denote literary compositions, including fiction or alternatively, refer to the academic discipline of literary study. When understood as literary writings, literature often signifies the attainment of aesthetic and moral significance, exemplified by canonical works or those aligned with the great tradition. He expounds further that the process of teaching and learning literature involves more than just language. It delves into various aspects of society, including the backgrounds and experiences of English-speaking people. The main goals are to gain insight into the moral and wise values embedded in literary works but understanding their messages necessitates both English proficiency and comprehension strategies.

Ugwu (2022) explains that studying literature in English involves more than simply reading and summarizing texts; it requires students to engage deeply with the material, appreciating its nuances through meaningful discussion to attain a profound comprehension. Texts often demand repeated reading for full understanding, with each iteration offering new insights. Active participation in classroom discussions is essential, encouraging students to question, clarify, and interact with both the texts and their peers. Teachers play a vital role in fostering this engagement by creating learner-centered, activity-based environments tailored to the specific literature genre and lesson objectives.

In the Philippines, literature is included in the curriculum for basic education and in some higher education programs particularly for students specializing in language and literature, offering skills in reading, writing, and speaking, and contributing to the development of sensitivity, self-awareness, and a deeper understanding of the world and humanity. In connection, Magulod Jr. (2018) also adds that literature holds a vital place in tertiary curriculum, enabling students to construct rich narrative contents through descriptive language and compelling characters, thus the integration of literature in instruction involves extensive vocabulary acquisition, dialogue comprehension, and prose analysis, fostering students' imagination, cultural acumen, and critical thinking skills pertaining to narrative elements such as plots, themes, and characters.

Academic Performance

Tadese et.al (2022) defines academic performance as the extent to which a student, teacher, or institution has attained their short or long-term educational goals and is measured either by continuous assessment or cumulative grade point average. Abid et al. (2023) further states that academic performance refers to the grades that students obtained in their English class, which are determined by their teachers. In the context of Jose Rizal Memorial State University, the academic performance is determined through this grading system: 30% for the midterm/final examination; 30% for the quizzes; and 40% for the performance tasks.

Zhu (2016) exclaims that academic performance of college students is a crucial factor that influences the attainment of higher education objectives.

Academic achievement is a clear demonstration of how well students are learning and serves as a reliable measure to assess the quality of teaching and education in higher education institutions, as well as the overall growth of students. The academic performance of college students is impacted by multiple factors, and have conducted extensive studies.

Zheng & Mustapha (2022) outlines that academic performance can be categorized into two distinct definitions: broad and narrow. In the broad sense, academic performance refers to the enhancement of students' overall quality throughout their years in school. Performance encompasses both cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes, as well as psychological and behavioral outcomes. Academic performance encompasses knowledge, values, attitudes, and skills or appropriate behaviors.

Brew et al. (2021) states that the exceptional academic performance of students at the tertiary institution is vital in every educational framework. Various factors influence students' academic performance and have been thoroughly researched; however, several unresolved challenges persist. Academic performance pertains to the extent of accomplishment that a student, teacher, or institution has attained in fulfilling their educational objectives, regardless of whether they are immediate or long-lasting. Student academic performance can be assessed by considering various factors, including the student's home environment, learning abilities, academic engagement, study habits, and home environment.

Literary Appreciation Skills and Academic Performance

There are a few studies that show the link between literary appreciation skills and academic performance, one of which is the study of Sugiarti and Prihatini (2019) which findings indicate that literary appreciation skills has an impact to the academic performance. In elaboration, when students are engaged in a certain reading strategy in literature appreciation, it fosters holistic engagement of the mind, emotions, and reading flow thereby enhancing students' academic proficiency and facilitating deeper understanding of literary texts. Literary appreciation skills enable students to engage critically and imaginatively with literary content.

Mart (2019) states that the reader is not seen as a separate entity, acting upon the environment, nor the environment acting on the organism, but both parts acting as a total event. After all, the meanings or interpretations created by the reader are a reflection of the reader as well as the text which highlights that the reader and the text are integral parts of a total event where meaning emerges from the dynamic interaction between the reader's cognitive processes and the textual stimuli. As such, his study affirms that there is a relationship between literary appreciation skills and academic performance which elaborates that engaging learners to active reading, emotional and intellectual participation in the text, construction of meaning and elicitation of responses can lead to increased academic performance as readers are able to

refine their analytical abilities, broaden their perspectives, and even enhance their communication skills. Through literary appreciation, educators have the opportunity to facilitate students' exploration of complex literary elements beyond their current comprehension levels, fostering deeper engagement with texts and thereby promoting academic growth.

Woodruff and Griffin (2019) indicates that literary appreciation skills also serves a tool in attaining increased academic performance among learners. It promotes student interactions with each other and the text and recognizing diversity in classrooms, incorporating appreciation towards literature, results in increased reading comprehension and engagement. Moreover, it accommodates the needs of learners and engage them at levels that are appropriate for their development, which includes academic performance.

Literary Appreciation Skills and Profile

In terms of gender, statistics show that teacher education program is more appealing to women than men. The study of Jugovic et al. (2022) stresses that the predominance of women in the teaching profession can be attributed to several interrelated factors. Men are generally less attracted to teaching due to lower salaries, the profession's low status, negative societal perceptions, and concerns about physical contact with children under public scrutiny. Traditional gender roles further reinforce this trend, with men gravitating towards fields like engineering and technology, while women are steered towards caregiving professions such as teaching. Nonetheless, the feminization of teaching has perpetuated the notion that teaching aligns with women's innate caregiving abilities and that women tend to express an interest in teaching earlier in life compared to men.

As for career choice, Gagalang (2020) highlights that degree holders in English-related programs in the Philippines are highly sought after in fields that require proficient use of the English language to achieve specific objectives. This explains the higher number of enrollees in English-related programs in the higher education. Career opportunities include academic and scholarly roles such as teaching and research, business and industry positions such as public relations, advertising, and documentation, and media and publishing jobs like writing, translating, and editing. Additionally, opportunities exist in Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry, which has rapidly expanded in the country, also offers numerous job prospects, with English proficiency being the primary requirement for the applicants.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on Cognitive-Constructivist Learning Theory of Jean Piaget (1971) which posits that knowledge is something that is actively constructed by learners based on their cognitive structures. Accordingly, this theory views learners as an active participant of the teaching-learning process. Hence, the environment needs to be democratic which is actualized through supportive learning and interactive and student-centered activities. This theory holds the position that teachers as a facilitator of learning encourages the students to become responsible and autonomous, giving them the freedom to learn on their own.

In the context of literary appreciation skills, the theory suggests that students develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of literature by actively engaging with texts, drawing connections between the content and their prior knowledge, and reflecting on their interpretations. According to Piaget, the processes of assimilation and accommodation are significant in this context. As students read and analyze literature, they assimilate new information into their existing schemas about themes, characters, and narrative structures. When they encounter complex or unfamiliar literary devices, they accommodate by

adjusting their cognitive framework to incorporate these new insights. This active engagement with literature enhances their critical thinking, analytical skills and ability to appreciate literary works.

Essentially, the theory explains the relationship of the literary appreciation skills and academic performance as it highlights that learners actively construct knowledge based on their cognitive structures. It suggests that creating a supportive and interactive learning environment, where students engage in literary appreciation activities autonomously, can positively influence academic performance. In line with Piaget's theory, teachers play a facilitative role, encouraging students to take ownership of their learning, which may enhance their ability to comprehend and apply the values embedded in literary works, thus potentially improving academic outcomes. Figure 1 shows the Cognitive-Constructivism Learning Theory Framework.

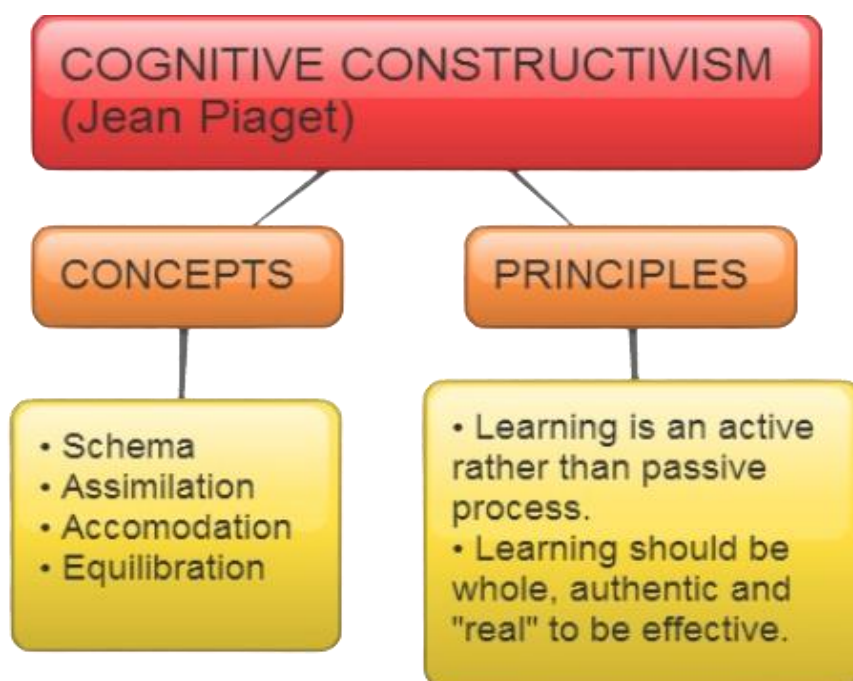


Figure 1. Cognitive-Constructivism Learning Theory Framework

Retrived from <https://www.structural-learning.com/post/embracing-the-learning-theory-cognitive-constructivism>

Figure 2 shows the conceptual framework of the study. The first box shows the independent variable which is the literary appreciation skills based on the study of Magulod Jr. (2018) with fourteen (14) items while the second box contains the dependent variable which is the academic performance determined through the grades of the students in their literature courses reflected in their records. The third box which is the intervening variable consist of the profile of the respondents categorized into gender, age, and year level.

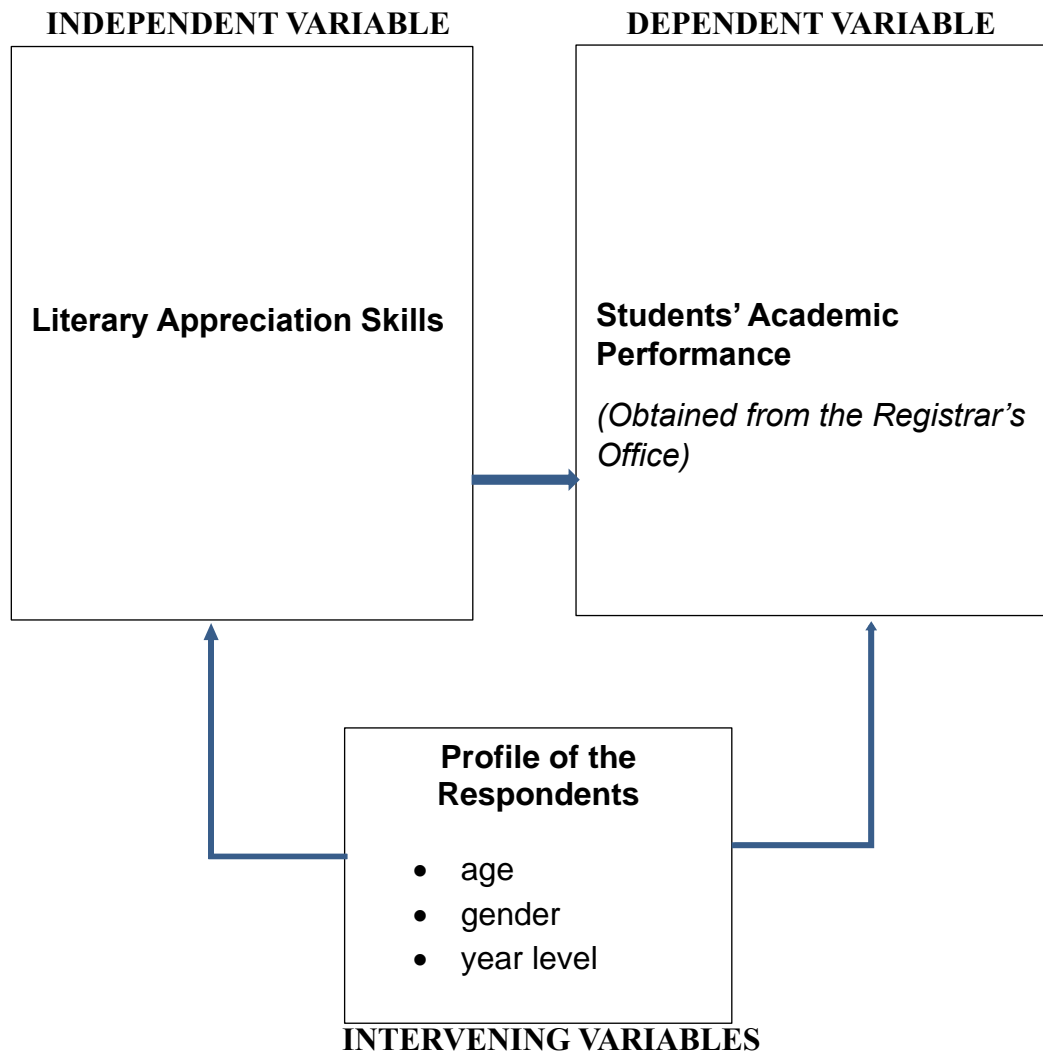


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework of the Study

Methodology

This study employed a survey and descriptive-correlational research design. The survey method was utilized to collect data on literary appreciation skills through a questionnaire, following the definition by Saro et al. (2023), which describes surveys as tools for gathering information from a predefined group of respondents. Additionally, a correlational analysis was conducted to determine the statistical relationship between literary appreciation skills and students' academic performance, without manipulating any variables.

The respondents of the study were 182 students enrolled in the Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in English program at JRMSU-Main, from the second to the fourth year during the second semester of the academic year 2023-2024. First-year students were excluded since they had not yet taken literature courses. The study employed a complete enumeration method to ensure an accurate sample size.

To gather data, an adopted three-part research instrument was used. The first part collected demographic information, including age, gender, and year level. The second part measured literary appreciation skills through a 14-item Likert scale questionnaire adapted from Magulod Jr. (2018), which has been used in related studies. The third part assessed academic performance based on students' grades in literature courses, obtained from the Office of the Registrar at JRMSU-Main.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 Profile of the respondents in terms of age

| <i>Age</i> | <i>Frequency (f)</i> | <i>Percent (%)</i> |
|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 19 years old and below | 7 | 3.8 |
| 20 – 25 years old | 173 | 95.1 |
| 26 years old and above | 2 | 1.1 |
| Total | 182 | 100.0 |

Table 1 presents the profile of the respondents in terms of age. The results show that almost all of the respondents in the program belong to ages between 20-25 years old covering 95.1% of the population while 3.8% are aged 19 years old and below and the remaining 1.1% belong to ages 26 years old and above. This findings corroborate to the study of the National Center for Education Statistics which shows that the majority of the undergraduate respondents at four-year institutions were under the age of 25 which supports the observation in higher education programs are typically within the 20-25 range.

Table 2 Profile of the respondents in terms of gender

| <i>Gender</i> | <i>Frequency (f)</i> | <i>Percent (%)</i> |
|---------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Male | 12 | 6.6 |
| Female | 150 | 82.4 |
| LGBTQIA+ | 20 | 11 |
| Total | 182 | 100.0 |

Table 2 shows the profile of the respondents according to gender. The data reveals that majority of the BSEd-English students at JRMSU-Main are females reaching to 82.4% of the total population while 6.6% are male and 11% identify themselves as members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

This finding is supported by the study of Mudiwa (2015) which emphasizes that women have dominated enrolment in teacher-education degrees. This is essentially reflective of the number of women taking a bigger space in the teaching profession. As of 2021, World Bank releases that 71.29% of the secondary teachers in the Philippines is composed of females and is continuously increasing in the present time. As per the record of UNESCO Institute for Statistics, it shows that for secondary teachers, female still dominates the record with 71% as of September, 2021. From this numerical outlook, the teaching field is categorized as highly feminised and is more attractive to women than men. The study of Tasner et al. (2017) also supports the results confirming that women dominate the teaching profession because of their disposition aligning with the field, viewing teaching as a vocation tied to caring, giving, and helping-attributes ingrained during early socialization. Female students in higher education perceive teaching as a natural extension of these qualities. The study further emphasizes that women dominance in teaching may likely to continue and should not be seen as a social issue.

Table 3 Profile of the respondents in terms of year level

| <i>Year Level</i> | <i>Frequency (f)</i> | <i>Percent (%)</i> |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Second Year | 35 | 19.2 |
| Third Year | 87 | 47.8 |
| Fourth Year | 60 | 33.0 |

| | | |
|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Total | 182 | 100.0 |
|--------------|------------|--------------|

Table 3 displays the record of the respondents as to their year level. The table shows a higher percentage of English Majors in the third year level accounting to 47.8% while 33% are in the fourth year level and 19.2% are in second year level.

For an extended period, the BSEd-English program has consistently had the highest enrollment in the College of Teacher Education at JRMSU-Main, usually accommodating two to three blocks per year level. However, at the start of academic year 2023-2024, a policy is implemented limiting enrollment to one section per program. This change accounts for the reduced number of students in the second year level, explaining the lesser number of enrolled students in the second year level. This data is backed up by Schmidt (2021) who states that the increasing global demand for English teachers has created significant employment opportunities for Filipinos, attracting many to enrol in English-major programs since the profession offers substantial job prospects both locally and internationally.

Perceived Level of Literary Appreciation Skills

Table 4 Perceived level of literary appreciation skills of BSEd-English students

| Statement | Mean | SD | Description | Interpretation |
|--|------|------|-----------------------|----------------|
| 1. Recognize the point of view used by the author. | 4.35 | 0.81 | To a Very High Extent | Very High |
| 2. Recognize imagery employed by the author | 4.19 | 0.83 | To a High Extent | High |
| 3. Recognize how the characters are introduced | 4.27 | 0.91 | To a Very High Extent | Very High |
| 4. Recognize the prime scheme used by the author | 3.94 | 0.86 | To a High Extent | High |
| 5. Recognize the purpose of the title | 4.35 | 0.93 | To a Very High Extent | Very High |
| 6. Recognize the parts of the plot | 4.26 | 0.79 | To a Very High Extent | Very High |
| 7. Determine the tone, mood, and style of the author | 4.23 | 0.79 | To a Very High Extent | Very High |
| 8. Judge the text in which generalizations, assumptions, hypotheses, theories, and arguments are formed. | 3.90 | 0.79 | To a High Extent | High |
| 9. Recognize evidence proving a universal truth or philosophy | 3.86 | 0.90 | To a High Extent | High |
| 10. Relate the story to their lives | 4.42 | 0.86 | To a Very High Extent | Very High |
| 11. Find answers to a question or a solution to a lifetime problem | 4.15 | 0.86 | To a High Extent | High |
| 12. Recognize personal philosophy based on the theme of the solution | 4.02 | 0.94 | To a High Extent | High |
| 13. Come up with enrichment activities like artworks, creative dramatics, story | 4.00 | 0.89 | To a High Extent | High |

| | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| writing, puppetry, and the like based on the selection read | | | | |
| 14. Concretize the imagery of language used by the author in the story | 4.13 | 0.91 | To a High Extent | High |
| Overall Mean | 4.15 | 0.91 | To a High Extent | High |

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 To No Extent: 1.81 – 2.60 To Little Extent: 2.61 – 3.40 Uncertain: 3.41 – 4.20 To a High Extent: 4.21 – 5.00 To a Very High Extent

Table 4 displays the perceived level of literary appreciation skills of the respondents. Notably, the participants demonstrated a considerable level of literary appreciation skills as evident in the overall mean of 4.15 with a descriptive interpretation of high. These data imply that students have already possessed a significant ability to understand, analyze, and value literary works and this set of skills enabled them to engage with literature, gaining a more profound and enriched understanding of literary materials.

Among the fourteen identified literary appreciation, it can be shown that students exhibit a strong grasp of several key elements of literary analysis, with particularly very high ratings observed in recognizing the point of view of the author with a mean of 4.35, recognizing how the characters are introduced with a mean of 4.27, recognizing the purpose of the title with a mean of 4.35, recognizing the parts of the plot with a mean of 4.26, determining the tone, mood, and style of the author with a mean of 4.23, and relating the story to their lives with a mean of 4.42.

On the other hand, there are areas where students demonstrate considerable degree which reflected a high extent of response such as recognizing the imagery employed by the author with a mean of 4.19, recognizing the prime scheme use by the author with a mean of 3.94, judging the text in which generalizations, assumptions, hypotheses, theories, and arguments are formed with a mean of 3.90, recognizing evidence proving a universal truth or philosophy with a mean of 3.86, finding answers to a question or a solution to a lifetime problem with a mean of 4.15, recognizing personal philosophy base on the theme of the solution with a mean of 4.02, coming up with enrichment activities with a mean of 4.00, and concretizing the imagery of language use by the author in the story with a mean of 4.13.

The results imply that students possessed a high level of literary appreciation skills suggesting a significant degree of capability in engaging and interpreting complex literary elements. However, the distinction in areas interpreted as “very high” and “high” indicated that while students are still proficient in these areas, their level of mastery is slightly lower.

This finding is supported in the study of Wright (2020) which states that a high extent of literary appreciation skills enable readers to discern what is relevant and discard what is unnecessary. They are also able to explore the parts of a piece of literature including its interrelationships and what unifies the piece into a cohesive whole and uncover the purpose, style, tone, mood, and the logic of the work. Additionally, the study of Abida (2016) also reflects the same results which positions that with high literary appreciation skills, students are able to immerse themselves in meaningful contexts filled with descriptive language and engaging characters that allow them to be actively engaged with texts, contemplating ideas, values, and ethical questions.

Level of Academic Performance

Table 5 Level of Academic Performance of Respondents in Literature

| <i>Academic Performance</i> | <i>Frequency (f)</i> | <i>Percent (%)</i> | <i>Mean Grade</i> | <i>Description</i> |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Excellent (1.0) | - | - | | |
| Very Good (1.1 – 1.5) | 33 | 18.1 | | |
| Good (2.5 – 1.6) | 144 | 79.1 | 1.78 | Good |
| Fair (3.0 – 2.6) | 2 | 1.1 | | |
| Failed (below 3.0) | 3 | 1.6 | | |
| Total | 182 | 100.0 | | |

Table 5 provides the level of the academic performance of the respondents which outlines that majority of students achieved grades categorized as “Good,” accounting for 79.1%. Additionally, a significant proportion of student’s attained grades classified as “Very Good” representing 18.1% of the total population. Minimal instances of grades categorized as “Fair” and “Failed”, are also recorded.

This finding is supported by the study of Pichay (2018) which study revealed that the level of academic performance of the respondents is average or good which is due to the fact that most students struggle with answering comprehension questions that require higher-order thinking skills. While nearly all students find the subject interesting, a few consider it boring. The difficulty increases with more critical or complex questions about literature. The study of Baba (2022) also supports the findings which point out that students achieve a satisfactory academic performance when they have a positive learning experience towards literature and how learners perceived literature influence their learning outcomes.

Test of Significant Difference in the Perceived Level of Literary Appreciation Skills

Table 6 Test of significant difference in the respondents’ perceived level of literary appreciation skills when analyzed according to profile

| Profile | H-Value | p-value | Interpretation |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Age | 1.348** | 0.510 | Not Significant |
| Year Level | 4.191 | 0.123 | Not Significant |
| Gender | 6.890 | 0.229 | Not Significant |

Table 6 presents the results of a test of significant difference in respondents’ perceived level of literary appreciation skills based on various demographic profiles. The Kruskal-Wallis H test was used to analyse the differences across age, year level, and gender. The p-values for each profile are compared to a significant level of 0.05. The findings indicate that there are no significant differences in perceived literary appreciation skills based on age ($p=0.510$), year level ($p=.123$), or gender ($p=0.229$). Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted for all three profiles, suggesting that these demographic factors do not have a significant impact on individual’s perceived level of literary appreciation skills. These results provide valuable insights into the uniformity of perceived skills across different demographic groups, highlighting the consistency of literary appreciation abilities among respondents regardless of age, year level, or gender. This finding is supported by the study of Magulod Jr (2018) which showed no significant difference in the level of literary appreciation skill when group according to the gender indicating that students can demonstrate the same level of literary appreciation skills regardless of the gender.

Test of Significant Difference in the Level of Academic Performance

Table 7 Test of significant difference in the respondents perceived level of academic performance when analyzed according to profile

| Profile | H-Value | p-value | Interpretation |
|------------|---------|---------|-----------------|
| Age | 1.354** | 0.508 | Not Significant |
| Gender | 4.957** | 0.421 | Not Significant |
| Year Level | 7.859* | 0.020 | Significant |

Table 7 illustrates the results of a test of difference in respondents' perceived level of academic performance across various demographic profiles. Using the Kruskal-Wallis H test, the findings reveal that there is a significant difference in perceived academic performance based on year level ($p = 0.020$), indicating that academic performance varies significantly across different academic years. However, no significant differences are found based on age ($p = 0.508$) or gender ($p = 0.421$), with the null hypothesis (H_0) accepted for both profiles. This suggests that age and gender do not have a significant impact on perceived academic performance.

The study of Lee and Kim (2019) supports the findings on the significant difference between the academic performance and year level which stated that academic performance has a chance to improve as the school year progressed driven by the influence of but not limited to motivation, school environment, teacher effectiveness, and maturity.

Test of Significant Relationship between the Level of Literary Appreciation Skills and Academic Performance

Table 8 Test of significant relationship in the perceived level of literary appreciation skills and level of academic performance

| Skills | Correlation Value and p-value | Academic Performance | Interpretation |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Level of Literary Appreciation Skills | Rho value | 0.024 | Almost Negligible Positive Correlation |
| | P value | 0.752 | Not Significant |

Table 8 displays the results of a test of significant relationship between respondents' perceived level of literary appreciation skills and their level of academic performance. The correlation coefficient (Rho Value) indicates a value of 0.024, suggesting an almost negligible positive correlation between the two variables. Additionally, the p-value of 0.752 exceeds the significance level of 0.05, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis (H_0) and indicating that the observed correlation is not statistically significant. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between perceived literary appreciation skills and academic performance among the respondents. These findings suggest that factors other than literary appreciation skills may influence academic performance, underscoring the complexity of the relationship between these two variables.

The findings in this study contradict the study of Woodruff and Griffin (2019) which indicates that literary appreciation skills and academic performance are correlated elaborating that literary appreciation skills serve as a tool in attaining increased academic performance among learners that promotes student interactions with each other and the text and recognizing diversity in classrooms, incorporating appreciation towards literature, results in increased reading comprehension and engagement. The study of

Hellas (2018) also refutes the findings which posits that there is a positive correlation between literary appreciation skills and academic performance and that engaging with literature enhances students' academic performance by providing them with diverse insights, cultural thinking, and analytical skills. The study of Magulod Jr. (2018) highlights the complexity and variability of factors that could influence academic performance which supports the idea that literary appreciation skills and academic performance is not feasible in the context of this study. For instance, cognitive strategies such as rehearsal, elaboration, and critical thinking may not directly correlate with academic success due to the differences in how these skills are applied by the students at various stages of their education. Moreover, according to Tan et al. (2021), other external factors such as but not limited to educational environment, teaching quality, and students' socio-economic backgrounds can heavily impact academic outcomes, overshadowing the potential benefits of literary appreciation skills alone. The complexity of these interacting variables suggests that a significant relationship between literary appreciation and academic performance may be difficult to establish consistently across different contexts and populations.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it is drawn that the majority of the respondents enrolled in the BSEd-English program were females aged 20-25 and were primarily in their third year. They demonstrated high literary appreciation skills, with particularly high proficiency in several key components, indicating that they already possessed substantial abilities in understanding, analyzing, and valuing literary works. This enabled them to engage with literature and attain a profound comprehension of literary pieces. Their academic performance in literature courses was consistently good, with most grades falling between 1.6 and 2.5, implying that the majority met the expected academic standards in their literary studies. The analysis showed no significant difference in the perceived level of literary appreciation skills across respondents' age, gender, and year level, thereby confirming the null hypothesis and indicating that literary appreciation skills were evident among respondents regardless of these factors. While no significant difference was found in academic performance based on age and gender, year level had a significant impact, as evidenced by a p-value of 0.020. This suggests that students' academic performance improved as they advanced through their studies, highlighting the importance of progressive learning experiences.

Recommendations

In light of the study's findings, several recommendations are proposed to enhance literary appreciation and academic performance. Deans and Associate Deans should provide opportunities for instructors to attend seminars on advanced literary instruction techniques and promote literary engagement through events and discussions. The Program Chairperson should review and adjust the curriculum to address students' academic needs at different stages and implement targeted support services, particularly for early-year students, while encouraging research in literature. Literature instructors and professors should enhance their teaching by sharing best pedagogical practices and focusing on areas where students show slightly lower appreciation, such as recognizing literary schemes and critically judging texts. Students should actively participate in literary activities, organize clubs and reading circles, and recognize the link between strong literary skills and overall academic success. Future researchers should further explore literary appreciation skills, validate findings, and examine additional factors influencing literary engagement.

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