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### COMPARISON OF READING COMPREHENSION AND ITS SUB- COMPONENTS IN TERMS OF DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Vageeshaiah, P. M. Principal, Tungabhadra College of Education (B.Ed.) Kottur, Tq. Kudligi, Dist. Ballari.

#### ABSTRACT

Reading is a complex cognitive process of decoding symbols in order to construct or derive meaning. It is a means of language acquisition, of communication, and of sharing information and ideas. Reading is one of the skills in learning a language. It opens the doors of knowledge. It helps the individuals to accumulate stores of knowledge. Reading habit in mother tongue is the basic for cultivation of the reading habit.

**KEYWORDS**: Demographic Variables , communication , interpret printed symbols .

#### **INTRODUCTION**

According to Grays (1960) there are four main components in the reading. They are : (i) word perception, (ii) comprehension of the ideas represented by the words, (iii) reaction to these ideas, (iv) assimilation of the ideas with previous knowledge. The four steps are interdependent. These four steps



are interdependent and help in understanding and makes reading as a problem-solving tool.

Proficient reading depends on the ability to recognize words quickly and effortlessly. It is also determined by an individual's cognitive development, which is 'the construction of thought process' (Adams, Marilyn McCord, 1994).

Collins and Cheek (1999) describes reading as a process that require the use of complex thought processes to interpret printed symbols as meaningful units and comprehend them as a thought unit in order to understand a printed Further, Hedgcock and Ferris (2009) message. viewed reading as a cognitive, development, and socially constructed task that goes beyond understanding the words on a page. According to Pearson and Johnson (1978) comprehension is the building bridges between the new and the known. Efficient comprehension involves and ability to select and understand what is needed by the reader; retaining and recalling the selected information later ; and connecting and applying the new information to prior knowledge. It is the ability to understand what is written within, between and beyond the Good comprehension includes important lines. factors such as concentration, critical evaluation of the reading material, the reader's purpose, ability to retain and recall information from the material and appropriate reading speeds for the selected tests. Flood James (1984) stated that reading comprehension is a constructive process in which the reader gains understanding through using the text as a model to create a parallel image in the mind. It is also interactive in that it require both the analysis of test structure and the examination of pre-existing memory structure.

Comprehension is ability to understand a given passage. Reading comprehension is a cognitive process that requires myriad skills and strategies. It's a part of communication getting thoughts that

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were in author's mind into the reader's mind. The teacher asks a few questions about the passage and the students are expected to find out correct answers to the questions. Then they are asked to write answers in their own words. This is very useful experience in learning process. It is also a two-fold process that involves speedy reading and quick understanding and precise reproduction.

#### REVIEW

After reviewing the literature related to reading and reading comprehension, it is inferred that among the skills of language, reading as a receptive skill contribute for speaking and writing. Reading with comprehension is the goal of reading and listening. Successful comprehension enables readers (or listeners) to acquire information to experience and to be aware of words, to communicate successfully and thereby to achieve academic success. Reading comprehension is affected by several factors related to psychological, environmental, and personal and so on as per the studies reviewed.

Research on reading comprehension yielded inconclusive results. To quote a few with regard to sex as a variable some studies reported significant differences between boys and girls. Within this type of finding some studies have revealed that boys have more comprehension levels while some revealed girls having more levels of reading comprehension.

Similarly with respect to the variables locality, management of the schools, medium of study, studies showed equivocal results in the reading comprehension levels of students. As such there is a need for further investigation into how these demographic variables are associated with reading comprehension. If explored appropriate measures can be taken up either to sustain or enhance the comprehension levels if they are satisfactory or to find out the needed strategies to develop reading comprehension, if they are low, as the success in academics as well as life is influenced by reading comprehension.

The study of Dailey Joanne (1975) concluded that vocabulary, reading comprehension and auditory memory skills improved significantly through the use of daily mental abilities experiences.

There are many studies to relate reading comprehension with different factors. The efforts to construct and validate reading comprehension battery is also a means to such an end. These studies also seem to have assumed that a detailed understanding of reading comprehension factors would be helpful in understanding children and facilitating better learning. Reading comprehension factors have influence on students reading. Many writers have mentioned the close relationship between cognitive development and language learning. The present study takes such an assumption one step ahead by examining the difference in reading comprehension and its sub-components in terms of some selected demographic variables.

#### **The Problem**

The problem chosen for the present investigation is "to study the difference in reading comprehension and its sub-components in terms of some demographic variables".

#### Variables

- i. Dependent Variable
  The major variable and its sub-components :
  i.Reading Comprehension
  Sub-components
   Story Reading
- Passage Reading
- Newspaper Reading
- Conversation
- Vocabulary

#### ii. Demographic Variables

• Gender – Male / Female

Locality-Urban/Rural

• Medium – Kannada / English

#### **Objectives**

The present study is designed with the following specific objectives in view:

i.To study the difference between boys and girls in their reading comprehension and its sub-components in Kannada.

ii.To study the difference between urban and rural students in their reading comprehension and its subcomponents in Kannada.

iii.To study the difference between Kannada and English medium school students in their reading comprehension and its sub-components in Kannada.

#### **Hypotheses**

Keeping in view the above specific objectives, the following research hypotheses are framed:

i.There is a significant difference between boys and girls students in their reading comprehension and its subcomponents in Kannada.

ii. There is a significant difference between urban and rural students in their reading comprehension and its subcomponents in Kannada.

iii. There is a significant difference between Kannada and English medium school students in their reading comprehension and its sub-components in Kannada.

#### **Method of Research**

For the present study descriptive survey method of research was found to be appropriate. The purpose was to study the reading comprehension in Kannada in relation to demographic variables among secondary school students.

#### **Tool Used**

In order to assess the reading comprehension of secondary school students in Kannada language, a 'Reading Test Battery' covering different components of reading comprehension was developed by the investigator.

#### Sample

The sample for the study consisted of secondary school students studying in schools of three different managements viz., government, private-aided and private-unaided. The schools of the urban and rural localities and students studying in Kannada and English medium were involved in study. Therefore, a multistage stratified random sampling technique was adopted while selecting the sample. The sample consists of 600 secondary school students studying in Bellari district.

#### **Collection of Data**

The investigator visited secondary schools of Bellari district with the permission of the heads of the institutions. The students were given necessary instructions about the various instruments and motivated them to respond genuinely to all the items. The tools and personal data sheet were administered. The data on each variable was properly coded for further analysis.

#### **Statistical Technique**

The analysis was carried out on the basis of objectives and hypotheses formulated by employing appropriate statistical technique. The data thus collected and scored was analyzed by using 't' test.

#### Results

I. Comparison of Boys and Girls with Respect to their Reading Comprehension and its Sub-components

The results are given in the following table :

Reading Comprehension	Gender	Ν	Mean	SD	t-value	Signifi cance
Sub-components						
Story Reading	Boys	250	25.68	3.82	4.7697	Yes
	Girls	250	24.09	3.64		
Passage Reading	Boys	250	15.75	2.86	1.7850	NS
	Girls	250	15.30	2.85		
Newspaper Reading	Boys	250	16.56	2.85	2.5658	Yes
	Girls	250	15.90	2.91		
Conversation	Boys	250	12.66	2.53	0.6039	NS
	Girls	250	12.80	2.35		
Vocabulary	Boys	250	34.41	4.26	0.4674	NS
	Girls	250	34.24	3.55		
Reading Comprehension	Boys	250	104.80	8.46	3.5477	Yes
_	Girls	250	102.32	7.06		

Table-1 : Comparison of Reading Comprehension among Boys and Girls

Note : Yes - Significant, NS - Not Significant

The obtained 't' value 4.7697 with respect to Reading Comprehension sub-component – Story Reading of boys and girls is greater than the tabled 't' value (2.76) at 0.01 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that secondary school boys and girls differ significantly in respect of their Reading Comprehension component – Story Reading is accepted. Further, it is noticed that the mean value of boys is greater than that of girls. Hence, it is concluded that secondary school boys are better in reading comprehension component – story reading when compared to girls.

The obtained 't' value 1.7850 with respect to Reading Comprehension sub-component – Passage Reading of boys and girls is lesser than the tabled 't' value (1.96) at 0.05 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups do not differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that secondary school boys and girls differ significantly in respect of their Reading Comprehension component – Passage Reading is rejected. However, it is noticed that the mean value of boys is greater than that of girls. Hence, it is concluded that secondary school boys are more competent in reading comprehension component – passage reading when compared to girls.

The obtained 't' value 2.5658 with respect to Reading Comprehension sub-component – Newspaper Reading of boys and girls is greater than the tabled 't' value (1.96) at 0.05 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that secondary school boys and girls differ significantly in respect of their Reading Comprehension component – Newspaper Reading is accepted. Further, it is noticed that the mean value of boys is greater than that of girls. Hence, it is concluded that secondary school boys are good in reading comprehension component – newspaper reading when compared to girls.

The obtained 't' value 0.6039 with respect to Reading Comprehension sub-component – Conversation of boys and girls is lesser than the tabled 't' value (1.96) at 0.05 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups do not differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that secondary school boys and girls differ significantly in respect of their Reading Comprehension component – Conversation is rejected. However, it is noticed that the mean value of girls is greater than that of boys. Hence, it is concluded that secondary school girls are more able in reading comprehension component – conversation when compared to boys.

The obtained 't' value 0.4674 with respect to Reading Comprehension sub-component - Vocabulary of

boys and girls is lesser than the tabled 't' value (1.96) at 0.05 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups do not differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that secondary school boys and girls differ significantly in respect of their Reading Comprehension component – Vocabulary is rejected. However, it is noticed that the mean value of girls is greater than that of boys. Hence, it is concluded that secondary when compared to boys.

The obtained 't' value 3.5477 with respect to Reading Comprehension of boys and girls is greater than the tabled 't' value (2.76) at 0.01 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that secondary school boys and girls differ significantly in respect of their Reading Comprehension is accepted. Further, it is noticed that the mean value of boys is greater than that of girls. Hence, it is concluded that secondary school boys showed better performance in to reading comprehension when compared to girls.

ii.Comparison of Rural and Urban Students with Respect to their Reading Comprehension and its Subcomponents

The results are given in the following table :

Reading Comprehension	Locale	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Signifi cance
Sub-components						
Story Reading	Rural	260	24.62	3.83	1.6200	NS
	Urban	240	25.18	3.78		
Passage Reading	Rural	260	14.90	2.94	5.2383	Yes
	Urban	240	16.20	2.61		
Newspaper Reading	Rural	260	16.07	2.93	1.2934	NS
	Urban	240	16.40	2.84		
Conversation	Rural	260	12.62	2.46	1.0924	NS
	Urban	240	12.85	2.42		
Vocabulary	Rural	260	34.44	3.74	0.6902	NS
	Urban	240	34.20	4.11		
Reading Comprehension	Rural	260	102.64	7.52	2.7278	Yes
	Urban	240	104.55	8.15		

Table_2 · Com	narison hetweer	Rural and	Urban School	Students in	their Readin	G Comprehension
Table-2: COM	parison betweer			students in	i inen Keaum	g comprehension

Note: Yes-Significant, NS-Not Significant

The obtained 't' value 1.6200 with respect to Reading Comprehension sub-component – Story Reading of rural and urban school students is lesser than the tabled 't' value (2.76) at 0.01 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups do not differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that rural and urban school students differ significantly in respect of their Reading Comprehension component – Story Reading is rejected. However, it is noticed that the mean value of urban school students is slightly greater than that of rural students. Thus, it is concluded that urban school students are relatively better in reading comprehension component – story reading when compared to rural students.

The obtained 't' value 5.2383 with respect to Reading Comprehension sub-component – Passage Reading of rural and urban school students is greater than the tabled 't' value (2.76) at 0.01 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that rural and urban school students differ significantly in respect of their Reading Comprehension component – Passage Reading is accepted. Further, it is noticed that the mean value of urban school students is

greater than that of rural students. Hence, it is concluded that urban school students are more prone to reading comprehension component – passage reading when compared to rural students.

The obtained 't' value 1.2934 with respect to Reading Comprehension sub-component – Newspaper Reading of rural and urban school students is lesser than the tabled 't' value (1.96) at 0.05 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups do not differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that rural and urban school students differ significantly in respect of their Reading Comprehension component – Newspaper Reading is rejected. However, it is noticed that the mean value of urban school students is somewhat greater than that of rural students. Thus, it is concluded that urban school students are little better in reading comprehension component – newspaper reading when compared to rural students.

The obtained 't' value 1.0924 with respect to Reading Comprehension sub-component – Conversation of rural and urban school students is lesser than the tabled 't' value (1.96) at 0.05 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups do not differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that rural and urban school students differ significantly in respect of their Reading Comprehension component – Conversation is rejected. But, it is noticed that the mean value of urban school students is greater than that of rural students. From this, it is concluded that urban school students are marginally good in reading comprehension component – conversation when compared to rural students.

The obtained 't' value 0.6902 with respect to Reading Comprehension sub-component – Vocabulary of rural and urban school students is lesser than the tabled 't' value (1.96) at 0.05 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups do not differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that rural and urban school students differ significantly in respect of their Reading Comprehension component – Vocabulary is rejected. Even then it is noticed that the mean value of urban school students is greater than that of rural students. However, it is concluded that urban school students have marginal capacity in reading comprehension component – vocabulary when compared to rural students.

The obtained 't' value 2.7278 with respect to the ability Reading Comprehension of rural and urban school students is greater than the tabled 't' value (1.96) at 0.05 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that rural and urban school students differ significantly in respect of their Reading Comprehension is accepted. Further, it is noticed that the mean value of urban school students is greater than that of rural students. Hence, it is concluded that urban school students are better in reading comprehension when compared to rural students.

iii. Comparison of Kannada and English Medium School Students with Respect to their Reading Comprehension and its Sub-components

The results are given in the following table :

Reading Comprehension	Medium	Ν	Mean	SD	t-value	Signifi cance
Sub-components						
Story Reading	Kannada	250	24.90	3.86	0.0938	NS
	English	250	24.87	3.77		
Passage Reading	Kannada	250	15.72	2.86	1.5332	NS
	English	250	15.33	2.85		
Newspaper Reading	Kannada	250	16.28	2.79	0.3863	NS
	English	250	16.18	2.99		

#### Table–3 : Comparison between Kannada and English Medium School Students in their Reading Comprehension

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Conversation	Kannada	250	12.79	2.48	0.5673	NS
	English	250	12.67	2.40		
Vocabulary	Kannada	250	34.34	4.00	0.0798	NS
	English	250	34.31	3.85		
Reading Comprehension	Kannada	250	103.76	8.67	0.5785	NS
	English	250	103.36	7.01		

Note: NS-Not Significant

The obtained 't' value 0.0938 with respect to the ability Reading Comprehension sub-component – Story Reading of Kannada and English medium school students is lesser than the tabled 't' value (1.96) at 0.05 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups do not differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that Kannada and English medium school students differ significantly in respect of their Reading Comprehension component – Story Reading is rejected. However, it is noticed that the mean value of Kannada medium school students is greater than that English medium school students. Thus, it can be concluded that Kannada medium school students are more prone to reading comprehension component – story reading when compared to English medium school students.

The obtained 't' value 1.5332 with respect to the ability Reading Comprehension sub-component – Passage Reading of Kannada and English medium school students is lesser than the tabled 't' value (1.96) at 0.05 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups do not differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that Kannada and English medium school students differ significantly in respect of their Reading Comprehension component – Passage Reading is rejected. However, it is noticed that the mean value of Kannada medium secondary school students is greater than that of English medium school students. Consequently, it is concluded that Kannada medium school students are more prone to reading comprehension component – passage reading when compared to English medium school students.

The obtained 't' value 0.3863 with respect to the ability Reading Comprehension sub-component – Newspaper Reading of Kannada and English medium school students is lesser than the tabled 't' value (1.96) at 0.05 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups do not differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that Kannada and English medium school students differ significantly in respect of their Reading Comprehension component – Newspaper Reading is rejected. However, it is noticed that the mean value of Kannada medium school students is greater than that of English medium school students. Therefore, it is concluded that Kannada medium secondary school students are more prone to reading comprehension component – newspaper reading when compared to English medium school students.

The obtained 't' value 0.5673 with respect to the ability Reading Comprehension sub-component – Conversation of Kannada and English medium school students is lesser than the tabled 't' value (1.96) at 0.05 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups do not differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that Kannada and English medium school students differ significantly in respect of their Reading Comprehension component – Conversation is rejected. However, it is noticed that the mean value of Kannada medium school students is greater than that of English medium school students. Therefore, it can be inferred that Kannada medium school students relatively better in reading comprehension component – conversation school students.

The obtained 't' value 0.0798 with respect to the ability Reading Comprehension sub-component – Vocabulary of Kannada and English medium school students is lesser than the tabled 't' value (1.96) at 0.05 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups do not differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that Kannada and English medium school students differ significantly in respect of their Reading Comprehension component – Vocabulary is rejected. However, it is noticed that the mean value of Kannada medium school students is greater than that of English medium school students. So, it is concluded that Kannada medium secondary school students are more prone to reading comprehension component – vocabulary when compared to English medium school students.

The obtained 't' value 0.5785 with respect to total ability Reading Comprehension of Kannada and

English medium school students is lesser than the tabled 't' value (1.96) at 0.05 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups do not differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that Kannada and English medium school students differ significantly in respect of their Reading Comprehension is rejected. It is noticed that the mean value of Kannada medium school students is little greater than that of English medium school students. Because of this, it is concluded that Kannada medium school students are may perform better in reading comprehension when compared to English medium school students.

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

1. Secondary school boys are more potential in reading comprehension as a whole as well as in its components – story reading, passage reading, newspaper reading, conversation, and vocabulary when compared to girls.

2.Urban secondary school students are competent enough in reading comprehension as a whole as well as in its components – story reading, passage reading, newspaper reading, conversation, and vocabulary when compared to rural students.

3.Kannada medium secondary school students are slightly better in reading comprehension as a whole as well as in its components – story reading, passage reading, newspaper reading, conversation, and vocabulary when compared to English medium school students.

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#### Vageeshaiah, P. M.

Principal, Tungabhadra College of Education (B.Ed.) Kottur, Tq. Kudligi, Dist. Ballari.

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