



TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Labor Market Intelligence Report

Highlights of the 2008 Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS)

*(This report was presented during the first policy research forum organized by the
Literacy Coordinating Council of the Department of Education.)*

Office of the Deputy Director General for Sectoral TVET
Planning Office
TESDA Complex, East Service Road, South Superhighway
Taguig City, Metro Manila
Tel. No. (02) 888 5652 ; 817 2675 ; 893 1966
www.tesda.gov.ph

CODE: ST-PO 06-05-2011

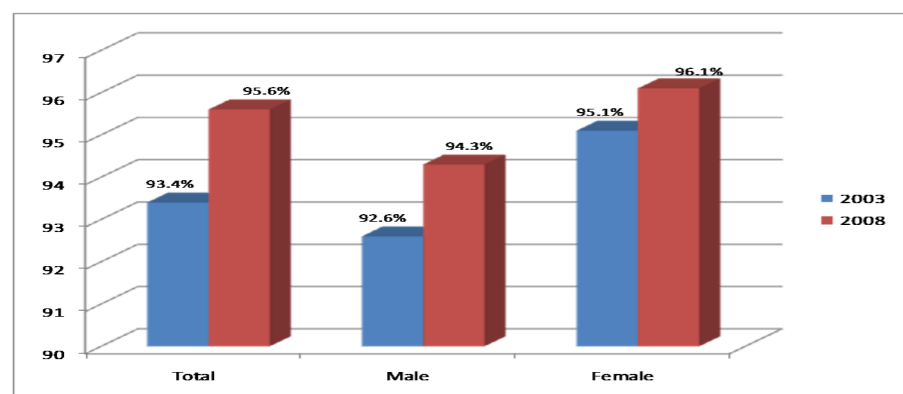
Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS) is designed to measure the functional literacy levels of the population; it is a statistical activity to determine the educational and skills qualifications of the population; assess the extent of exposure of the population to mass media and determine the magnitude and socio-economic profile of the out-of-school youth. This is in line with the government's thrust to promote education policies and program aimed at eradicating illiteracy in the country.

Basic or Simple Literacy

Basic literacy is almost universal in the Philippines. Of the estimated 68 million Filipinos 10 years old and over, around 96% are basically literate, according to the results of the 2008 FLEMMS. Basic or simple literacy is the ability of a person to read and write with understanding a simple message in language or dialect. In this survey, basic literacy status of an individual was determined based on the respondents answer to the question "Can ___ read and write a simple message in any language or dialect?"

The basic literacy rate in 2008 is slightly higher than the 2003 rate of 93%. The basic literacy rate among females is 96.1% as compared to 95.1% among males (Fig. 1).

Figure 1. Basic Literacy Rate of Population 10 Years Old and Over by Sex and Year, Philippines: 2008



Among regions, NCR has the highest basic literacy rate with 99% followed by Region I, Region II and Region IV-A with around 98%, respectively. ARMM has the lowest rate with eight out of 10 persons 10 years old and over considered as basically literate (Table 1).

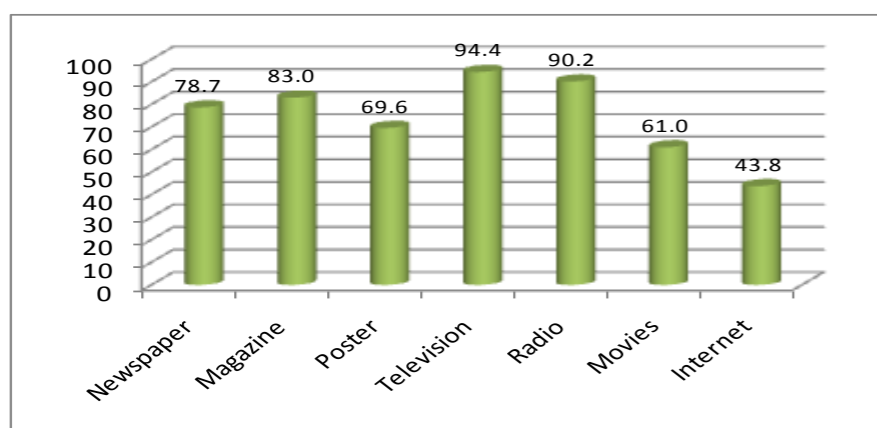
Table 1. Basic Literacy Rate of Population 10 Years Old and Over by Region, Philippines: 2008

Region	Population 10 years old and over (in '000)	Basic Literacy Rate
Philippines	70,818	95.6
NCR	9,021	99.2
CAR	1,277	94.8
I	3,941	98.2
II	2,583	95.0
III	7,752	97.8
IV - A	8,951	98.0
IV - B	2,136	95.1
V	4,205	96.6
VI	5,819	94.5
VII	5,283	95.1
VIII	3,310	93.6
IX	2,534	94.0
X	3,234	93.9
XI	3,302	93.7
XII	2,991	92.1
CARAGA	1,899	94.7
ARMM	2,578	81.5

Exposure to Mass Media

One question in the FLEMMS self-administered questionnaire asked about the respondent's exposure to different forms of mass media and the frequency of exposure e.g., everyday, at least once a week, seldom, or not at all. The vast majority of Filipinos age 10 to 64 years are exposed to television (94.4%), radio (90.2%), magazine (83.0%), and newspaper (78.7%). Seven in ten Filipinos 10 to 64 years old watch television everyday and 4 in 10 listen to radio everyday. Meanwhile, two in ten read magazine at least once a week. Two out of ten Filipinos also read newspapers at least once a week. Forty-four percent of Filipinos have some exposure to the internet; only one in ten surfs the internet every day (Fig. 5).

Figure 5. Percentage of Population 10 to 64 Years Old Who Were Exposed to Specific Forms of Mass Media, Philippines: 2008



The 2008 FLEMMS also revealed that functionally literacy rate is generally high among persons exposed to different forms of mass media; it ranges from 93.9% for those who watched television to 96.3% for those who surfed the internet. Functional Literacy rates are about the same for females and males who have exposure to a particular form of mass media (Table 5).

Table 5. Functional Literacy Rate of Population 10 to 64 Years Old by Specific Forms of Mass Media Exposed To and Sex, Philippines: 2008

Mass Media	Total (in '000)	Sex	
		Male (in '000)	Female (in '000)
Philippines	67,089	33,837	33,251
Newspaper	95.2	94.4	95.9
Magazine	95.0	94.3	95.5
Poster	96.1	95.4	96.7
Television	93.9	93.0	94.7
Radio	94.2	93.2	95.1
Movies	95.8	95.1	96.5
Internet	96.3	95.5	97.0

Source: NSO, 2008 Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS)

Functional Literacy

In the 2008 FLEMMS, a self-administered functional literacy questionnaire was accomplished by persons 10 to 64 years old in order to determine their literacy status. Literacy is categorized into four levels based on the individual responses in the self-administered questionnaire. Person who cannot read and write are considered illiterate (Functional Literacy Level 0 in Table 2).

Table 2. Percentage of Population 10 to 64 years old who are classified into the different Functional Literacy Levels by Sex, Philippines: 2008

Functional Literacy Levels	Both Sexes	Male	Female
Philippines (in '000)	67,089	33,837	33,251
Level 0 - Cannot read and Write	6.9	8.4	5.5
Level 1 - Can read and write*	90.9	89.1	92.8
Level 2 - Can read, write and compute**	86.4	84.2	88.7
Level 3 - Can read, write, compute and comprehend	69.9	86.3	73.6
Level 4 - High school graduate or higher	44.0	40.8	47.2
Undetermined***	2.1	2.5	1.8

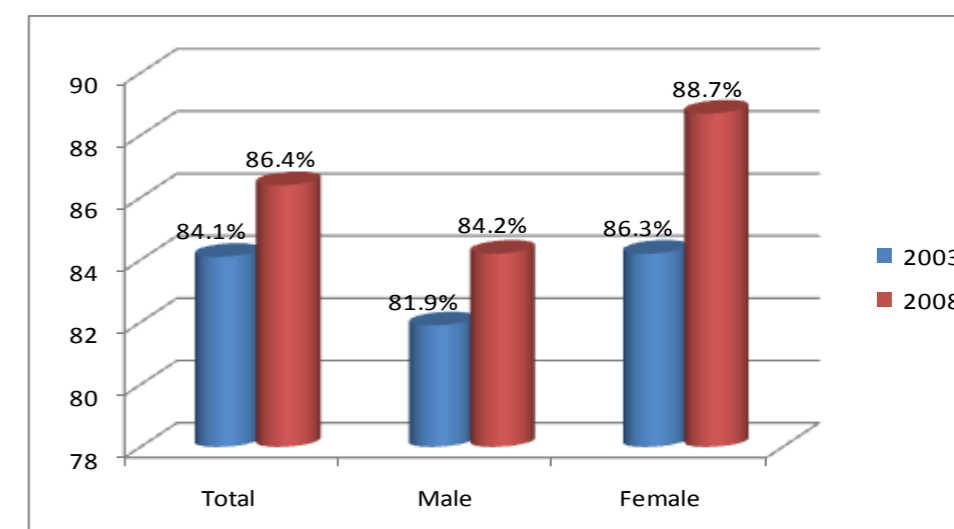
Notes: * Population age 10 to 64 years who can read and write only
 ** Population aged 10 to 64 years who can read, write and compute or have a numerical skill
 *** Population who could not be classified into any of the levels of functional literacy based on the criteria used.

Source: NSO, 2008 Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS)

Persons who can only read and write are considered basically literate (Level 1). Persons who can read, write and compute (Level 2) and persons who can read, write compute and comprehend (Level 3) are considered as functionally literate. Hence, a functionally literate person is one who can read, write and compute or one who can read, write, compute and comprehend. Persons who graduated from high school or completed a higher level of education are considered functionally literate.

Around 58 million or 86 percent of the estimated 67 million Filipinos 10 to 64 years old are functionally literate in the 2008 FLEMMS. In 2003, functional literacy rate was lower at 84.1 percent. The functional literacy rate among females is higher than among males (88.7 vs 84.2%) (Fig. 2).

Figure 2. Functional Literacy Rate of Population 10 to 64 Years Old by Sex and Year, Philippines: 2008



As expected, functional literacy rate of the population increases with an increasing level of education. Nine (9) out of 10 persons who have reached high school level but did not complete it are functionally literate. By comparison, 8 out of 10 elementary graduates are functionally literate while around 7 in 10 persons with some elementary education are functionally literate. Only around 5% among those with no formal education are functionally literate (Table 3). Among those who have most elementary education, those who are in the age group 10 to 14 are more likely to be functionally literate than those in the older group.

Table 3. Functional Literacy Rate of Population 10 to 64 Years Old by Highest Educational Attainment and Age Group, Philippines: 2008

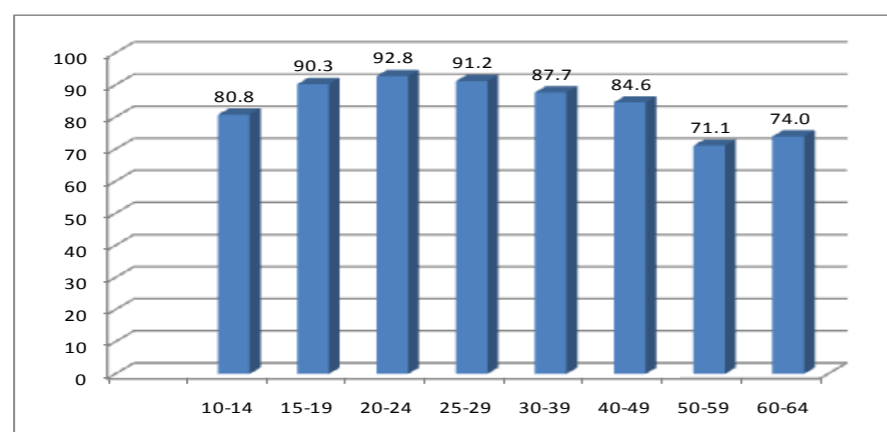
Age Group	Population 10 to 64 years old	Highest Grade Completed				
		No grade Completed	Elementary Level	Elementary Graduate	High School Level	High School Graduate or Higher*
Philippines (in '000)	67,089	1,544	13,597	9,601	12,856	29,491
Total	86.4	5.3	67.0	80.8	89.8	100.0
10-14	80.8	9.9	76.6	89.9	94.5	100.0
15-19	90.3	3.2	58.4	80.9	92.1	100.0
20-24	92.8	8.2	57.8	78.8	88.3	100.0
25-29	91.2	3.6	53.2	77.8	87.7	100.0
30-39	87.7	5.9	56.0	78.0	85.6	100.0
40-49	84.6	5.5	55.6	77.1	84.7	100.0
50-59	71.1	1.9	58.3	78.3	85.8	100.0
60-64	74.0	2.5	52.9	76.1	82.6	100.0

Note: * Persons who graduated from high school or completed higher level of education are, in this tabulation, automatically considered functionally literate.

Source: NSO, 2008 Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS)

With respect to age, the persons in the age group 20 to 24 have the highest functional literacy rate followed by those in the age groups 25 to 29 and 15 to 19. Those in the age group 60 to 64 have the lowest (Fig. 3).

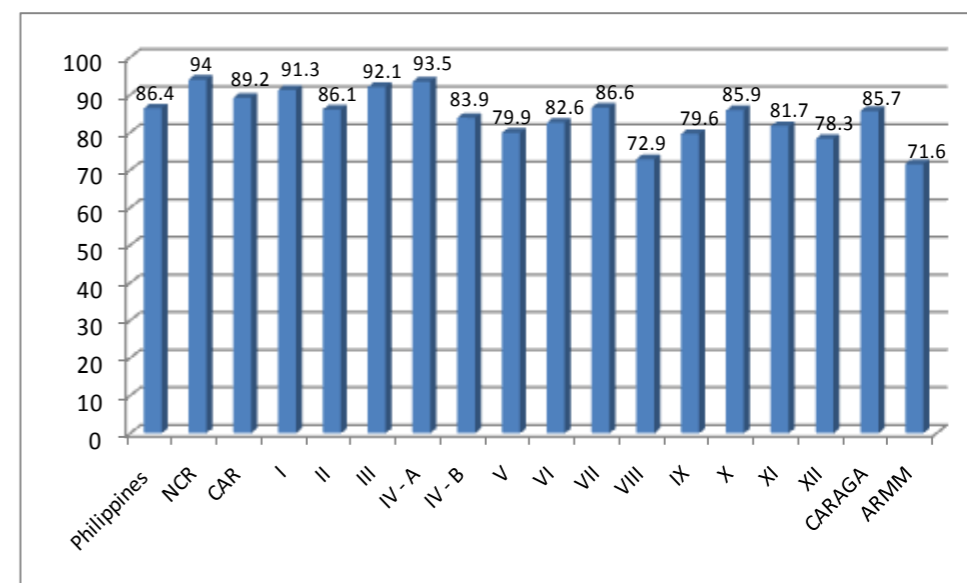
Figure 3. Functional Literacy Rate of Population 10 to 64 Years Old by Age Group, Philippines: 2008



In 2008, 61 million or 90.9 percent of Filipinos aged 10 to 64 years can read and write. Those who have a numerical skill, that is, they can read, write and compute comprise 86.4 percent of Filipinos aged 10 to 64 years, which mean that 4.5 percent lack numerical skills. (Table 2)

Among the regions, NCR ranks first in terms of functional literacy rate (94.0%), followed by CALABARZON (93.5%) and Central Luzon (92.1%). ARMM has the lowest functional literacy rate (71.6%) (Fig.4).

Figure 4. Functional Literacy Rate of Population 10 to 64 Years Old by Region, Philippines: 2008



Survey results also show that seven out of 10 persons aged 10 to 64 years who are poor are functionally literate compared to 9 out of 10 among the non-poor. In the 2008 FLEMMS, ownership of household amenities and conveniences are used as a substitute for income in order to classify the households into either poor or non-poor.

Data on functional literacy among the poor and non-poor populations in each of the regions shows that the functional literacy rate of the poor is lower compared to the non-poor. For example, in six regions, namely, CAR, MIMAROPA, Eastern Visayas, Zamboanga Peninsula, Davao, and SOCCSKSARGEN, functional literacy rates among the poor population are lower by at least 20 percentage points than those among the non-poor (Table 4).

Table 4. Functional Literacy Rate of Population 10-64 Years Old by Socio-Economic Status and Region: 2008

Region	Population 10-64 years old (in '000)	Socio-Economic Status	
		Poor (in '000)	Non-Poor (in '000)
Philippines	67,089	17,365	49,724
NCR	94.0	85.7	95.0
CAR	89.2	75.0	95.3
I	91.3	84.1	92.9
II	86.1	76.4	90.2
III	92.1	83.6	93.3
IV - A	93.5	86.1	95.2
IV - B	83.9	69.6	90.6
V	79.9	69.7	86.1
VI	82.6	69.9	88.9
VII	86.6	75.5	90.7
VIII	72.9	58.3	81.4
IX	79.6	68.0	88.0
X	85.9	73.8	92.2
XI	81.7	65.0	89.0
XII	78.3	60.0	87.6
CARAGA	85.7	73.2	90.8
ARMM	71.6	68.4	74.6

Source: NSO, 2008 Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS)