

Comprehension Concerns: Signs and Signals for Improving a School-based Reading Intervention

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Abstract This qualitative case study explores the school-based reading intervention in a public elementary school by analyzing how the reading teachers viewed the intervention's program objectives, assessed learners' reading levels, employed reading strategies, and utilized reading materials. Through the narrative analyses of interview data coupled with triangulation of observation notes and program artifacts, it was found that the teachers' reading objectives and strategies focused mainly on the development of word reading skills while providing little to no attention to the improvement of comprehension skills. Also, piloted teacher-made and adapted materials may be more beneficial if subjected to further testing and review to be grade-level appropriate and diverse learner sensitive. The reading teachers' illustrative cases, lack of literacy-relevant resources, effective strategy, and assessment in this study may inform school stakeholders, drivers, and the school intervention program for an all-out engagement towards a well-programmed road promoting literacy for all at the school level.

Keywords: *comprehension; remedial instruction; reading difficulties; school-based reading intervention program; teaching reading*

Introduction

Reading difficulties persist in almost every classroom worldwide. Schools have different approaches to addressing diverse learners' reading problems, including how various resources are used. The Philippine education system, thus, requires schools to implement school-based reading programs. The impact of these programs, however, has yet to be felt to address the dismal literacy results of national assessment as stipulated in DepEd Memorandum No. 173 Series 2019 (Department of Education [DepEd], 2019) and the more alarming international reading literacy assessments (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2019; United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund [UNICEF] & Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization [SEAMEO], 2020).

Correspondingly, the Division of Quezon disseminated the "*Bawat Bata Bumabasa*" (*Every Child is a Reader*), which required the reading teachers to conduct intensive reading instruction and interventions for frustrated and non-readers (DepEd, 2019). The reading assessment material being used is the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI), which aims to address the goal of making every Filipino child a reader as mandated in DepEd order no. 14, Series 2018. There seems to be, however, no mandated standard and sustainable reading programs. Instead, the policymakers only provided guidelines and recommendations such as a list of effective reading intervention models, reading components, expected inputs and outputs, and assessment using the Phil-IRI post test and national assessment programs for student learning (DepEd, 2018).

The school research site recorded several frustrated readers whose reading skills are outside the reading proficiency level required in their grade level. Based on the results gathered using Phil-IRI, the school initiated the ENCOURAGER (*Empowering and Nurturing Children's Opportunity to Understand, Reinforce, and Acknowledge the Genuine Enthusiasm for Reading*). This project is a school-based reading intervention program that aims to address the needs of frustrated readers. Subsequently, structuring a reading intervention program is necessary to meet the reading proficiency level expected at the end of the primary level to diminish the perceived difficulties when they transition to the secondary level (UNICEF & SEAMEO, 2020). The teachers, then, have the responsibility to craft the school-based reading intervention program based on the Phil-IRI pretest results among the frustrated readers and non-readers in Grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 in English and Filipino by following the guidelines and recommendations of the 3Bs initiatives.

The assigned reading teachers should be cautious in developing their reading intervention program because of its significant role and impact on the development of the reading proficiency level of the students. For instance, the Library Hour intervention program of Figuracion and Ormilla (2021) aimed at improving the word reading of Grade 5 students through repeated word reading activities. The aforementioned confirmed the findings of the study of Protacio and Sarroub (2013) that the reading views of the teachers were focused on oral performance with little to no attention to the development of the students' reading comprehension. Various studies and reports (Adapon & Mangila, 2020; Ditona & Rico, 2021; Echaure & Torno, 2017; Reysio-Cruz, 2020; San Juan, 2019) revealed that there were Filipino students who have difficulties in word recognition/oral reading, silent reading comprehension, and listening comprehension. Thus, teachers have a major role

in crafting intervention programs that target these reading difficulties as a whole and not on a fragmented approach that simply focuses on enhancing one skill like word reading or oral performance.

The study explored the school-based reading intervention program implementation initiated by one public elementary school through the analysis of the perspectives of the teachers in their reading program objectives as adapted from the curriculum and policies, assessment of the readability skills of the learners, employment of reading strategies, and utilization of reading materials. This study aims to contribute to the growth of literature discussing reading intervention programs (e.g., Adapon & Mangilan, 2020; Ditona & Rico, 2021; Echaure & Torno, 201; Figuracion & Ormilla, 2021; Protacio & Sarroub, 2013) and to determine whether this reading intervention program is aligned and responsive to the reading proficiency level that the learners should develop in order to meet the desired competencies of the national and international assessment standards. The importance of analyzing the perspectives of the teachers can provide insights into their goals as reading teachers. Hence, what the teachers define and implement greatly impacts the learning outcomes of their students.

Framework of the Study

This study is anchored on the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism (SI), which recognizes the “primary importance of the social meanings people attach to the world around them” (Taylor et al., 2016, p. 12). There are three premises on SI that Taylor et al. (2016) deduced. First, it is stated that people interpret things and depend on the “meanings these things have for them” (Taylor et al., 2016, p. 12). Therefore, even though the reading intervention program has its written demographics, and curriculum and policies

from the DepEd as a guide, the participating teachers in this study have their perceptions about reading that directly or indirectly affect their practices during the implementation of a particular literacy program. The next premise is that meanings are not accumulated, but a product that is extracted during an interaction. Hence, the lead researcher accumulated data through observing the actual reading intervention implementation. The teachers' perceptions during the interview and written documents are identified as the units of analysis to understand and explore the reading program. The last premise of SI is that the actors' attached meanings are based on the process of interpretation. As Taylor et al. (2016) articulated, "although people may act within the framework of an organization, it is their interpretations and definitions of the situation that determine the action..." (p. 13). Thus, the study is centered on interpreting the data from the teachers' views as corroborated by the actual observations and analyses of relevant documents.

Teaching Reading View and Models

The study framework provided the analytical lens used by the researchers in treating the data and information gathered. Whereas, this section offers the theoretical views and models in teaching of reading that commonly anchor various reading programs. Indeed, teachers are recognized as significant players in the successful implementation of a reading program because the students' progress is largely dependent on their decisions and perceptions (Cabalo & Cabalo, 2019). They are mainly the front runner in alleviating the reading difficulties of the students (Baha, 2017). Thus, this study also relied on the teachers' perspectives in investigating the reading program objectives and assessing the learner's reading level.

There are three main models of reading that this study is anchored on as discussed in *Reading Models for*

Effective Teaching of Reading (2022). First is the skill model of reading which defines reading as the student's ability to comprehend any reading material by accepting, assessing, and comprehending graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic information presented in a text. Next is the psycholinguistic model of reading which discusses that reading is a psycholinguistic guessing game where the students make predictions, utilize varied strategies to decode the written signs and symbols, and apply their background knowledge of sounds, words, grammar structures, and past strategies in reading to comprehend the text. Last is the sociocultural model of reading that assumes that the readers are inseparable from their social and cultural contexts and backgrounds which may mean that their knowledge and experiences should be embedded in their reading processes.

Notably, effective teaching of reading may require the teachers to analyze and consider various factors such as their reading objectives, the reading materials, and strategies to be used, the individual reading skills of the readers, and other sociocultural constraints. As the teachers monitor the students' progress, they may use their knowledge of the specific reading model depending on the needs of the learners. Particularly, the teachers may adhere to the skill model of reading if they want to build the students' necessary reading skills to comprehend and learn semantic, syntactic, and graphophonic information. Teachers may also utilize the psycholinguistic model which stresses the significant role of the student's cognitive skills in predicting and utilizing their background knowledge during reading. They may also consider the sociocultural model which gives importance to the role of students' social and cultural backgrounds in honing their reading skills. Thus, there may not be a "one-size fits all" reading model that embodies the reading process that the teachers employed in developing the students' reading skills. Therefore, they may incorporate varied teaching strategies

and methods anchored on various reading models depending on the diverse needs of the learners. Understanding the teachers' views and articulation of these models in the implementation of literacy programs is critical in analyzing data and discussing results.

Methodology

A qualitative case study design was utilized because the researchers obtained multiple data sources such as interviews, written documents, and direct observation (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). This qualitative case study explores the school-based reading intervention in a public elementary school setting by analyzing how the reading teachers viewed its reading program objectives, assessed learners' reading levels, employed reading strategies, and utilized reading materials by means of actual observation (with observation checklist), conducted individual and focused-group interviews, and collected program artifacts.

The data gathered were analyzed and presented in the results section through the narrative analyses of the individual and focused-group interview. Additionally, the researchers utilized observation notes and program artifacts to triangulate the data gathered from the interviews with the participants. Observation notes during the teacher's actual teaching of reading were gathered as the researchers directly observed the participants under study without interacting and interfering during the teaching of reading processes (Kawulich, 2012). The data gathered from direct observations were narratively analyzed and presented in the succeeding section.

The research site is in one of the public elementary schools in Calauag, Quezon, Philippines. In the school year 2019-2020, the school had a population of 738 pupils who were in the grade levels of Kindergarten to Grade 6. There

were 21 public elementary teachers in this school who were managed by one (1) school head. The target school and teacher-participants were purposely chosen to be part of this study since this school has a functional 2-year reading intervention program and is within close proximity to the lead researcher's location. The *ENCOURAGER* program was the initiative of the school to assist the students who scored below 14 on the Phil-IRI group screening test, a 20-item reading comprehension test for students in Grades 3 to 6 in Filipino and Grades 4 to 6 in English. It was created based on the DepEd Order No. 14, s. 2018 which emphasizes the importance of reading in the successful academic learning of students (DepEd, 2018). Additionally, to protect the participants' privacy and data confidentiality, the researchers used the grade level as an attribute rather than their actual names as explained and indicated in the accomplished agreement and consent forms. More so, the researchers strategically chose four teachers as primary data sources because of their knowledge and involvement in the program and their availability during the research. They are the teachers of Grade 3, Grade 4, Grade 5, and Grade 6 who are all directly involved in the administration of the Phil-IRI and reading intervention program in the school year 2019-2020.

The teachers' demographic profile (Table 1) includes age, sex, years in the teaching profession, teaching position/designation, and numbers of seminars/meetings attended related to the reading intervention program implementation in the school year 2019-2020.

After the teachers identified the frustrated readers in Grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 in English and Filipino, they crafted the school-based reading intervention program utilizing the guidelines and recommendations of 3Bs initiatives.

Table 1

Demographic Profile of the Participants

Participants	Age	Sex	Years in the teaching profession	Teaching position/designation	Number of seminars/meetings attended related to the reading intervention program implementation SY 2019-2020
Teacher 3	53	Female	24	Teacher III	1
Teacher 4	25	Female	2	Teacher I	1
Teacher 5	30	Female	8	Teacher I	3
Teacher 6	48	Female	23	Teacher II	1

Table 2

Number of Students in Frustration Readability Level in English and Filipino

Grade Level	Number of Students in Frustration Readability Level in Filipino	Number of Students in Frustration Readability Level in English
Grade 3	18	20
Grade 4	20	23
Grade 5	23	54
Grade 6	50	97

During the data gathering, the researchers utilized various research instruments such as consent forms, semi-structured open-ended teacher interview questionnaires, and teacher's strategy checklist form that utilized the Likert scale which were all patterned from Vogel (2013). Additionally, a cellular phone was used as a recording device. Audio outputs were transcribed and translated into

English to capture and communicate the nuisances and subtleties of the in-depth interview.

The study parameters were discussed with the participants to prepare them for the data-gathering procedures. Afterward, approaching the school reading coordinator, who happened to be a teacher-participant in this study, was done to acquire the needed written documents of the reading intervention program and the Phil-IRI results for the school year 2019-2020. Then, an in-depth interview with the teachers was arranged. The teachers were interviewed separately and as a group. After the interviews were encoded, transcripts were emailed to the teachers to verify their intended meanings and accuracy (member checking). Then, permission to directly observe (in person) the teachers during their implementation was requested and approved which corroborated the data gathered from the checklist and interviews. Five sessions per reading teacher of Grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 were directly observed. Moreover, narrative analysis was incorporated during the data analysis because it worked with the stories told in interviews (Taylor et al., 2016). Finally, the researchers administered cross-checking on the participant's statements during the interview, direct observation, and the reading program documents to test the robustness and integrity of the data gathered. Emerging in the results are four key categories that are further discussed in the following section.

Results

Reading and Program Objectives

The *ENCOURAGER* program was the initiative of the school to assist the students who scored below 14 in the Phil-IRI group screening test. It was created based on the DepEd Order No. 14, s. 2018 which emphasizes the importance

of reading in the successful academic learning of students (DepEd, 2018). Extracted from the written document of the reading intervention program, the local intervention aimed to identify the reading ability of the pupils under the frustration level, develop appropriate strategies, and provide assistance and enhancement activities to develop their reading skills. The participating teachers articulated these objectives in the in-depth interview in these manners (English translation equivalents):

...to recognize the words and to achieve the target of making the pupils a reader... to read is to pass to the next grade level... for them to be promoted to the next grade level, they should be able to read which is the requirement in Grade 3... the actual target is for the pupils to achieve reading comprehension but mostly is to read. - Grade 3 Teacher

Of course, to make them a reader, to lessen the number of frustrated readers, and not to comprehend but just to read (implying the reading and comprehension are two different things) - Grade 4 Teacher

Improve their reading levels, not necessarily to be independent but to elevate their reading levels - Grade 5 Teacher

No learners from my class will be left behind, I want them to be a reader... not focused on comprehension because that should have been developed in the lower grade levels since it is difficult to teach in Grade 6 - Grade 6 Teacher

The participating teachers emphasized their desire to develop and elevate the reading skills of these pupils who belonged to the frustration level. It is alarming to deduce

that despite the varying age, received training, and length of service, these teachers' perspectives on the reading intervention program objectives have reached a consensus—to develop simple phonological awareness, phonics, and vocabulary while giving little to no attention to the student's comprehension. Focus on basal reading skills seems to be a classic case of teachers where phonological awareness and vocabulary development are more emphasized than comprehension at the formative language development of learners.

Through observation, all teachers utilized repeated word reading using sight words, also known as the whole-word approach. This result may imply that the students memorized the words and their surface structure without understanding their deep structure. Nonetheless, Grades 5 and 6 teachers sometimes employed comprehension questions as observed during the actual reading. Thus, inquiring why there are still students in the higher-grade level who are categorized in the frustration level if they have this program, the Grade 5 teacher retorted, *"It is because we had transferee students"* from which Grades 3 and 4 teachers agreed in unison. On one hand, it appears that some of these frustrated readers were not transferees, but rather, they may have forgotten the words they memorized during the reading intervention program since they seem to be just meaningless words understood at the surface structure. This assumption was justified by the Grade 6 teacher explaining, *"When it is their vacation, or when they stopped attending the reading program, they tend to forget it"*.

Reading Difficulties

Based on teacher observations, reading difficulties are manifested by pupils who can barely recognize the alphabet and its sounds and those who can read but lack comprehension. This is strengthened by the statement of the Grade 3

Teacher, “*No letter and sound recognition... also exhibits no comprehension because there are students who can read, but if you ask questions, they just gape at you*”. Reading difficulty was further articulated by the responses of Grade 4, 5, and 6 teachers in their respective statements, “*they cannot read, can read but cannot comprehend, and cannot read or can read but has no comprehension if questions were asked*”. As observed, the students guessed the words they were reading and frequently repeated them in different pronunciations until the teacher prompted the correct pronunciation.

The reading difficulties encountered by the learners during their primary education may lead to learning difficulties which could be a reason for attrition or for them to drop out. As the Grade 6 teacher observed in one student, “*One pupil got scared in the reading activity, and he did not appear in class*”. It is suspected that this learner has a special need that is not addressed in the normal school, but maybe in special education. The lack of emphasis on the students’ reading comprehension further crippled their literacy foundations. Thus, if these teachers continue adhering to their definition of reading as mere word decoding through repeated reading aloud, their students will continue to affirm the dismal reading performance of the Philippines in national and international assessments. The misalignment of the reading definition or competency serves as a weak foundation of the teachers’ employed reading strategies and practices. Thus, turning around poor reading performance remains a great challenge at the school level.

Reading Strategies

The school created a list of strategies as stated in the ENCOURAGER reading intervention program. However, the written documents only provided the general procedures of the reading intervention program. There are no indications

of structured plan of activities and strategies to be used during the implementation. The absence of a programmed plan was confirmed during the interview since the participating teachers provided their activities and strategies. The program is implemented every 12:30 to 1:30 in the afternoon and sometimes during the last period of their class in the afternoon based on the researchers' observation. The Grade 5 teacher who is also the reading coordinator of the school expressed the reading strategies and activities that all of them employed:

The first activity is where everybody reads. Then reading by row follows and last is individual reading. Sometimes I pair them with those excellent students while I am also guiding one student to read. Then if they can read on their own I give them different stories which they exchange with each other.

Additionally, Grade 3 stated, “*individualized reading instruction is my style*” which was the same strategy as the Grade 4 teacher used. On the other hand, the Grade 6 teacher employed repeated reading aloud coupled with comprehension questions as affirmed in her statement, “*reading individually with me as model, afterward questions will be asked to them*”. These reading strategies were verified during the actual observations. Grade 3 and 4 teachers utilized the choral reading aloud and individual reading aloud guided by them or sometimes paired with the high-achieving classmates during their actual reading intervention sessions. Whereas, Grade 5 and 6 teachers focused on individual reading aloud coupled with comprehension questions afterward.

More so, teachers reported that they almost always employed *group modeling of target skills, decoding, and questioning* as their strategies based on an accomplished checklist. Other strategy indicators include a *comprehension check, activating schema, and applying metacognition*

strategies as the utilized strategies from time to time. Then, they *seldom used graphic organizers, developing speed and fluency, identifying, adapting to learning styles, utilizing differentiated learning activities, and efficient use of time and materials*. Lastly, the strategies that were not observed were *chunking, enhancing vocabulary, summarizing, providing contextual support, providing feedback, and eliciting active participation*.

The result of the observation checklists contradicts the statement of the teachers about the strategies and activities that they utilized. For instance, choral reading, individual reading, read-a-loud, repeated reading, guided reading, and peer tutoring were strategies centered on developing speed, fluency, and vocabulary. Similarly, *activating schema strategy* is *sometimes* employed, but *providing contextual support* was *never* indicated. Likewise, *using graphic organizers, efficient use of time and materials, providing feedback, and eliciting active participation* strategies were placed in the seldom and never that appears to be contradictory when these were analyzed using the teachers' statements. They mentioned that they utilized "*flashcards, printed stories, projector, television, and instructional materials during the reading intervention program*" which was contrary to the results of their observation checklists. Moreover, *adapting to the learning style and utilizing differentiated learning activities* were not used in planning but rather contingent on the provided materials by the school reading coordinator.

Readability and Resource Challenges

Another concern is the quality of the materials and resources used in the reading intervention program. Based on the written documents of the reading intervention program, their reading materials are all based on *Abakada* (alphabets), old curriculum books, and other school reading materials that were readily

available and as such, were considered as “one-size fits all” for those learners who have reading difficulties. It is important to note that these materials are provided by the teachers who are involved in the reading intervention program. The Grade 5 teacher commented, “*these reading materials are mostly from the internet...but we have selections that we, ourselves, wrote because it is mandated that we localize the reading materials.*” This statement was affirmed by Grade 3, 4, and 6 teachers, “*reading materials from the old (curriculum) books and alphabets*” ...internet sources”. On the other hand, when the researchers questioned if they have validated these reading materials, they all could not confirm. Ensuring the readability and appropriateness of the reading materials being implemented for these students is critical. It is also noticeable that teachers usually lack the training to validate and provide appropriate reading materials suited to the learning needs of the students. That is why these teachers usually adapt selections and passages from the old curriculum. To infer, the piloted teacher-made and adapted reading materials may be beneficial to the intervention program if subjected to further testing, review, and refinement to be grade-level appropriate and diverse learners sensitive.

Another issue observed is apparently due to fund constraints. There were only limited numbers of printed materials for the students to use. All of the participating teachers voiced out that it has been their practice to provide instructional materials utilizing their own resources and providing one for each of the reading materials. As the Grade 4 teacher said, “*Usually, the students just alternately read the books and the reading materials*” which in some way reflects the sentiments of all the participating teachers. This was also observed during the reading sessions where two students shared a book and visual material provided by the teacher to accommodate the reading needs of the learners.

Discussions

It can be said that teachers are the most important and most potent tools in the education system (Cabalo & Cabalo, 2019) since the student's progress is mainly dependent on their decisions, perceptions, and actions. Thus, understanding and analyzing their perspectives played a crucial role in educational success. Firstly, the deduced objectives of the teachers in this reading intervention program posed alarming implications for the development of the reading proficiency level of the learners at the primary level. It may seem that they are replicating the dismal reading proficiency level results of the primary and secondary students in the national and international assessment. Such may be the case if teachers continuously viewed teaching reading as repeated word recognition also known as the whole-word approach by targeting only phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, and fluency reading components (DepEd, 2019) while placing little to no importance to the development of the reading comprehension of the students (Figuracion & Ormilla, 2019; Protacio & Sarroub, 2013).

The study of Egloff et al. (2019) delineated two different reading skills, reading fluency which is anchored on automatic word recognition, and reading comprehension which is based on prior knowledge, metacognitive processes, and conscious engagement with the text. Reading fluency development is supported by paired reading (Egloff et al., 2019) and repeated reading (Figuracion & Ormilla, 2021) whilst reading programs that foster reading comprehension demand direct instruction where the teacher actively models and instructs the cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Additionally, Smith (2015) cited three factors to consider when implementing research-based practices: the knowledge and ability of the teacher, local goals and objectives, and the curriculum standards. Because of the expectations that

teachers should create strategies, practices, and instructional materials that are responsive to the diverse needs of the students, teachers' perspectives and practices could contribute to the understanding of whether the reading intervention program being implemented meets the instructional needs of the students and is responsive to the national and global assessment standards.

The findings further strengthened the notion that schools often lack efficiently trained teachers who are equipped with adequate teaching reading knowledge in terms of assessment methods, reading materials, and strategies that are significant to the success of a reading intervention program (Gatcho & Bautista, 2019; Smith, 2015). As observed, the deficiency of validated reading materials that the teachers can utilize in their reading programs may further cause reading problems because teachers in their pre-service preparations may have acquired a limited to scant pedagogical knowledge level (Cacho, 2014) about assessment tools to test the age and grade appropriateness of the reading materials. Relevant academic literature promotes studies on reading that utilize localized reading materials that enhance the reading comprehension skills of struggling readers (Hernando-Malipot, 2020) including an exploration of using mother tongue-based vocabulary and literacy text in enhancing reading instructions (Cacho & Cacho, 2015).

Thorough planning and structuring of the reading intervention program should be done by aligning the objectives to the curriculum. The teachers have significant responsibility in providing the best possible learning activities and validated reading materials. Furthermore, the written documents of the intervention program only provided general procedures. There appears to be no structured plan of activities and strategies to be used during the implementation. This resulted in using choral reading, individual reading,

read-a-loud, repeated reading, guided reading, and peer tutoring strategies centered on developing speed, fluency, and vocabulary. Such low-level and stake activities may have minimal effect on improving reading comprehension.

Another concern is the quality of the materials and resources used in the reading intervention program. Based on the written documents of the program, their reading materials are all based on *abakada* (alphabets), old curriculum books, and other school reading materials that were readily available. That is why these teachers usually adapt selections and passages from the old curriculum, pilot teacher-made and/or use whatever is available disregarding readability, suitability, and contextualization of reading materials for diverse students with reading problems.

Conclusion

This study explored the school-based reading intervention in a public elementary school setting by analyzing how the reading teachers view its program objectives, assessed learners' reading levels, employed reading strategies, and utilized reading materials. Key issues relevant to the reading program objectives, learners' reading difficulties, program strategies, readability and resources challenges emerge. Although the context and generalizability of the findings is limited to a single school research site, participating teachers and a particular reading intervention program, sound analyses of data and discussions of results, however, render a useful knowledge contribution to the literature and, most especially, in teaching of reading practice and program implementation.

The researchers explored how teachers' perspectives on reading are articulated in the school-based reading intervention. This study recognizes the significance of the teacher's view and actions since they are the implementers of

the program. Their influence and role as reading teachers can greatly influence its overall effectiveness. Knowing the signs (viewpoints and artifacts) and signals (behaviors, actions, indicators and resources) of an effective reading program from objectives to actionable and well-programmed strategy is pivotal to periodically improving a reading intervention program. Although the researchers analyzed limited teachers' illustrative cases and observation, perceived deficiencies or lack of literacy-relevant and appropriate resources and/or effective processes, this study may inform the school administrator, program implementers, specialists, and, more importantly, the school intervention program on how the latter can be crafted to be more aligned and responsive to the reading needs of the learners at the school level. Some useful and insightful recommendations follow in the subsequent section.

Recommendations

The study suggests that other similar studies should be explored with the inclusion of diverse students as the recipients of the program, and other stakeholders such as the school head and parents, as well as other factors to be deeply covered affecting the reading program's success (for example: time spent, reading strategies, and reading materials). This study provides additional baseline information on how a specific reading program can be contextualized to suit the implementing school's needs and environment. Also, the data were only presented in a qualitative manner using narrative analysis where the impact of the intervention program and the depth of the reading levels of the students in quantitative form remained unexplored. Thus, future related studies may utilize other research designs and data analyses.

Moreover, the research study indicates that there are various aspects of the reading intervention program that the school needs to consider before implementation. For one,

Phil-IRI is not a standardized test that has a goal of comparing the performance of the students but rather from the word description itself an ‘informal’ tool that provides data on the reading performance of the students so that the teachers can design and structure their programs appropriate to the needs of the learners. Also, even though the program is created to address the low reading proficiency level, the teachers have yet to change their teaching reading objectives and strategies with greater attention to comprehension across different subject areas and real-life literacy experiences where piloting and customizing other tried-and-tested reading programs can be an option.

The lack of the validated and well-programmed reading materials that are age and grade-level appropriate could only contribute to the pressing literacy problems. For this reason, the results of this study urge the policymakers and administrations, to revisit their policies and guidelines on reading programs and interventions where they should clearly and effectively articulate reading literacy, reading teachers’ training, and reading materials to alleviate the reading proficiency level of the students. Participating teachers in this study and their school are encouraged to align their reading program to the development of reading literacy as framed from the national and international standards and for the implementers to pursue further professional development in remedial reading and other literacy interventions. This, however, should be taken more seriously through engagement of all school stakeholders and drivers toward a well-programmed signalized path in promoting and improving literacy programs for a particular school with diverse learners.



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