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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Pedagogical Strategies and Teachers' Reading Intervention Practices in Enhancing School Reading Programs

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Abstract

This qualitative study explored pedagogical strategies and teachers' reading intervention practices in enhancing school reading programs in the Cabatuan West District, Schools Division of Isabela. The study aimed to examine the instructional approaches, literacy intervention strategies, and classroom practices utilized by teachers in supporting struggling readers and strengthening school-based reading programs. Using a descriptive qualitative research design, data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, focus group discussions, and document analysis involving reading coordinators, elementary teachers, and selected learners. Thematic analysis revealed four major themes: (1) learner-centered and differentiated reading instructional strategies, (2) collaborative literacy support and motivational intervention practices, (3) contextualized and adaptive reading program implementation, and (4) instructional and operational challenges in sustaining school reading programs. Findings showed that teachers implemented guided reading, phonics instruction, peer-assisted learning, remedial reading sessions, contextualized literacy activities, and differentiated instruction to improve learners' reading fluency, comprehension, and confidence. Learners became more engaged and motivated when literacy instruction was interactive, supportive, and aligned with their reading levels and interests. However, inadequate reading resources, limited instructional time, learner diversity, and insufficient parental support affected program implementation. The study concludes that learner-centered pedagogical strategies and adaptive reading intervention practices significantly contribute to literacy improvement and learner engagement in school reading programs. Strengthening literacy resources, teacher professional development, and community literacy partnerships is recommended to enhance reading intervention programs in public elementary schools.

Keywords: reading intervention, literacy instruction, pedagogical strategies, school reading programs, learner engagement, qualitative study, Philippines

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Introduction

Reading literacy is one of the most essential foundational skills in elementary education because it significantly influences learners' comprehension, academic achievement, communication abilities, and lifelong learning opportunities. Learners who experience reading difficulties frequently encounter challenges in classroom participation, comprehension across learning areas, and academic confidence. As a result, schools continuously implement reading intervention programs and literacy support initiatives to address learners' reading needs and strengthen literacy development.

Teachers play a significant role in enhancing school reading programs through the implementation of pedagogical strategies and literacy intervention practices that address diverse learner needs. Effective reading instruction requires learner-centered, differentiated, and contextualized teaching approaches that support struggling readers while sustaining learner engagement and motivation. Teachers frequently utilize guided reading, phonics instruction, oral reading activities, peer-assisted learning, and remedial literacy sessions to strengthen learners' reading fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension skills.

Learner engagement is particularly important in reading intervention programs because struggling readers often experience low confidence, fear of participation, and reduced motivation during literacy activities. Behavioral engagement is reflected through participation in reading tasks and literacy exercises, emotional engagement through confidence and motivation, and cognitive engagement through comprehension and active literacy involvement.

In public elementary schools, teachers implementing school reading programs frequently encounter challenges related to inadequate reading materials, learner diversity, insufficient parental support, limited instructional time, and resource limitations. Despite these educational difficulties, teachers continuously adapt instructional practices and literacy intervention strategies to sustain meaningful literacy learning experiences among learners.

Contextualized and learner-centered literacy instruction has become an important pedagogical approach in reading education because it connects literacy learning to learners' experiences, interests, and developmental levels. Teachers who implement contextualized reading strategies and adaptive literacy interventions create more meaningful and engaging reading environments for learners.

Previous studies revealed that differentiated literacy instruction and teacher support significantly improve learner engagement and reading achievement. However, limited qualitative studies have explored teachers' pedagogical practices and reading intervention experiences in enhancing school reading programs within Philippine public elementary school contexts.

This study therefore aimed to explore pedagogical strategies and teachers' reading intervention practices in enhancing school reading programs in the Cabatuan West District, Schools Division of Isabela.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What pedagogical strategies are utilized by teachers in implementing school reading programs?
2. What reading intervention practices are implemented to support struggling readers?
3. What challenges do teachers encounter in implementing school-based reading interventions?
4. What implications may be derived for improving school reading programs and literacy intervention practices?

Review of Related Literature and Studies

Pedagogical Strategies in Reading Instruction

Pedagogical strategies in reading instruction refer to instructional approaches utilized to improve learners' literacy development, comprehension, and engagement in reading activities. According to Lev Vygotsky, learners develop literacy skills more effectively when guided through scaffolded instruction and

meaningful social interaction (Vygotsky, 1978).

Research indicates that guided reading, phonics instruction, oral reading exercises, vocabulary development, and differentiated literacy instruction significantly improve learners' reading performance and comprehension (Allington, 2012). Learner-centered reading instruction enables teachers to address diverse literacy needs and comprehension levels among elementary learners.

Reading Intervention Practices

Reading intervention practices involve remediation activities and literacy support programs designed to improve learners' reading fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and confidence. Teachers implementing reading interventions frequently utilize peer-assisted learning, contextualized literacy activities, reading drills, and individualized instruction to support struggling readers.

Studies revealed that literacy intervention programs positively influence learners' reading engagement and classroom confidence when instructional activities are adaptive, interactive, and developmentally appropriate (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000).

Learner Engagement in Literacy Programs

Learner engagement refers to learners' behavioral, emotional, and cognitive involvement in literacy activities and classroom learning experiences (Fredricks et al., 2004). In reading programs, engagement becomes evident through participation in oral reading, willingness to read independently, classroom interaction, and active comprehension during literacy tasks.

Research suggests that supportive literacy environments and positive teacher-learner relationships strengthen learners' reading motivation, confidence, and classroom participation (Pianta et al., 2012).

Challenges in School Reading Programs

Public elementary schools frequently encounter challenges related to inadequate reading materials, insufficient literacy resources, learner diversity, limited parental support, and instructional workload (OECD, 2019). Teachers often modify literacy intervention practices and improvise reading materials according to available school resources and learners' reading needs.

Despite these difficulties, teachers continue to demonstrate adaptability and commitment in sustaining school reading programs and literacy recovery initiatives.

Methodology

Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive qualitative research design to explore pedagogical strategies and teachers' reading intervention practices in enhancing school reading programs. The qualitative approach enabled the researcher to examine participants' lived experiences, literacy instructional practices, and intervention realities within natural educational settings.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in selected public elementary schools in the Cabatuan West District, Schools Division of Isabela, Philippines. The schools included in the study actively implemented school reading programs and literacy intervention initiatives for struggling readers.

Participants of the Study

The participants included six reading coordinators, elementary teachers, and selected learners involved in school reading programs and literacy intervention activities. Participants were selected through purposive sampling based on their direct involvement and experiences in reading instruction and intervention

implementation.

Data Gathering Procedures

Interviews explored teachers' pedagogical practices, literacy intervention experiences, learner engagement, and implementation challenges. Classroom observations focused on teacher-learner interaction, reading participation, literacy engagement, and instructional delivery during intervention sessions.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the framework developed by Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke (2006). Coding, categorization, and theme generation were conducted systematically to identify meaningful patterns and interpretations from the collected qualitative data.

Trustworthiness of the Study

Credibility was established through triangulation, member checking, and prolonged engagement during data gathering. Dependability was ensured through audit trails and systematic documentation of research procedures. Confirmability and transferability were strengthened through detailed descriptions of the research process, literacy intervention context, and findings.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles such as informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, voluntary participation, and respect for participants were strictly observed throughout the conduct of the study. Permission from school authorities and parental consent for learner participants were secured prior to data gathering activities.

Results and Findings

Theme 1: Learner-Centered and Differentiated Reading Instructional Strategies

The findings revealed that teachers in the Cabatuan West District implemented learner-centered and differentiated instructional strategies to address the diverse reading needs of struggling learners. Teachers emphasized that effective reading instruction required flexibility, individualized guidance, and developmentally appropriate literacy activities that matched learners' reading abilities and comprehension levels.

Participants explained that learners demonstrated varying levels of reading proficiency, vocabulary knowledge, fluency, and comprehension skills. As a result, teachers frequently modified instructional approaches and literacy activities according to learners' specific needs and reading performance.

One participant shared:

"Hindi pare-pareho ang reading ability ng mga bata kaya kailangan talagang i-adjust ang strategies."

Another teacher explained:

"Kapag individualized ang instruction, mas natutulungan naming mag-improve ang struggling readers."

Teachers commonly utilized guided reading, phonics instruction, oral reading activities, vocabulary drills, picture-based reading exercises, comprehension questioning, and repetitive reading practices during literacy intervention sessions. Participants emphasized that guided reading and scaffolded literacy activities significantly helped learners improve reading confidence and participation.

One reading coordinator stated:

"Malaking tulong ang guided reading kasi natututukan talaga ang bawat learner."

Another participant noted:

"Kapag step-by-step ang activities, mas nagiging confident silang magbasa."

Classroom observations revealed that teachers provided individualized learner support during oral reading, word recognition activities, and comprehension tasks. Teachers frequently simplified reading passages, used localized examples, and integrated visual aids to facilitate comprehension among struggling

readers.

Learners also expressed positive experiences regarding differentiated literacy instruction.

One learner shared:

“Mas naiintindihan ko po kapag dahan-dahan ang pagtuturo ni teacher.”

Another learner explained:

“Mas gusto ko po kapag may pictures at simple stories.”

Teachers explained that struggling readers often experienced fear, hesitation, and low confidence during literacy activities. Participants emphasized that supportive and adaptive instructional approaches encouraged learners to participate more actively in classroom reading exercises.

One participant stated:

“Kapag hindi sila napapahiya at supportive ang environment, mas lumalakas ang loob nilang magbasa.”

Another teacher added:

“Unti-unti silang nagiging motivated kapag nararamdaman nilang kaya nilang mag-improve.”

Behavioral engagement was observed through learners’ participation in reading exercises, oral reading activities, and literacy drills. Emotional engagement emerged through learners’ confidence, motivation, and willingness to participate during reading sessions. Cognitive engagement was reflected in learners’ improved comprehension, word recognition, and literacy performance during intervention activities.

The findings suggest that learner-centered and differentiated instructional strategies significantly contribute to literacy engagement, confidence, and reading improvement among struggling readers. Adaptive literacy instruction created meaningful and supportive reading environments that strengthened learners’ participation and motivation.

These findings support the sociocultural learning theory of Lev Vygotsky, which emphasizes scaffolded instruction and guided learning interaction in literacy development (Vygotsky, 1978). Similarly, Allington (2012) emphasized that differentiated and learner-centered reading instruction significantly improves literacy achievement and engagement among struggling readers.

Theme 2: Collaborative Literacy Support and Motivational Intervention Practices

Another major finding revealed that collaborative literacy support and motivational intervention practices significantly influenced learners’ reading engagement and classroom confidence. Teachers emphasized that supportive teacher-learner relationships, peer-assisted learning, encouragement, and collaborative reading activities positively contributed to learners’ motivation and literacy participation.

One participant shared:

“Importante talaga ang encouragement para hindi mawalan ng confidence ang mga batang hiram magbasa.”

Another teacher explained:

“Kapag supportive ang teacher at classmates, mas nagiging active sila sa reading activities.”

Teachers frequently implemented peer-assisted reading, buddy reading, collaborative storytelling, group literacy activities, and positive reinforcement strategies during intervention sessions. Participants explained that collaborative literacy environments encouraged learners to become more expressive and participative during reading activities.

One reading coordinator stated:

“Kapag peer-assisted ang activities, mas nagiging comfortable silang magpractice.”

Another participant noted:

“Nagkakaroon sila ng confidence kapag may support mula sa classmates nila.”

Classroom observations showed that teachers consistently motivated learners through praise, encouragement, and constructive feedback during oral reading and literacy exercises. Learners became more engaged when teachers demonstrated patience, empathy, and positive reinforcement during intervention sessions.

Learners also expressed appreciation regarding teachers’ support and encouragement.

One learner shared:

“Hindi po kami pinapagalitan kapag nagkakamali sa pagbabasa.”

Another learner explained:

“Mas ginaganahan po akong magbasa kapag pinupuri ako ni teacher.”

Teachers emphasized that emotional support and positive classroom interaction significantly influenced learners’ willingness to participate in reading activities. Participants noted that struggling readers gradually became more confident when teachers recognized learners’ efforts and small improvements.

One participant stated:

“Kahit maliit na improvement, importante iyong ma-appreciate para mamotivate sila.”

Another teacher added:

“Kapag positive ang environment, mas nagiging engaged sila sa literacy activities.”

Behavioral engagement was observed through learners’ active participation during reading exercises and collaborative literacy tasks. Emotional engagement emerged through learners’ confidence, enjoyment, and reduced anxiety during oral reading activities. Cognitive engagement was reflected in learners’ persistence and active involvement during literacy comprehension and vocabulary activities.

The findings indicate that collaborative literacy support and motivational intervention practices significantly contribute to learners’ reading confidence, participation, and literacy engagement. Supportive classroom environments strengthened learners’ emotional and academic involvement during school reading programs.

These findings align with Pianta et al. (2012), which emphasized that supportive teacher-learner relationships positively influence learner motivation, participation, and literacy achievement. Similarly, Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) highlighted that engaging literacy environments strengthen reading motivation and learner participation.

Theme 3: Contextualized and Adaptive Reading Program Implementation

The findings further revealed that teachers implemented contextualized and adaptive literacy intervention strategies to make reading instruction more meaningful and accessible to learners. Participants emphasized that contextualized reading materials and culturally familiar literacy activities improved learners’ comprehension, participation, and classroom interaction.

One participant shared:

“Mas naiintindihan nila kapag ang stories ay related sa experiences nila.”

Another teacher explained:

“Ginagamit namin ang local examples at familiar vocabulary para mas makarelate ang learners.”

Teachers integrated localized stories, community experiences, environmental examples, culturally familiar reading passages, and contextualized literacy exercises into school reading programs. Participants explained that contextualized reading instruction enabled learners to connect literacy activities to their daily lives and familiar experiences.

Classroom observations revealed that learners demonstrated stronger participation and comprehension during literacy activities involving familiar stories and contextualized reading passages. Learners became more expressive and interactive during discussions involving local experiences and relatable literacy content.

One learner shared:

“Mas gusto ko po ang stories kapag tungkol sa totoong buhay.”

Another learner explained:

“Mas naiintindihan ko po kapag simple at familiar ang words.”

Teachers also adapted intervention activities according to learners’ literacy levels and reading progress. Participants emphasized the importance of flexibility and gradual instruction in improving learners’ literacy confidence and comprehension.

One participant stated:

“Hindi puwedeng pare-pareho ang approach kasi iba-iba ang reading needs nila.”

Another teacher added:

“Mas effective kapag gradual at step-by-step ang intervention.”

Teachers further explained that adaptive literacy practices enabled struggling readers to participate more comfortably during intervention sessions. Flexible instructional approaches reduced learners' fear and frustration during reading activities.

One participant noted:

"Kapag manageable ang activities, mas nagiging motivated silang magbasa."

The findings suggest that contextualized and adaptive literacy intervention practices significantly contribute to learner engagement, reading confidence, and comprehension improvement. Flexible and culturally meaningful literacy instruction strengthened learners' connection to reading activities and promoted meaningful literacy learning experiences.

These findings support contextualized literacy frameworks emphasizing learner-centered and culturally responsive literacy instruction. The findings likewise align with Vygotsky's sociocultural learning theory emphasizing meaningful learning through culturally familiar experiences and guided instructional interaction (Vygotsky, 1978).

Theme 4: Instructional and Operational Challenges in Sustaining School Reading Programs

Despite the positive pedagogical practices and literacy intervention strategies implemented by teachers, participants encountered several instructional and operational challenges affecting the sustainability of school reading programs in the Cabatuan West District.

One participant stated:

"Mahirap minsan kasi kulang ang reading materials at intervention resources."

Another teacher explained:

"May mga learners ding mabagal ang progress kaya kailangan ng mas mahabang intervention."

Teachers identified inadequate reading materials, limited literacy resources, insufficient instructional time, learner diversity, irregular attendance, and lack of parental support as major challenges affecting reading intervention implementation.

One participant shared:

"Kulang minsan ang oras para matutukan lahat ng struggling readers."

Another teacher noted:

"May mga batang walang reading support sa bahay kaya nahihirapan silang mag-improve."

Classroom observations revealed that teachers frequently improvised reading materials and modified intervention activities according to available resources and learners' literacy needs. Teachers exerted additional effort in preparing literacy exercises, contextualized stories, and remedial reading activities despite workload demands and limited instructional support.

Participants also highlighted operational challenges related to documentation requirements, monitoring systems, and balancing reading intervention responsibilities with regular teaching workloads.

One participant explained:

"Dagdag trabaho rin talaga ang intervention programs lalo na sa preparation at monitoring."

Another teacher stated:

"Minsan mahirap pagsabayin ang regular classes at remedial reading sessions."

Learners also recognized instructional limitations.

One learner shared:

"Mas gusto po namin kung mas marami pang reading books."

Another learner explained:

"Minsan po nahihirapan ako sa mahahabang babasahin."

Despite these challenges, teachers demonstrated resilience, adaptability, and commitment in sustaining school reading programs and literacy intervention activities. Participants emphasized that learners' gradual improvement and increased confidence motivated them to continue implementing literacy intervention practices despite operational limitations.

One participant stated:

"Kahit mahirap, tuloy pa rin ang intervention kasi nakikita naming may improvement ang learners."

Another teacher added:

“Mas fulfilling kapag nakikita naming natututo at nagiging confident silang magbasa.”

The findings indicate that while learner-centered pedagogical strategies and literacy intervention practices positively influence reading engagement and literacy development, strengthened institutional support, literacy resources, and community involvement remain essential in sustaining effective school reading programs.

These findings support OECD (2019), which emphasized that public schools frequently encounter literacy resource limitations affecting intervention effectiveness and educational support programs. Similarly, Dela Peña (2020) highlighted that teachers continuously adapt instructional practices despite classroom and resource-related challenges.

Discussion

The study revealed that learner-centered pedagogical strategies and adaptive reading intervention practices significantly contribute to literacy engagement, confidence, and reading improvement among learners participating in school reading programs in the Cabatuan West District, Schools Division of Isabela. Teachers demonstrated strong instructional commitment, flexibility, and responsiveness in addressing the diverse literacy needs of struggling readers.

Differentiated literacy instruction, guided reading, phonics activities, contextualized literacy exercises, and individualized learner support strengthened learners' behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement during reading intervention sessions. Learners became more participative, motivated, and confident when literacy activities were aligned with their reading abilities and developmental needs.

Collaborative literacy support and motivational intervention practices also contributed significantly to learners' reading confidence and classroom participation. Supportive teacher-learner relationships, peer-assisted learning, positive reinforcement, and emotionally supportive literacy environments encouraged struggling readers to become more active and confident during reading activities.

Contextualized and adaptive reading intervention strategies further strengthened learners' comprehension and engagement by connecting literacy activities to familiar experiences and culturally meaningful content. Learners demonstrated stronger participation and literacy involvement when reading materials reflected their community realities and lived experiences.

However, instructional and operational challenges related to inadequate literacy resources, limited instructional time, learner diversity, insufficient parental support, and workload demands continue to affect the sustainability of school reading programs. Despite these limitations, teachers demonstrated resilience, creativity, and commitment in sustaining meaningful literacy intervention practices.

The findings emphasize the importance of strengthening literacy intervention programs, contextualized reading instruction, teacher professional development, and community literacy partnerships to improve learner engagement and literacy development in public elementary schools.

Conclusions

The study concludes that learner-centered pedagogical strategies and adaptive reading intervention practices significantly strengthen learner engagement, literacy confidence, and reading development among struggling readers in school reading programs in the Cabatuan West District, Schools Division of Isabela.

Teachers implemented differentiated literacy instruction, guided reading, contextualized literacy activities, phonics instruction, and collaborative literacy practices that promoted meaningful reading experiences and strengthened learners' participation during intervention sessions.

Supportive teacher-learner relationships, peer-assisted learning, and motivational intervention practices positively influenced learners' confidence, emotional engagement, and willingness to participate in reading activities. Contextualized and adaptive literacy instruction further enhanced learners' comprehension and classroom interaction by connecting reading activities to familiar experiences and culturally meaningful content.

However, challenges related to limited reading resources, insufficient instructional time, learner diversity,

workload demands, and inadequate parental support continue to affect the implementation and sustainability of school reading programs.

Despite these instructional and operational difficulties, teachers demonstrated resilience, flexibility, and dedication in sustaining literacy intervention initiatives and supporting struggling readers. The study emphasizes the importance of learner-centered, contextualized, and collaborative literacy practices in improving reading engagement and literacy recovery among elementary learners.

Implications of the Study

The findings imply that school reading programs should continuously emphasize learner-centered, differentiated, and contextualized literacy instructional approaches to strengthen reading engagement and literacy development among struggling readers.

Educational leaders and policymakers may strengthen literacy intervention programs by providing adequate reading materials, literacy resources, intervention tools, and instructional support necessary for effective school reading program implementation.

Professional development programs focusing on differentiated reading instruction, literacy intervention strategies, contextualized literacy teaching, and learner engagement techniques may further enhance teachers' competencies in supporting struggling readers.

Schools may also strengthen parental involvement and community literacy partnership programs to reinforce learners' reading development outside classroom intervention sessions.

Future researchers may conduct similar qualitative or mixed-methods studies exploring literacy intervention effectiveness, contextualized reading innovations, and learner engagement across diverse educational contexts.

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