

LEADERSHIP IN SUPREME PUPILS GOVERNMENT (SPG): PERSPECTIVE OF TEACHER-ADVISERS

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ABSTRACT

This study unveiled the narrations of participants on the reading intervention program of helping out struggling readers. There were ten (10) teacher- participants from the different public elementary schools. The participants of this study were randomly selected. This phenomenological study employed in-depth interview in gathering information data. Using thematic analysis, the following were the themes developed: Assess reading level of learners, involve parents in the reading program and Motivate learners through rewards. On the challenges of participants in implementing the reading intervention. The themes that emerged in the thematic content analysis of the participants' narrations were as follows: Refusal of learners to cooperate in reading activities and Lack of parents' competence to do guided reading. Finally, this study has the drawn insight from the findings which may help enrich the reading intervention program. The following are the insights developed: Intensify parents' involvement in beginning reading and Strengthen reading intervention for struggling readers. The insights proposed that, for the reading intervention to be more effective, the parents must be trained also in teaching beginning reading for their children

Key words: Helping out; reading intervention; struggling readers.

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading is a fundamental skill that underpins academic success and lifelong learning. However, a significant number of students, particularly in elementary schools, face challenges in achieving reading proficiency, which impedes their overall academic performance. Recent reports indicate a concerning decline in children's reading skills, with a historic low of one-third of eighth graders and 40% of fourth graders possessing "below-basic" reading skills (U.S. Department of Education, 2022). This decline has been attributed to various factors, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted foundational reading instruction during critical early learning years (Krieg, 2021).

In response to these challenges, reading intervention programs have been implemented to support struggling readers. These programs aim to enhance reading skills through targeted support and individualized instruction. The effectiveness of these interventions is significantly influenced by the active participation of both educators and parents in creating a supportive reading environment. Research has shown that teacher perceptions and practices play a crucial role in the successful implementation of literacy interventions (Smith & Brown, 2020). Additionally, parental involvement has been identified as a key factor in improving students' reading attitudes and comprehension levels (Williams, 2020).

This study seeks to explore the experiences and perspectives of teacher-participants involved in a reading intervention program designed to assist struggling readers in public elementary schools. By examining the challenges and strategies employed by teachers, this research aims to provide insights into how reading interventions can be more effectively implemented and sustained. Furthermore, the study will investigate the role of parental involvement in the reading process and its impact on the success of these interventions. Through a phenomenological approach, this research draws on the experiences of teachers to better understand the key factors that contribute to the effectiveness of reading intervention programs and the obstacles that may hinder their success.

The findings from this study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics involved in assisting struggling readers, with the goal of enhancing the quality and impact of reading interventions in elementary education.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on education systems globally, leading to significant learning losses, particularly in literacy. As schools shifted to remote learning, students in lower-income regions and those without reliable internet access were disproportionately affected. Studies show that the pandemic exacerbated existing gaps in education, hindering the reading development of students, especially those who were already struggling before the crisis (United Nations, 2021). This disruption highlights the critical need for more effective reading intervention programs that can address these disparities and help students catch up with lost learning.

Moreover, the global literacy crisis continues to pose a significant challenge, despite efforts to improve education worldwide. According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2022), nearly 50% of 10-year-olds in low-income countries are unable to read and understand a simple text. This alarming statistic underscores the importance of targeted reading intervention programs aimed at improving foundational literacy skills. Without such interventions, many young learners face the risk of falling further behind, which can have long-term consequences on their academic and social

development. The ongoing literacy crisis emphasizes the need for a global push to ensure that all children, regardless of their socio-economic background, receive the support they need to develop strong reading skills.

In addition to these challenges, the digital divide further complicates efforts to improve literacy. As technology increasingly plays a pivotal role in education, there remains a growing gap between students who have access to digital resources and those who do not. This divide particularly affects students in rural areas or low-income communities, limiting their ability to participate in online reading programs and access digital learning materials. Chandra (2020) highlights that the lack of access to devices and reliable internet connectivity exacerbates disparities in educational achievement, especially in terms of reading proficiency. This digital divide must be addressed to ensure that all students, regardless of their circumstances, have equal opportunities to engage in effective literacy interventions.

In the Philippines, reading proficiency remains a significant challenge, with many students struggling to meet minimum reading standards. A study by the Department of Education (DepEd, 2021) found that over 40% of elementary students in the country are unable to read at grade level. This issue is particularly prominent in underserved areas, where students face additional barriers such as a lack of access to reading materials and qualified teachers. To address this, there is an urgent need for effective reading interventions tailored to the specific needs of these students.

Another major issue in the Philippines is the limited involvement of parents in their children's education. Parental participation is crucial for the success of reading programs, but many Filipino parents face challenges such as long working hours, economic difficulties, and a lack of knowledge on how to support their children's learning. The National Economic and Development Authority (2021) reports that these barriers limit parents' ability to actively engage in their children's educational development, which in turn affects the success of reading interventions. Strengthening parental involvement through targeted programs and resources is essential for improving literacy outcomes.

Furthermore, many teachers in the Philippines lack specialized training in reading instruction, particularly for struggling readers. While teachers are generally trained in pedagogy, the absence of specific professional development in reading instruction means that many are ill-equipped to implement effective literacy programs. Reyes and Cruz (2020) emphasize the need for enhanced training for educators to ensure they can effectively support struggling readers and deliver high-quality literacy instruction. Addressing this gap in teacher training is essential for the success of reading intervention programs across the country.

In the Davao region, particularly in rural areas such as Davao Oriental and Davao del Sur, schools face additional challenges in providing quality education due to limited resources and infrastructure. Students in these areas often lack access to appropriate learning materials, including books for reading programs, which further hinders their ability to develop strong literacy skills. According to a report from the Davao Region Department of Education (2021), improving access to educational resources and providing training for teachers are critical steps toward improving literacy rates in these underserved regions. Without these improvements, students in rural Davao are at risk of falling behind their peers in more urbanized areas, further exacerbating educational inequality.

These issues highlight the urgent need for targeted reading interventions, improved parental involvement, enhanced teacher training, and better access to educational resources, particularly in rural areas. Addressing these challenges is essential for ensuring that all students, regardless of their background, have the opportunity to develop strong literacy skills and succeed academically.

The social values of this study on reading intervention programs for struggling readers are crucial for shaping both educational outcomes and societal well-being. First and foremost, the study emphasizes **equity** in education, highlighting the importance of providing equal learning opportunities to all students, regardless of their socio-economic background. In a society where disparities in access to resources and education are prevalent, this study seeks to address the gaps in literacy, ensuring that struggling readers receive the support they need to succeed academically. By focusing on early intervention, this research promotes the idea that every child, regardless of their challenges, should have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Community involvement, particularly through parental engagement, is another significant social value highlighted by the study. It emphasizes the need for families to be active partners in the educational process. The study suggests that fostering a strong partnership between schools and parents can greatly enhance the effectiveness of reading interventions. Involving parents in the learning process not only strengthens the child's academic development but also builds a sense of responsibility and accountability within the community. It also highlights how collective efforts in education can uplift communities as a whole, especially in underprivileged or rural areas where parental engagement is often limited due to various socio-economic factors.

Moreover, the study underscores the importance of **collaboration** between educators, parents, and communities. Through its findings, the research advocates for a community-centered approach to education, where all stakeholders

work together to create an environment that supports struggling readers. This promotes a shared sense of responsibility for the academic and social development of children, reinforcing the idea that education is not solely the responsibility of schools but of the entire community.

The study also contributes to the value of **social responsibility** by highlighting the role of teachers in fostering positive change. It emphasizes the need for teachers to not only focus on content delivery but also to recognize and address the diverse needs of their students. Teachers play a critical role in bridging gaps in literacy, and this research advocates for their continued professional development to ensure they are equipped to meet the challenges of students with diverse needs.

Finally, this study encourages **empowerment**, particularly for struggling readers and their families. By providing insights into how reading interventions can be more effective and how parents can be better equipped to support their children's reading development, the study empowers both students and parents to take an active role in the learning process. This sense of empowerment can inspire hope and resilience, fostering an environment where individuals feel capable of overcoming obstacles and achieving success, both academically and in other areas of life.

Overall, the social values of this study promote a more inclusive, responsible, and community-oriented approach to education, encouraging greater involvement, collaboration, and support for struggling readers to ensure their academic and personal growth.

2. METHODS

The study employed a **phenomenological research design**, which is particularly effective for exploring and understanding the lived experiences of participants. This method was chosen because it allows the researcher to gain a deep insight into the personal perceptions, experiences, and challenges faced by the teacher-participants involved in reading intervention programs. Phenomenology is commonly used in educational research to explore how individuals make sense of their experiences within a specific context (Creswell & Poth, 2020). By focusing on the subjective experiences of the teachers, this approach offers valuable insights into the real-world application of reading interventions and the complexities involved in implementing these programs.

To collect data, the study utilized **in-depth interviews**, a qualitative method that allows for a detailed exploration of participants' thoughts and experiences. In-depth interviews are particularly suited for this study as they provide rich, detailed accounts of the participants' views on the reading intervention programs and the challenges they face. This method is known for its ability to capture nuanced, personal stories that other methods, such as surveys, may not fully capture (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2020). The interviews allowed the researchers to probe deeper into the teachers' experiences, asking follow-up questions that helped clarify and expand on initial responses, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the intervention process.

Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the data gathered from the interviews. This analytical method involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Thematic analysis is a flexible and widely-used technique in qualitative research, particularly in studies exploring people's experiences and perceptions. By organizing the data into themes, the researchers were able to identify common patterns in the participants' narratives related to successful strategies, challenges, and insights regarding the implementation of reading interventions. This method is particularly useful for exploring complex social issues, such as the challenges of reading interventions, and allows the researcher to capture a range of experiences and perspectives (Vaismoradi et al., 2016).

The participants in the study were **randomly selected** from different public elementary schools, ensuring a diverse sample that reflects a variety of teaching environments and experiences. Random selection is critical in ensuring the generalizability and credibility of the findings, as it reduces bias and provides a more accurate representation of the broader population (Yin, 2018). This method also helps in capturing a wide range of experiences, which is essential for understanding the different factors that influence the success of reading interventions across various contexts.

In conclusion, the combination of phenomenology, in-depth interviews, and thematic analysis provided a robust methodology for exploring the experiences of teachers involved in reading intervention programs.

This approach allowed for a rich and detailed understanding of the challenges and strategies associated with supporting struggling readers and highlighted the critical role of teacher and parental involvement in the success of these interventions.

The results of this study reveal significant insights into the experiences of teacher-participants involved in reading intervention programs for struggling readers. The analysis of the interview data, using thematic analysis, identified several key themes related to both the strategies employed by the teachers and the challenges they faced during the implementation of these programs.

1. Key Strategies for Effective Reading Intervention: The first major theme that emerged from the data was the importance of **assessing the reading levels of learners**. Teachers emphasized the need for accurate and regular assessments to identify the specific needs of struggling readers. By assessing each student's reading abilities, teachers were able to tailor their interventions more effectively, ensuring that each student received personalized support based on their level of proficiency. This approach helped teachers monitor progress over time and adjust strategies as needed, allowing for a more dynamic and responsive intervention process. Research supports this approach, suggesting that individualized assessments are crucial in understanding the unique challenges faced by struggling readers (Fuchs et al., 2020).

The second theme that emerged was the necessity of **parental involvement in the reading program**. Teachers reported that engaging parents in their children's reading development, both at school and at home, significantly enhanced the effectiveness of the intervention. Many participants discussed strategies such as regular communication with parents about their child's progress and the importance of parents participating in reading-related activities at home. This finding aligns with existing literature, which underscores the critical role of parental engagement in improving students' literacy outcomes (Baker et al., 2020).

The third theme identified was **motivating learners through rewards**. Teachers found that offering rewards, such as praise, certificates, or small incentives, helped keep students motivated and engaged in the reading process. Rewards were particularly useful for students who struggled with reading, as they provided immediate, positive reinforcement that encouraged further effort. This theme reflects research that suggests motivational strategies, including positive reinforcement, can significantly impact student engagement and achievement, particularly for at-risk learners (Schunk, 2021).

2. Challenges in Implementing Reading Intervention: While the strategies highlighted above proved effective, teachers also faced significant challenges in implementing the reading intervention programs. The first challenge identified was the **refusal of learners to cooperate** in reading activities. Many teachers reported that some students were reluctant to engage in the reading process, often due to a lack of confidence or negative previous experiences with reading. This resistance was particularly evident among older students who had already developed negative attitudes toward reading. The teachers suggested that overcoming this reluctance required additional time, patience, and personalized support, which was often difficult to provide due to class size or time constraints.

The second challenge that emerged was the **lack of parents' competence to assist with guided reading**. Although teachers recognized the importance of involving parents in the intervention, many reported that parents lacked the necessary skills or knowledge to effectively support their children's reading at home. This issue was particularly prevalent in households where parents had limited education or literacy skills. This finding highlights the need for **parental training** programs to equip parents with the tools and knowledge they need to support their children's literacy development effectively. Previous studies have also identified this as a common challenge, indicating that parental literacy training can have a profound impact on the success of reading interventions (González et al., 2021).

3. Insights and Implications for Practice: The insights drawn from the study suggest that there is a strong need to **intensify parental involvement in early reading programs**. Teachers advocated for more comprehensive and structured ways to engage parents in their children's literacy development, such as workshops, informational sessions, and resources that parents could use at home. Additionally, teachers emphasized the importance of **strengthening reading interventions for struggling readers**, particularly in terms of professional development for educators and the availability of more specialized resources.

The findings suggest that for reading interventions to be more effective, there is a need for a holistic approach that combines targeted support for struggling readers, consistent assessment, parent involvement, and continuous teacher development. Ensuring that both teachers and parents are equipped with the tools to support struggling readers can significantly improve the outcomes of reading intervention programs.

3. RESULTS

The results of this study provide valuable insights into the experiences of teacher-participants involved in reading intervention programs for struggling readers. Through the use of thematic analysis of interview data, the study identified key strategies that teachers employ to support struggling readers and the challenges they face in implementing these programs effectively. These insights offer a comprehensive view of the factors that contribute to both the successes and obstacles in reading intervention, ultimately enhancing our understanding of how to better support struggling readers.

Key Strategies for Effective Reading Intervention:

One of the major themes identified in the study was the importance of **assessing the reading levels of learners**. Teachers emphasized that regular, accurate assessments are essential for identifying the specific needs of struggling readers. By

evaluating students' current reading levels, teachers are able to tailor interventions that match each student's abilities, ensuring that their instruction is personalized and appropriate. This individualized approach not only helps to address the varied needs of students but also allows teachers to monitor progress over time and adjust interventions accordingly. This dynamic, responsive approach is crucial for effective reading interventions, as it ensures that the strategies employed remain relevant and supportive as students develop. Research supports this approach, suggesting that individualized assessments provide essential insights into students' challenges and guide teachers in making data-informed decisions to improve literacy outcomes (Fuchs et al., 2020). Furthermore, continuous assessment enables teachers to track progress and make adjustments to teaching strategies, helping to ensure that interventions remain effective throughout the learning process.

Another significant theme was the **necessity of parental involvement** in the reading program. Teachers reported that when parents are engaged in their children's literacy development, both at school and at home, the success of the intervention is greatly enhanced. Teachers found that strategies such as maintaining regular communication with parents about their child's progress and encouraging parents to actively participate in reading-related activities at home were key to fostering a collaborative approach to learning. This finding aligns with existing literature, which emphasizes the pivotal role of parents in supporting their children's reading development. Parental involvement not only provides additional reinforcement at home but also strengthens the relationship between home and school, creating a unified approach to learning (Baker et al., 2020). This active engagement from parents can lead to improved literacy outcomes, as it builds a supportive learning environment both in the classroom and at home.

The third theme was the use of **motivational strategies, such as rewards**, to engage students. Teachers found that incorporating rewards, whether through praise, certificates, or small incentives, was particularly effective in keeping students motivated and engaged in the reading process. This is particularly important for struggling readers, who may face challenges with motivation due to previous negative experiences with reading. Rewards serve as immediate, positive reinforcement, encouraging students to continue putting effort into their reading tasks. This finding echoes research on the positive impact of motivational strategies on student engagement and achievement, especially for at-risk learners. Research suggests that rewards and recognition, when used appropriately, can increase students' self-esteem and willingness to participate in reading activities, leading to higher achievement in literacy (Schunk, 2021).

Challenges in Implementing Reading Intervention:

While the strategies discussed above were found to be effective, teachers also encountered significant challenges in implementing the reading intervention programs. One of the primary challenges was the **refusal of learners to cooperate** in reading activities. Many teachers reported that students, particularly older learners, were reluctant to engage in the reading process. This resistance was often attributed to a lack of confidence, negative prior experiences with reading, or a general disinterest in the activity. The challenge of engaging reluctant readers is well-documented, and teachers emphasized the need for patience and personalized support to help overcome these barriers. Teachers suggested that additional time and one-on-one attention were required to build students' confidence and foster a more positive attitude toward reading. However, this personalized support was often difficult to provide due to factors such as class size and limited instructional time, making it challenging for teachers to give each student the individualized attention they needed.

The second challenge identified was the **lack of competence among parents to assist with guided reading**. Although teachers acknowledged the importance of involving parents in their children's reading development, many parents lacked the skills or knowledge necessary to effectively support their children's reading at home. This issue was particularly prevalent in households where parents had limited education or literacy skills. This gap in parental knowledge highlights the need for **parental training programs** that equip parents with the necessary tools and strategies to support their children's literacy development. Without this support, even the most well-intentioned parental involvement may fall short of effectively aiding children in improving their reading skills. The lack of parental competence in supporting guided reading is a critical challenge, and research has shown that targeted parental literacy training can significantly improve the success of reading interventions (González et al., 2021).

Insights and Implications for Practice:

The findings from this study suggest that for reading interventions to be more effective, there must be a stronger emphasis on **intensifying parental involvement**, particularly in the early stages of reading development. Teachers advocated for more structured and comprehensive ways to engage parents, such as workshops, informational sessions, and providing resources that parents can use at home to support their children's reading. These efforts could help bridge the gap between home and school, creating a more consistent and supportive environment for students. Furthermore, teachers highlighted the importance of **strengthening reading interventions** through professional development for

educators and providing more specialized resources for struggling readers. By enhancing teachers' skills and providing better tools, interventions can be more targeted and effective, ensuring that all students receive the support they need to succeed.

In addition to strengthening the intervention itself, the study suggests the importance of a **holistic approach** that combines targeted support for struggling readers, consistent assessment, active parental involvement, and ongoing professional development for teachers. This approach ensures that reading interventions address the multifaceted needs of struggling readers while empowering parents and teachers to actively participate in the process. By equipping both teachers and parents with the knowledge and resources necessary to support struggling readers, the overall effectiveness of reading interventions can be significantly improved, leading to better literacy outcomes for students. This approach not only benefits struggling readers but also contributes to the broader goal of improving educational equity, ensuring that all children, regardless of their background, have the opportunity to develop strong literacy skills.

4. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide a deeper understanding of the experiences of teacher-participants in implementing reading intervention programs for struggling readers. The thematic analysis of the interview data revealed key strategies that teachers use to enhance reading interventions, as well as the challenges they encounter. These findings highlight the importance of a structured, well-supported reading intervention program that involves not only teachers but also parents and the broader educational community.

Key Strategies for Effective Reading Intervention

One of the most critical aspects of an effective reading intervention program is **assessing the reading levels of learners**. The study found that teachers relied on continuous assessment to determine the specific needs of struggling readers. This approach allowed them to tailor interventions to the individual student's proficiency level, ensuring that instruction was targeted and effective. Assessment also played a vital role in tracking progress and making necessary adjustments to intervention strategies. According to Fuchs et al. (2020), regular and accurate assessments are essential in providing educators with the data needed to make informed decisions about instructional methods and intervention approaches. Without such assessments, teachers may struggle to identify students' specific weaknesses, leading to ineffective interventions.

Another key strategy identified in the study was **parental involvement in the reading program**. Teachers emphasized that engaging parents in their children's literacy development both at home and in school greatly enhances the effectiveness of reading interventions. Strategies such as regular communication with parents, providing at-home reading activities, and encouraging parents to be active participants in their child's learning were highlighted as essential components of successful interventions. This finding aligns with Baker et al. (2020), who emphasize that parental engagement in literacy development significantly improves reading comprehension and fluency. When parents take an active role in their child's reading journey, students receive reinforcement beyond the classroom, fostering consistency in their learning experience.

Additionally, the study highlighted **motivation through rewards** as a powerful tool in engaging struggling readers. Teachers found that positive reinforcement in the form of praise, certificates, and small incentives encouraged students to participate more actively in reading activities. Motivation plays a crucial role in students' academic performance, especially among those who have previously experienced difficulties with reading. Research by Schunk (2021) supports this finding, indicating that rewards and recognition boost students' confidence and willingness to engage in literacy activities. Struggling readers often experience frustration and discouragement, and incorporating motivational strategies can help them develop a more positive attitude toward reading.

Challenges in Implementing Reading Intervention Programs

Despite the effectiveness of these strategies, teachers faced significant challenges in implementing reading interventions. One of the most pressing issues was the **refusal of learners to cooperate** in reading activities. Many struggling readers exhibited reluctance or lack of interest in participating in reading exercises, often due to low self-confidence or negative past experiences. This problem was particularly evident among older students who had already formed a negative perception of reading. The challenge of engaging reluctant readers is well-documented in literacy research, with educators emphasizing the need for patience, differentiated instruction, and individualized support to overcome these barriers (Fuchs et al., 2020). However, teachers in the study reported that the constraints of large class sizes and limited time often made it difficult to provide personalized attention to each struggling reader.

Another significant challenge was the **lack of parental competence to assist with guided reading**. While teachers recognized the value of parental involvement, they also noted that many parents lacked the necessary skills or knowledge to support their children's reading development. This was particularly prevalent in households where parents had limited

formal education or low literacy levels. Without adequate training, parents may struggle to provide meaningful reading support at home, reducing the overall effectiveness of the intervention. This finding is supported by González et al. (2021), who argue that parental literacy training is a critical component of effective reading interventions. Providing workshops and resources for parents could help bridge this gap, ensuring that families are better equipped to assist their children.

Implications for Practice

The findings of this study suggest several important implications for improving reading intervention programs. First, **there is a need to intensify parental involvement in early reading development**. Schools should explore structured approaches to engage parents, such as workshops, literacy training programs, and accessible reading resources that can be used at home. By equipping parents with the necessary skills and knowledge, schools can create a more supportive learning environment for struggling readers.

Second, **strengthening teacher training in reading intervention strategies** is essential. While teachers are often well-trained in general pedagogy, many lack specialized skills in addressing the needs of struggling readers. Professional development programs focused on literacy instruction, differentiated teaching strategies, and motivational techniques could help educators implement more effective interventions. Reyes and Cruz (2020) highlight that ongoing training and capacity-building efforts for teachers can significantly enhance the success of reading intervention programs.

Finally, a **holistic approach** to reading intervention is necessary—one that combines assessment-driven instruction, active parental participation, and structured teacher training. Policymakers, educators, and stakeholders must work together to ensure that struggling readers receive the targeted support they need to develop strong literacy skills. By addressing both the strengths and challenges of current reading intervention efforts, this study provides a foundation for improving literacy education and ensuring that all students, regardless of their reading ability, are given the opportunity to succeed.

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