IJGGSD
International Journal of Global Goals and Sustainable Development
RESEARCH | INNOVATION | INCLUSION | SUSTAINABLE FUTURES
ISSN: 3155-7716
DOI: https://doi.org/10.65339/ijggsd.V1.I1.71

The Effectiveness of the Activities in Enhancing the Reading Skills of the Grade 1 Learners in Jovellar District, Division of Albay

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the utilization and perceived effectiveness of literacy activities in enhancing the reading skills of Grade 1 learners in Jovellar District, Division of Albay, during School Year 2025–2026, and developed evidence-based policy recommendations. A descriptive-evaluative-correlational research design was employed, involving 30 Grade 1 teachers from 20 public elementary schools selected through total enumeration. Data were gathered using a validated, researcher-made five-point Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using weighted mean, rank order, Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance, and chi-square tests. Findings revealed that assessment and monitoring received the highest utilization rating (4.52), while teacher training and professional development ranked lowest (4.25). All seven reading competencies were rated Much Effective, with letter-sound recognition obtaining the highest weighted mean (4.16) and reading comprehension the lowest (3.74). Statistically significant agreement was established among respondent groups across all utilization dimensions and reading competencies ($p<0.05$). The findings indicate favorable and consistent teacher assessments of literacy activities, particularly in foundational reading competencies, while highlighting areas requiring instructional improvement. Strengthening teacher professional development, differentiated reading instruction, comprehension activities, and access to appropriate instructional resources is recommended. The study was limited to teacher-reported assessments within one district, without direct measurement of learners' reading improvement. The findings provide localized evidence for improving literacy instruction, guiding resource allocation, and developing educational policies that support foundational reading development in public elementary schools.

Keywords: *Early Literacy, Grade 1 Learners, Jovellar District, Literacy Activities, Reading Comprehension, Reading Skills, Teacher Assessments*

1. INTRODUCTION

Early literacy development is fundamental to academic achievement, lifelong learning, and educational equity. During Grade 1, learners acquire essential reading competencies, including letter-sound recognition, phonemic awareness, decoding, word recognition, vocabulary development, reading fluency, and reading comprehension. However, many Filipino learners, particularly those in rural and underserved communities, experience difficulties developing these foundational skills. These challenges emphasize the need for appropriate, accessible, and effective literacy activities that address individual learning needs. In the Philippines, early literacy development is supported by Article XIV, Section 1 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, which guarantees the right to accessible and quality education (The Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, 1987, art. XIV, § 1). Republic Act No. 9155, or the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, establishes the framework for educational governance and accountability (Republic Act No. 9155, 2001). Republic Act No. 10533, or the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, strengthens the basic education curriculum and promotes learner-centered, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate instruction (Republic Act No. 10533, 2013). Furthermore, the Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda (BESRA) emphasizes systematic improvements in educational quality, institutional effectiveness, and the implementation of basic education reforms (Department of Education, 2007). These policies support inclusive and equitable basic education through curriculum improvement, teacher development, resource provision, and school-based interventions. The MATATAG curriculum and Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) program further reinforce the importance of strengthening foundational reading competencies and addressing learning gaps. Existing research demonstrates the importance of structured, evidence-based literacy interventions. Hacutina (2025) emphasized individualized instruction, teacher commitment, and continuous monitoring, while Dahl-Leonard et al. (2025) highlighted the positive contribution of family-supported literacy activities. Similarly, William et al. (2025) and Tortola (2024) emphasized structured reading programs, contextual relevance, parental involvement, and differentiated support. Whittingham (2024) advocated evidence-based intervention selection, whereas Santillan (2023) emphasized community participation in addressing literacy challenges. Studies on reading development further establish the importance of early intervention. Jago (2025) identified vocabulary and grammar as important predictors of reading outcomes, while Bandala (2024) highlighted the contributions of phonics instruction to early literacy development. Bautista et al. (2024) explored educational technology in literacy development, whereas Park et al. (2023) emphasized early reading growth and its importance for subsequent reading development. Despite these findings, limited localized evidence addresses the utilization and effectiveness of literacy activities among Grade 1 learners in Jovellar District, Division of Albay. Thus, this study evaluates literacy activities during School Year 2025–2026, focusing on their implementation, perceived effectiveness in developing early reading competencies, and implications for evidence-based policy recommendations. (Aguirre et al., 2024; Alejandro et al., 2025; Department of Education, 2023; Mullis et al., 2023; Republic Act No. 12028, 2024)

Research Problem

Reading difficulties among Grade 1 learners remain a significant educational concern because inadequate foundational literacy skills may affect subsequent academic performance. Although schools implement reading activities, their effectiveness depends on curriculum alignment, teacher preparation, instructional resources, learner participation, and assessment practices. Previous studies identified factors influencing literacy intervention outcomes. Hacutina (2025)

reported that resource limitations, scheduling constraints, and inconsistent parental involvement may hinder reading programs. Dahl-Leonard et al. (2025) established the value of family-supported literacy activities, while William et al. (2025) associated successful reading interventions with teacher training, resource availability, and contextual relevance. Tortola (2024) further highlighted the influence of learner backgrounds, school environments, attendance, and parental engagement. Research on foundational reading competencies also supports targeted interventions. Jago (2025) emphasized the relationship between oral language development and reading outcomes, while Bandala (2024) examined phonics instruction. Park et al. (2023) highlighted the relationship between early reading development and later reading performance, reinforcing the importance of timely instructional support. Educational policy studies likewise identified challenges in translating reforms into effective classroom practices. Brooks and Sinclair (2024) emphasized equity and contextual considerations in educational policymaking, while Ignacio et al. (2022) examined gaps in Philippine educational policy implementation. Magallanes et al. (2021) and Viennet and Pont (2017) further emphasized the relationship between policy implementation, educational access, stakeholder participation, and institutional effectiveness. Although these studies provide substantial evidence regarding literacy interventions and educational improvement, none specifically evaluates the utilization and effectiveness of reading activities among Grade 1 learners in Jovellar District, Division of Albay. Accordingly, the central research problem concerns the extent to which literacy activities are utilized and considered effective in enhancing early reading skills, the degree of agreement among respondent groups regarding their assessments, and the policy recommendations that may be formulated from the findings. (Borja et al., 2024; Brooks & Sinclair, 2024; Department of Education, 2024a, 2024b; Hacutina, 2025; Pastoril, 2025)

Assumptions of the Study

The study is anchored on the assumption that the utilization and effectiveness of literacy activities can be systematically assessed using clearly defined educational indicators. First, the extent of activity utilization can be determined through curriculum alignment, teacher training and professional development, resource availability and utilization, learner engagement and participation, and assessment and monitoring. Second, the effectiveness of literacy activities can be assessed in relation to seven foundational reading competencies: letter-sound recognition, phonemic awareness, decoding skills, word recognition, vocabulary development, reading fluency, and reading comprehension. Third, the assessments of Grade 1 teachers from different school classifications can provide information for examining the agreement among respondent groups regarding activity utilization and effectiveness. Finally, findings from these assessments can serve as the basis for formulating policy recommendations to strengthen early literacy instruction in Jovellar District. The study also tests the hypotheses that significant agreement exists among the rank orders of activity utilization and among the rank orders of perceived effectiveness across respondent groups.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to determine the effectiveness of literacy activities in enhancing the reading skills of Grade 1 learners in Jovellar District, Division of Albay, during School Year 2025–2026. Specifically, it aims to assess the extent of utilization of literacy activities in terms of curriculum alignment, teacher training and professional development, resource availability and utilization, learner engagement and participation, and assessment and monitoring. It also seeks to determine the significance of agreement among the rank orders of activity utilization across these dimensions and evaluate the effectiveness of the activities in enhancing letter-sound recognition, phonemic awareness, decoding skills, word recognition, vocabulary development, reading fluency, and reading comprehension. Furthermore, the study

aims to determine the significance of agreement among different respondent groups regarding the rank orders of activity effectiveness and formulate policy recommendations based on the findings to strengthen early literacy instruction. The study focuses on Grade 1 teachers from large, medium, and small public elementary schools in Jovellar District, utilizing a researcher-made Likert-scale questionnaire to gather data on literacy activity implementation and effectiveness as a basis for instructional improvement and evidence-based policy recommendations.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

The study is grounded in four complementary educational theories that explain how instructional activities support early reading development: Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, Piaget's Cognitive Development Theory, Skinner's Behaviorist Theory, and Bruner's Constructivist Theory. Sociocultural Theory, (Vygotsky, 1978) emphasizes social interaction, guided learning, and the Zone of Proximal Development. It supports teacher-assisted reading, peer collaboration, small-group instruction, and scaffolding to help learners develop reading competencies beyond their independent abilities. Cognitive Development Theory, (Piaget, 1952) explains that learning activities should correspond to children's cognitive readiness. For Grade 1 learners, concrete, visual, and interactive strategies, including picture-word matching, letter manipulatives, phonics games, and storytelling, facilitate understanding of sounds, symbols, and words. Behaviorist Theory, (Skinner, 1953) emphasizes repetition, reinforcement, and immediate feedback in developing learned behaviors. Structured phonics instruction, repeated reading, decoding exercises, and sight-word practice support reading accuracy, automaticity, and fluency. Constructivist Theory (Bruner, 1960) emphasizes active knowledge construction through exploration, interaction, and meaningful learning experiences. Guided storytelling, shared reading, comprehension activities, and progressively challenging reading tasks enable learners to develop understanding and strengthen reading competencies. Collectively, these theories establish that effective literacy development involves social interaction, developmentally appropriate instruction, systematic practice, reinforcement, and active engagement. The study's conceptual framework follows an input-process-output approach. Its inputs consist of relevant educational policies, theoretical foundations, related literature, curriculum materials, Grade 1 teacher respondents, research instruments, and statistical tools. The process involves assessing the extent of literacy activity utilization, evaluating effectiveness across foundational reading competencies, and determining agreement among respondent groups. The expected output consists of policy recommendations for improving early literacy activities in Jovellar District. The framework therefore connects the implementation of literacy activities with their assessed effectiveness in developing reading skills and the formulation of evidence-based educational policies. (Bruner, 1960; Piaget, 1952; Skinner, 1953; Vygotsky, 1978)

Sustainable Development Goal and Multidisciplinary Sustainability Relevance

The study primarily supports Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4): Quality Education, which promotes inclusive, equitable, and quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all. By evaluating literacy activities for Grade 1 learners, the research addresses foundational learning competencies necessary for academic progress and continued educational participation. Its emphasis on curriculum alignment, teacher professional development, learning resources, learner engagement, and continuous assessment supports efforts to improve instructional quality and respond to diverse learning needs. The study is particularly relevant to rural public schools, where differences in resources and educational conditions may influence learners' opportunities to develop essential reading skills. The research also contributes to SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities through its focus on strengthening early literacy support across large, medium, and small public elementary schools. Identifying gaps in activity

utilization and effectiveness may help guide more equitable instructional support and resource allocation, particularly for learners in geographically disadvantaged communities. Furthermore, the study has relevance to SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals, as its proposed policy recommendations may strengthen collaboration among teachers, school administrators, the Department of Education, local government units, parents, and community stakeholders in supporting early literacy development. In terms of sustainability, the study contributes primarily to educational, institutional, and community sustainability. Educational sustainability is supported by identifying literacy practices that may strengthen foundational reading competencies and promote continued learning. Institutional sustainability is addressed through evidence-based recommendations concerning teacher development, curriculum implementation, resource management, and assessment practices. Community sustainability is reflected in the importance of school–home collaboration and stakeholder participation in supporting children's literacy development. Overall, the study seeks to provide a localized evidence base for improving literacy activities, guiding educational decisions, and promoting more inclusive and sustainable early reading instruction in Jovellar District, Division of Albay.

2. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive-evaluative-correlational research design to assess the utilization and effectiveness of literacy activities in enhancing the reading skills of Grade 1 learners. The descriptive-evaluative component determined the extent of activity utilization in terms of curriculum alignment, teacher training and professional development, resource availability and utilization, learner engagement and participation, and assessment and monitoring. It also evaluated the effectiveness of these activities in developing foundational reading competencies. The correlational component examined the significance of agreement among the rank orders of activity utilization and effectiveness across respondent groups. This design enabled the researcher to systematically assess literacy practices and generate evidence for improving early reading instruction.

Research Locale or Study Setting

The study was conducted in public elementary schools in Jovellar District, Division of Albay, during School Year 2025–2026. The district comprised 20 public elementary schools classified into three categories according to school size. The large schools included Jovellar Central School, Medalla Milagrosa Integrated School, and Cabraran Elementary School, while the medium-sized schools consisted of San Isidro Elementary School, San Roque Elementary School, and Villa Paz Elementary School. The remaining 14 schools were classified as small schools and served various communities within the district. The locale was purposively selected because of its relevance to the implementation of literacy activities and the assessment of early reading instruction among Grade 1 learners.

Participants or Data Sources

The study involved 30 Grade 1 teachers from public elementary schools in Jovellar District, Division of Albay. Purposive sampling was employed in selecting the research locale, while total enumeration was used to include all Grade 1 teachers in the district. Of the respondents, 10 teachers (33%) represented large schools, six (20%) represented medium-sized schools, and 14 (47%) represented small schools. Their responses provided the primary data for assessing literacy activity utilization and effectiveness across different school classifications. The inclusion of all Grade 1 teachers ensured representation of the district's instructional settings and provided information for developing policy recommendations to strengthen early reading instruction.

Research Instruments or Materials

The study utilized a researcher-made questionnaire-checklist employing a five-point Likert scale to assess the utilization and effectiveness of literacy activities. The instrument consisted of 142 items divided into two parts. The first part contained 60 items assessing curriculum alignment, teacher training and professional development, resource availability and utilization, learner engagement and participation, and assessment and monitoring. The second part comprised 82 items evaluating the effectiveness of literacy activities in developing letter-sound recognition, phonemic awareness, decoding skills, word recognition, vocabulary development, reading fluency, and reading comprehension. Responses were interpreted using five-point rating scales. For activity utilization, mean scores of 4.50–5.00 indicated Very Much Utilized, 3.50–4.49 Much Utilized, 2.50–3.49 Utilized, 1.50–2.49 Fairly Utilized, and 1.00–1.49 Not at All. For effectiveness, the corresponding interpretations were Very Much Effective, Much Effective, Effective, Fairly Effective, and Not at All. The questionnaire underwent content validation by a panel of experts, including the Graduate School Dean of the University of Northeastern Philippines, the thesis adviser, university professors, the Public Schools District Supervisor, school heads, and experienced educators. Their recommendations were incorporated to improve the instrument's clarity and alignment with the study objectives. The questionnaire was also pretested, and its internal consistency was assessed using the Kuder–Richardson Formula 21 (KR-21), originally developed by Kuder and Richardson (1937). The computed reliability coefficient was 0.75, which was interpreted as acceptable. The significance of the reliability coefficient was further examined using a t-test for correlation analysis (Freund, 1988), yielding a computed value of 8.03, which exceeded the stated critical value of 1.645 at the 0.05 significance level. These results served as the basis for considering the instrument suitable for data collection.

Data Gathering Procedure

The research process began with the presentation of the thesis proposal to the university thesis committee, followed by the incorporation of its recommendations and the preparation of the research instrument. The researcher subsequently sought permission from the Public Schools District Supervisor of Jovellar District, Division of Albay, to conduct the study. The questionnaire underwent expert validation and revisions before its administration to the 30 Grade 1 teachers. Following approval from the Graduate Studies Dean, the researcher distributed the questionnaires, retrieved the completed instruments, and organized the responses for statistical analysis. Data gathering formed part of the research activities scheduled from August 2025 to July 2026. Proposal presentation, revisions, instrument preparation, and permission-seeking were scheduled from August to November 2025, followed by instrument validation and questionnaire administration in December 2025. Questionnaire retrieval and data tabulation were scheduled for January 2026, while data analysis and manuscript preparation followed in February and March 2026. The subsequent activities included pre-oral and final oral defenses, incorporation of committee recommendations, manuscript editing and approval, presentation of policy recommendations to concerned authorities, and publication of the research output. These procedures provided an organized sequence for conducting the study and preparing its findings for educational improvement.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using frequency count, percentage, weighted mean, rank order, Kendall Coefficient of Concordance W, and chi-square analysis. Frequency count and percentage described the distribution of respondents and their responses, while the weighted mean determined the extent of literacy activity utilization and effectiveness across the

identified indicators. Rank order was employed to identify the highest- and lowest-rated dimensions and reading competencies. To determine the significance of agreement among respondent groups regarding the rank orders of literacy activity utilization and effectiveness, the Kendall Coefficient of Concordance W was employed, (Siegel & Castellan, 1988). The coefficient measured the degree of agreement among the rankings provided by the different school classifications. The corresponding chi-square test was used to determine the statistical significance of the observed agreement (Siegel & Castellan, 1988). All statistical tests were evaluated at the 0.05 level of significance. The results provided the basis for interpreting the utilization and effectiveness of literacy activities and formulating policy recommendations for improving early reading instruction. (Siegel & Castellan, 1988)

Ethical Consideration

The study observed institutional procedures in conducting research involving Grade 1 teachers in Jovellar District, Division of Albay. Prior to data gathering, the researcher presented the thesis proposal to the university thesis committee and incorporated its recommendations to ensure that the research procedures aligned with institutional requirements. Permission to conduct the study was subsequently sought from the Public Schools District Supervisor of Jovellar District, Division of Albay. The researcher-made questionnaire underwent content validation by a panel of experts, including the Dean of the Graduate School of the University of Northeastern Philippines, the thesis adviser, university professors, school heads, and other educational professionals. Their suggestions were incorporated to improve the clarity, reliability, and appropriateness of the instrument. Following validation and approval from the Graduate Studies Dean, the questionnaire was administered to the Grade 1 teachers in the district. The completed instruments were retrieved, and the responses were collated, analyzed, and interpreted to provide a basis for formulating policy recommendations aimed at improving early literacy instruction. These procedures reflected the researcher's adherence to institutional authorization, expert review, and systematic data collection throughout the conduct of the study.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Extent of Utilization of Literacy Activities

3.1.1 Curriculum Alignment

The literacy activities were rated Much Utilized in terms of curriculum alignment, with an overall weighted mean of 4.42. Connecting reading tasks with other subject areas received the highest rating (4.70), followed by ensuring consistency between intervention activities and curriculum goals (4.56) and utilizing curriculum-based resources (4.55), all interpreted as Very Much Utilized. Matching instructional materials with grade-level expectations obtained the lowest rating (4.12), although still interpreted as Much Utilized. These findings indicate that reading activities were generally aligned with curriculum competencies, with comparatively lower ratings for the appropriateness of instructional materials. The results emphasize the importance of combining curriculum alignment with developmentally appropriate and contextualized reading resources. Heraña and Azarias (2024) found that reading materials developed according to learners' difficulties and familiar experiences supported vocabulary and comprehension. Similarly, Alqahtani (2024) reported that technology-based reading interventions can support learners with reading difficulties when adapted to their specific needs and reading levels. These findings support the need to strengthen the development, selection, and adaptation of reading materials appropriate for Grade 1 learners (Department of Education, 2023; Heraña & Azarias, 2024).

3.1.2 Teacher Training and Professional Development

Teacher training and professional development obtained an overall weighted mean of 4.25, interpreted as Much Utilized. Adapting teaching approaches based on knowledge acquired from training ranked highest (4.61), followed by implementing strategies learned from seminars and training programs (4.56), both interpreted as Very Much Utilized. Utilizing updated teaching methods gained from training sessions received the lowest rating (3.98), interpreted as Much Utilized. The findings indicate that teachers applied knowledge acquired through professional development, although the consistent use of updated instructional methods received a comparatively lower assessment. These findings highlight the need for sustained professional development that extends beyond seminar participation, particularly through continuous mentoring, collaborative learning, and classroom-based instructional support to strengthen teachers' implementation of literacy activities (Rosales, 2024).

3.1.3 Resource Availability and Utilization

Resource availability and utilization obtained an overall weighted mean of 4.34, interpreted as Much Utilized. Maximizing classroom materials for reading interventions ranked highest (4.52), followed by incorporating varied learning resources (4.51), both interpreted as Very Much Utilized. Providing sufficient reading materials for Grade 1 learners received the lowest rating (4.11), interpreted as Much Utilized. The results suggest that effective resource utilization should be supported by adequate access to developmentally appropriate reading materials. Mullis et al. (2023) emphasized the importance of quality reading materials and supportive literacy environments in learners' reading achievement. These findings support improved resource allocation, instructional material development, and school-community collaboration to strengthen literacy instruction (Reynolds et al., 2024).

3.1.4 Learner Engagement and Participation

Learner engagement and participation received an overall weighted mean of 4.37, interpreted as Much Utilized. Practicing reading skills through guided and independent activities obtained the highest rating (4.69), followed by peer interaction during collaborative reading tasks (4.62) and participation in discussions about reading materials (4.58), all interpreted as Very Much Utilized. Completing assigned reading tasks with focus and attention received the lowest rating (4.08), interpreted as Much Utilized. These results indicate favorable learner participation, particularly in guided practice and collaborative activities, while sustained concentration received a comparatively lower assessment. The findings emphasize the importance of meaningful participation, structured practice, and motivating reading experiences. Reynolds et al. (2024) emphasized that effective literacy instruction requires active learner involvement and opportunities for interaction. Similarly, Department of Education (2023) highlighted the relationship between motivation, engagement, cognitive processes, and literacy development. These studies support the continued use of interactive, learner-centered, and developmentally appropriate activities that strengthen participation, attention, and reading practice. (van der Sande et al., 2023)

3.1.5 Assessment and Monitoring

Assessment and monitoring obtained the highest overall weighted mean among the utilization dimensions (4.52), interpreted as Very Much Utilized. Tracking individual reading progress ranked highest (4.62), followed by monitoring learners' performance (4.59), conducting regular

assessments (4.58), and providing timely feedback (4.58). Adjusting reading interventions based on assessment data received the lowest rating (4.28), interpreted as Much Utilized. These findings indicate that assessment and progress monitoring were strongly utilized, although the use of assessment results to modify interventions received a lower rating. The findings highlight the importance of using assessment information to guide instructional decisions rather than focusing solely on monitoring learner progress. Department of Education (2025) emphasized that effective assessment-data utilization helps teachers identify learning needs and improve instructional practices. Similarly, Department of Education (2025) identified progress monitoring and data-based instructional adjustments as important components of successful reading interventions. These findings support strengthening teachers' capacity to interpret assessment results and implement targeted literacy activities.

3.1.6 Overall Utilization of Literacy Activities

The overall assessment showed that literacy activities were highly utilized across the five implementation dimensions. Assessment and Monitoring ranked first (4.52), interpreted as Very Much Utilized, followed by Curriculum Alignment (4.42), Learner Engagement and Participation (4.37), Resource Availability and Utilization (4.34), and Teacher Training and Professional Development (4.25), all interpreted as Much Utilized. The findings indicate that systematic assessment was the strongest aspect of literacy activity implementation, while teacher training and professional development received the lowest overall rating. This pattern emphasizes the need to sustain assessment practices while strengthening continuous professional learning, instructional coaching, and the classroom application of literacy strategies.

3.2 Significant Agreement on the Utilization of Literacy Activities

3.2.1 Agreement Among Respondent Groups

The Kendall Coefficient of Concordance and corresponding chi-square tests revealed significant agreement among respondent groups regarding the rank orders of literacy activity utilization. Curriculum Alignment obtained $W = 0.94$ and $\chi^2 = 31.02$ ($p<0.005$), while Teacher Training and Professional Development obtained $W = 0.88$ and $\chi^2 = 23.76$ ($p<0.005$). Resource Availability and Utilization recorded $W = 0.84$ and $\chi^2 = 22.68$ ($p<0.01$), and Learner Engagement and Participation obtained $W = 0.94$ and $\chi^2 = 31.02$ ($p<0.005$). Assessment and Monitoring recorded $W = 0.66$ and $\chi^2 = 19.80$ ($p<0.05$). The alternative hypothesis was accepted for all five dimensions. These results indicate statistically significant consistency in the respondents' rankings of literacy activity utilization across school classifications. The strongest agreement was observed in curriculum alignment and learner engagement, while assessment and monitoring showed the lowest concordance coefficient, although agreement remained significant. The findings indicate that the respondent groups shared generally consistent assessments of the implementation dimensions.

3.3 Effectiveness of Literacy Activities in Enhancing Reading Skills

3.3.1 Letter-Sound Recognition

Letter-sound recognition obtained an overall weighted mean of 4.16, interpreted as Much Effective. Associating letters with their appropriate phonetic sounds received the highest rating (4.45), followed by recognizing uppercase and lowercase letters (4.36) and practicing letter-sound relationships during guided reading (4.35). Demonstrating improved recognition of letter-sound relationships received the lowest rating (3.55), although still interpreted as Much

Effective. These results indicate that the activities were favorably assessed in developing foundational letter-sound knowledge, with comparatively lower ratings for consistent recognition of letter-sound relationships. The findings emphasize the importance of systematic phonics instruction, repeated practice, and differentiated support. Department of Education (2023) emphasized that explicit phonics instruction strengthens connections between letters and sounds, supporting early decoding skills. Similarly, Department of Education (2023) highlighted the contribution of phonological awareness and letter-sound knowledge to later reading development. These findings support continued reinforcement of letter-sound relationships through structured, multisensory, and individualized literacy activities (Anku, 2024; Duque & Fortes, 2023).

3.3.2 Phonemic Awareness

Phonemic awareness obtained an overall weighted mean of 4.01, interpreted as Much Effective. Manipulating sounds through adding, deleting, or changing phonemes ranked highest (4.20), followed by blending individual sounds into simple words (4.08), repeating sound sequences (4.08), and matching words with similar beginning or ending sounds (4.08). Distinguishing similar and different sounds in words received the lowest rating (3.74). These results indicate favorable assessments of sound manipulation and blending activities, while sound discrimination received the lowest evaluation. The findings emphasize the importance of explicit instruction in identifying, distinguishing, and manipulating speech sounds. Department of Education (2023) found that phonemic awareness instruction, particularly sound manipulation and blending, supports children's word-reading development. Similarly, Department of Education (2023) emphasized that systematic phonological and phonemic interventions strengthen foundational competencies needed for reading fluency and comprehension. These studies support continued practice and targeted instructional assistance for learners experiencing difficulties in sound discrimination. (Anku, 2024; Duque & Fortes, 2023)

3.3.3 Decoding Skills

Decoding skills obtained an overall weighted mean of 4.02, interpreted as Much Effective. Identifying common word patterns and word families received the highest rating (4.56), followed by recognizing familiar words through decoding strategies (4.15) and accurately reading consonant-vowel-consonant words (4.11). Blending letter sounds to decode unfamiliar words received the lowest rating (3.73). These findings indicate that the activities were favorably assessed in developing word-pattern recognition, although independently decoding unfamiliar words received a comparatively lower evaluation. The findings highlight the importance of strengthening phonics application, sound blending, and independent word recognition. Department of Education (2023) emphasized that systematic phonics and decoding instruction supports accurate word reading and long-term reading proficiency. Similarly, Department of Education (2023) highlighted the importance of connections between phonological knowledge and word recognition during early literacy development. These findings support sustained decoding practice, individualized assistance, and structured activities that develop independent reading skills. (Aguirre et al., 2024; Solheim et al., 2025)

3.3.4 Word Recognition

Word recognition obtained an overall weighted mean of 4.15, interpreted as Much Effective. Accurately identifying high-frequency sight words received the highest rating (4.34), followed by

automatically reading familiar words (4.32) and distinguishing words with similar spelling patterns (4.24). Reading irregular words correctly without decoding received the lowest rating (3.90). These findings indicate favorable assessments of familiar-word recognition and reading automaticity, while irregular-word recognition received the lowest rating. The findings emphasize the importance of repeated exposure to familiar and unfamiliar words in meaningful reading contexts. Department of Education (2023) emphasized that automatic sight-word recognition supports reading fluency by reducing the effort required for word identification. Similarly, Department of Education (2023) explained that effective reading instruction integrates phonics, vocabulary, language comprehension, and automatic word recognition. These studies support continued instruction in irregular-word recognition, repeated reading, and contextual vocabulary development. (Tanjutco & Garcia, 2023)

3.3.5 Vocabulary Development

Vocabulary development obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.89, interpreted as Much Effective. Associating words with corresponding objects or pictures received the highest rating (4.05), followed by recognizing words in different contexts (4.01) and classifying words according to meaning or function (4.00). Understanding the meaning of new words introduced during lessons obtained the lowest rating (3.65). These results indicate that visual and contextual activities were favorably assessed, while comprehension of newly introduced vocabulary received the lowest evaluation. The findings highlight the importance of repeated exposure, meaningful language experiences, and explicit vocabulary instruction. Department of Education (2023) emphasized that vocabulary development is strengthened through repeated encounters with words in meaningful contexts and rich oral language interactions. These findings support the continued use of visual materials, contextual learning, storytelling, and activities that encourage learners to understand and apply unfamiliar words (Alejandro et al., 2025).

3.3.6 Reading Fluency

Reading fluency obtained an overall weighted mean of 4.07, interpreted as Much Effective. Using proper intonation and expression during oral reading received the highest rating (4.22), followed by maintaining an appropriate reading pace (4.21) and participating in repeated reading activities (4.18). Recognizing punctuation marks and adjusting reading accordingly obtained the lowest rating (3.88). These results indicate favorable assessments of expressive reading and appropriate pacing, while punctuation-guided reading received the lowest evaluation. The findings emphasize the importance of developing accuracy, automaticity, and expressive reading through repeated practice. Department of Education (2023) reported that repeated oral reading with explicit teacher feedback improves reading rate, accuracy, and expression. These findings support sustained fluency instruction, particularly activities that strengthen punctuation awareness, phrasing, and expressive oral reading (Solheim et al., 2025).

3.3.7 Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.74, interpreted as Much Effective. Recognizing cause-and-effect relationships received the highest rating (4.27), followed by understanding the main idea of a text (4.15) and identifying important details (4.07). Predicting what might happen next in a story obtained the lowest rating (3.18). These results indicate that the activities received favorable assessments in identifying textual relationships and key information, while prediction and other higher-order comprehension skills received

comparatively lower ratings. The findings emphasize the importance of strengthening inferential comprehension, prediction, and critical thinking. Department of Education (2023) emphasized that reading comprehension develops through the interaction of decoding, language comprehension, vocabulary, background knowledge, and strategic thinking. Similarly, Hwang (2023) found that explicit comprehension instruction, meaningful classroom discussions, and engagement with texts support learners' ability to construct meaning and make inferences. These findings support increased emphasis on prediction, questioning, storytelling, and comprehension activities that develop higher-order thinking skills.

3.3.8 Overall Effectiveness of Literacy Activities

The overall findings showed that literacy activities were rated Much Effective across all seven reading competencies. Letter-Sound Recognition obtained the highest weighted mean (4.16), followed by Word Recognition (4.15), Reading Fluency (4.07), Decoding Skills (4.02), Phonemic Awareness (4.01), Vocabulary Development (3.89), and Reading Comprehension (3.74). These findings indicate that the activities received stronger assessments in foundational reading competencies, particularly letter-sound and word recognition, than in vocabulary development and reading comprehension. The results emphasize the need to sustain instruction in foundational literacy skills while strengthening vocabulary knowledge, inferential comprehension, and higher-order reading abilities.

3.4 Significant Agreement on the Effectiveness of Literacy Activities

3.4.1 Agreement Among Respondent Groups Across Reading Competencies

The Kendall Coefficient of Concordance and chi-square tests revealed significant agreement among respondent groups regarding the effectiveness of literacy activities across all seven reading competencies. Letter-Sound Recognition obtained $W = 0.80$ and $\chi^2 = 24.00$ ($p<0.01$), while Phonemic Awareness recorded $W = 0.87$ and $\chi^2 = 23.49$ ($p<0.01$). Decoding Skills and Word Recognition each obtained $W = 0.95$ and $\chi^2 = 28.50$ ($p<0.005$). Vocabulary Development recorded $W = 0.84$ and $\chi^2 = 22.68$ ($p<0.01$), while Reading Fluency obtained $W = 0.91$ and $\chi^2 = 27.30$ ($p<0.005$). Reading Comprehension recorded the highest agreement, with $W = 0.98$ and $\chi^2 = 29.40$ ($p<0.005$). The alternative hypothesis was accepted across all seven competencies. The results indicate significant consistency in the rankings provided by respondents from different school classifications. Reading comprehension demonstrated the strongest agreement, followed by decoding skills and word recognition, while letter-sound recognition recorded the lowest concordance coefficient. Nevertheless, all seven competencies showed statistically significant agreement, indicating that the respondent groups shared generally consistent perceptions of the effectiveness of literacy activities.

3.5 Policy Recommendations Based on the Findings

The findings identified several priorities for improving early literacy instruction in Jovellar District. Assessment and Monitoring received the highest utilization rating (4.52), while Teacher Training and Professional Development received the lowest (4.25). Among the reading competencies, Letter-Sound Recognition obtained the highest effectiveness rating (4.16), whereas Reading Comprehension received the lowest (3.74). The findings also identified comparatively lower ratings for instructional material sufficiency, the consistent application of updated teaching methods, independent decoding of unfamiliar words, vocabulary comprehension, and higher-order reading skills. Significant agreement among respondent groups supported the consistency

of these assessments. Based on these findings, the study proposed strengthening continuous professional development through coaching, mentoring, classroom demonstrations, and collaborative learning activities. It also recommended the development and equitable distribution of curriculum-aligned, culturally responsive, and developmentally appropriate reading materials; systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, word recognition, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension; and improved assessment systems that support differentiated instruction and continuous progress monitoring. Additional recommendations emphasized instructional leadership, sustained funding, school-home collaboration, community reading initiatives, multi-sectoral partnerships, and systematic evaluation of early literacy programs. These recommendations were directed toward Department of Education officials, school heads, teachers, parents, and education and community stakeholders to strengthen the implementation and sustainability of Grade 1 literacy activities in Jovellar District, Division of Albay. (Tortola, 2024; William et al., 2025)

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that literacy activities in Jovellar District, Division of Albay, were generally highly utilized and perceived as effective in enhancing the foundational reading competencies of Grade 1 learners during School Year 2025–2026. Based on the assessments of 30 Grade 1 teachers from large, medium, and small public elementary schools, assessment and monitoring emerged as the strongest implementation dimension, while teacher training and professional development received the lowest overall rating. Among the reading competencies, letter-sound recognition received the highest effectiveness assessment, whereas reading comprehension received the lowest, indicating a greater need to strengthen higher-order reading skills. Significant agreement among respondent groups was established across the dimensions of activity utilization and reading competencies, demonstrating consistency in their assessments. Collectively, the findings provide localized evidence that existing literacy activities are favorably evaluated while identifying instructional areas requiring improvement and providing a basis for evidence-based educational policy recommendations.

Based on the findings, the Department of Education should strengthen early literacy programs by prioritizing adequate instructional resources, curriculum-aligned reading materials, and systematic monitoring and evaluation. School heads should provide sustained professional development through coaching, mentoring, Learning Action Cell sessions, and collaborative instructional planning to improve teachers' application of updated literacy strategies. Teachers should maintain effective assessment practices while using assessment results to provide differentiated instruction, particularly in reading comprehension, vocabulary development, phonemic awareness, and decoding. Greater emphasis should be placed on guided reading, comprehension exercises, contextualized learning materials, and activities that develop learners' ability to understand and interpret texts. Parents should reinforce classroom instruction through regular home reading activities and communication with teachers. Community stakeholders and educational institutions should strengthen partnerships that support reading resources and school-based literacy initiatives. These actions should be regularly evaluated to improve the implementation and sustainability of literacy activities.

The study was confined to 30 Grade 1 teachers from large, medium, and small public elementary schools in Jovellar District, Division of Albay, during School Year 2025–2026. Although total enumeration included all Grade 1 teachers in the district, the findings were limited to this geographical and educational setting. The descriptive-evaluative-correlational design relied on teachers' assessments obtained through a researcher-made Likert-scale questionnaire,

reflecting perceived utilization and effectiveness rather than directly measured improvements in learners' reading performance. Consequently, the findings should be interpreted within the study's defined scope. Future research may examine reading interventions and learners' reading development using additional assessment approaches.

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