

Reading Instruction Practices Among Multi-Grade Teachers and Learners' Reading Performance in English

Blessed Grace A. Acut¹, Erlinda A. Quirap, PhD²

¹Master of Arts in Elementary Education, PHINMA Cagayan de Oro College, School of Graduate and Professional Studies, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines

²Thesis Adviser, PHINMA Cagayan de Oro College, School of Graduate and Professional Studies, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines

Email of Corresponding Author: blessedgrace.almonte@deped.gov.ph

Publication history:

Received: August 17, 2026

Revised: September 16, 2026

Accepted: September 18, 2026

Published: September 19, 2026

International Journal of Sustainable and Integrated Studies, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 421–428, September 2026.

Abstract

This mixed-methods study determined the reading instruction practices of multi-grade teachers and the English reading performance of their learners in selected public elementary schools in the Division of Misamis Oriental during School Year 2024–2025. Anchored on Shulman's Pedagogical Content Knowledge Theory, the research examined five components of instruction—learners' motivation, learner-centered reading strategies, open communication with parents, utilization of digital resources, and professional development—alongside learners' Phil-IRI post-test results and the relationships among these variables. Eighty-two multi-grade teachers handling Grades 4, 5, and 6 were selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a validated researcher-made questionnaire, official Phil-IRI post-test results, and structured in-depth interviews with both experienced and beginning teachers. Quantitative data were analyzed through means, standard deviations, and Pearson's product-moment correlation, while qualitative responses were examined thematically. Findings revealed that teachers highly practiced learners' motivation, learner-centered reading, open communication with parents, and professional development, whereas utilization of digital resources was practiced at a comparatively lower level. Overall, reading instruction practices were highly practiced. Multi-grade learners across Grades 4–6 performed at the instructional level, indicating partial comprehension and continued need for guided teacher support to attain independent reading. Only the utilization of digital resources showed a significant positive relationship with learners' reading performance; the other four practices yielded no statistically significant relationships. The study concludes that multi-grade teachers demonstrate strong commitment to supporting diverse learners yet require greater digital integration, and that learners benefit most when instruction is differentiated and technology supported. Recommendations include more frequent use of DepEd digital tools such as Reading Progress and DepEd Commons, targeted activities matched to learners' decoding, fluency, and comprehension needs, and the use of digital assessment platforms when devices and connectivity are available. The study advances SDG 4 (Quality Education) by strengthening foundational literacy in multi-grade classrooms and contributes to educational and institutional sustainability through improved instructional practices and more responsive support for learners in resource-constrained settings.

Keywords: Digital Resources; Learner-Centered Reading; Multi-Grade Teachers; Phil-IRI; Professional Development; Reading Instruction Practices; Reading Performance; Learners' Motivation; Open Communication with Parents

1. Introduction

Learning to read is the first step toward understanding the world and reaching one's potential. Even with programs such as the Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs) Program and the Comprehensive Reading Program under DepEd Order No. 16, s. 2016 (Department of Education, 2016), many students struggle with reading. The most recent Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results show that Filipino learners perform below the global average in reading, placing the country among those with low reading performance (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2023). Less than 25 percent reached the minimum proficiency level in 2022, though this was a slight improvement from 2018. In Misamis Oriental these issues are especially relevant for multi-grade learners. Multi-grade teachers find it hard to teach different grade levels at the same time (Funelas-Hacutina, 2025). Similar challenges are noted by Gementiza and Alda (2021). Students' interests and motivation differ, so some do well while others struggle to meet basic standards (Crisologo, 2025). Teachers must oversee different age groups simultaneously, which hinders their ability to give appropriate assistance to each learner (Funelas-Hacutina, 2025). Constraints of resources and inadequacy of reading instruction further complicate the situation (Crisologo, 2025).

Programs such as the Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs) Reading Program, National Reading Month activities, and the Reading Progress tool help learners practice reading and make it more entertaining (Department of Education, 2021). The Reading Progress tool helps track improvement and allows teachers to measure fluency, motivate interest, and improve performance. According to Gementiza and Alda (2021), teachers struggle to balance instruction for learners of different grade levels. Funelas-Hacutina (2025) observed that although reading programs exist in multi-grade schools, implementation is challenged by lack of resources. Teaching strategies for multi-grade classes can improve understanding, but teachers need proper training and constant support (Crisologo, 2025). Reading is more than a skill; it is the foundation for thinking and lifelong learning (Alicante & Pontillas, 2025). The study arose from the researcher's experience as a multi-grade teacher facing the difficulties of delivering reading instruction to learners of different grade levels in one classroom. Some learners expressed frustration when they could not keep pace with classmates. Examining the relationship between reading instruction practices and learners' reading performance aims to provide information that may help teachers improve instruction so that learners develop skills, gain confidence, and become more independent readers.

Reading instruction practices in multi-grade classrooms are shaped by learners' motivation, learner-centered strategies, open communication with parents, utilization of digital resources, and professional development. Motivated students are more likely to engage actively; Gulay and Pontillas (2024) noted that motivation directly influences comprehension and critical thinking, while Perry et al. (2025) emphasized that such motivation leads to stronger Phil-IRI performance. Learner-centered strategies allow teachers to adapt to varying skill levels (Suson et al., 2020; Po et al., 2025). Open communication with parents fosters confidence and academic success (Department of Education, 2021). Digital resources strengthen instruction (Department of Education, 2022), and professional development equips teachers with research-based strategies (Department of Education, 2024). Students learn to read better when activities are meaningful and enjoyable (Cremin, 2022). Positive attitudes and interactive activities help learners enjoy reading and understand texts (Barotas & Palma, 2023; Van der Sande et al., 2023). Motivated learners show better focus when teachers give regular encouragement and feedback (Bruggink et al., 2022). In multi-grade settings, clear materials reduce frustration (Gulay & Pontillas, 2024; Natividad & Tangalin, 2023). Group discussions, reading games, praise, and recognition sustain motivation (Bagay, 2024). Well-organized instruction increases confidence and participation (Gementiza & Alda, 2023).

Learner-centered strategies such as guided reading and small-group instruction improve performance and encourage active participation. These approaches give learners more control, increasing participation and responsibility (Buelow & Frambaugh-Kritzer, 2025). Choice of materials or digital tools improves understanding (Nabong & Ferenal, 2025). Collaborative and flexible strategies—group work, differentiated tasks, and teacher flexibility—help multi-grade learners (Naparan & Alinsug, 2021; Maquiling, 2025). Open communication between teachers and parents improves involvement and reading performance (Bendanillo, 2021; Macalawi and Osias, 2023). Informed parents better support home reading (Mirasol & Topacio, 2021). Continuous communication addresses learning gaps beyond the classroom (Lucas et al., 2021). Programs such as the Child-Friendly School Program encourage participation (Perez & Labitad, 2025). Digital tools can further support engagement when access allows (Almacen & Labitad, 2024; Griffin & Scullin, 2024), although limited devices and unstable internet remain barriers (Bagay, 2024).

Digital resources—e-books, apps, and multimedia—improve skills when used regularly (Judijanto and Rusiadi, 2024). ICT-based activities enhance engagement even in low-resource schools. Limited access and training constrain use (Judijanto & Rusiadi, 2024; Bagay, 2024). When combined with effective strategies, digital tools support differentiated pacing. Professional development improves teachers' reading instruction. Regular training on basic skills and comprehension strategies enhances effectiveness and teacher confidence (Rice et al., 2024; Dayagbil et al., 2020; Education Development Center, 2021). Training focused on Grades 4–6 helps teachers move learners from basic skills to higher-level comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency. Collaboration, mentoring, and workshops further support growth.

Reading performance is assessed through Phil-IRI post-test results that classify learners into frustration, instructional, or independent levels based on word recognition and comprehension (Tampus, 2024; Gagno, 2022).

Limited materials and inconsistent support affect progress (Saguig, 2024; Abril et al., 2022). Learner-centered and motivational strategies, together with digital tools, increase interest, confidence, and performance (Guvén & Haddad, 2023; Miller, 2021; Marin & Castañeda, 2022). Frustration-level learners need close monitoring and remediation (Tolibas, 2025; Misanes & Pascual, 2023; Tomas et al., 2021; Castro, 2024). Instructional-level learners benefit from guided support, while independent-level learners require enrichment (Abril et al., 2022; DepEd Tagbilaran City Division, 2021).

Nationally, Filipino learners ranked near the bottom in PISA reading, with fewer than 25 percent reaching minimum proficiency (OECD, 2023). DepEd programs such as the 3Bs initiative, National Reading Month, Project Digi-Reads, and the INSET Program aim to strengthen literacy (Department of Education, 2021; Department of Education, 2022; Department of Education, 2024). Locally, multi-grade schools in Misamis Oriental face resource constraints, diverse learner needs, and the simultaneous management of multiple grade levels (Funelas-Hacutina, 2025; Gementiza & Alda, 2021; Crisologo, 2025). These local realities mirror broader national literacy challenges and the global emphasis on foundational reading skills reflected in international assessments.

The study is anchored on Shulman's Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) Theory (1986), which explains that effective teaching results from the integration of content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. Teachers must understand reading skills—phonics, word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension—and know how to teach them to learners with varied abilities. In multi-grade classrooms, teachers transform reading content into meaningful instructional practices that address different reading levels.

The conceptual framework positions reading instruction practices (learners' motivation, learner-centered reading strategies, open communication with parents, utilization of digital resources, and professional development) as Variable 1 and learners' Phil-IRI post-test reading performance in English (classified as frustration, instructional, or independent) as Variable 2. The framework assumes a relationship between the level of these practices and learners' reading performance levels.

Although multi-grade teachers implement a range of reading instruction practices, utilization of digital resources remains comparatively limited, and many learners still perform at the instructional level requiring guided support. Existing studies document challenges in multi-grade settings (Funelas-Hacutina, 2025; Gementiza & Alda, 2021; Crisologo, 2025) but provide limited empirical examination of the specific relationship between the five identified instructional practices and Phil-IRI outcomes in Misamis Oriental multi-grade schools. The researcher's own experience of managing diverse reading needs in one classroom further highlighted the need for systematic inquiry. Addressing this gap can inform more targeted support for both teachers and learners.

The study aligns primarily with SDG 4 (Quality Education) by examining practices that support foundational literacy for multi-grade learners, who are often located in remote or resource-limited schools. Strengthening reading instruction contributes to inclusive, equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities. It also relates to SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) through the emphasis on open communication between teachers and parents, which fosters collaborative home-school support for literacy development.

The research contributes to educational sustainability by identifying effective reading instruction practices that can help multi-grade learners progress toward independent reading, thereby reducing long-term educational disparities. It supports socio-economic sustainability because strong literacy skills underpin further learning, employability, and community participation. By highlighting the role of digital resources and teacher professional development, the study also advances technological and institutional sustainability within the basic education system, ensuring that multi-grade classrooms remain responsive and effective learning environments.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study employed a mixed-method research design that integrated quantitative and qualitative approaches. The descriptive quantitative component documented the levels of reading instruction practices in terms of learners' motivation, learner-centered reading strategies, open communication with parents, utilization of digital resources, and professional development training. The correlational component examined the relationship between these practices and learners' reading performance without implying causation. The qualitative component consisted of structured in-depth interviews with selected multi-grade teachers to obtain insights into their classroom experiences, challenges, and perspectives. Combining these approaches allowed numerical findings on Phil-IRI reading levels to be interpreted considering teachers' actual practices and the conditions of multi-grade settings.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in Misamis Oriental, a province in Northern Mindanao bounded by Iligan Bay, Bohol Sea, Macajalar Bay, Gingoog Bay, Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Bukidnon, and Lanao del Norte (PhilAtlas, n.d.). Forty-one public elementary schools located across seventeen districts in municipalities including Lugait, Manticao, Naawan, Initao, Libertad, Gitagum, Laguindingan, Alubijid, Opol, Tagoloan, Villanueva, Jasaan, Claveria, Balingasag, Lagonglong, Salay, Binuangan, Sugbongcogon, Kinoguitan, Balingoan, Talisayan, Medina, and Magsaysay served as research sites. These schools represent highway, hillside, midland, and coastal settings and provided a suitable environment for examining multi-grade reading instruction.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents were eighty-two multi-grade elementary school teachers handling Grades 4, 5, and 6 in the Division of Misamis Oriental during School Year 2024–2025. Teachers of kindergarten to Grade 3 were excluded because the Phil-IRI is not administered at those levels and therefore does not contribute to the reading performance data used in the study. The selected teachers were directly responsible for planning and delivering reading instruction and for administering the Phil-IRI, making them appropriate sources of information on both instructional practices and learner outcomes.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

Purposive sampling was used to select the eighty-two multi-grade teachers. This non-probability technique was chosen because participants were required to meet specific criteria directly aligned with the study objectives: they had to be multi-grade teachers handling Grades 4, 5, and 6 and involved in both reading instruction and Phil-IRI administration. The approach ensured that only information-rich respondents with relevant experience were included, thereby strengthening the depth and contextual relevance of the data even though the findings are not intended to be generalized to all teachers in the division.

2.5 Research Instrument

A three-part researcher-made instrument was used. Part I was a questionnaire measuring the five components of reading instruction practices—learners’ motivation, learner-centered reading strategies, open communication with parents, utilization of digital resources, and professional development—on a four-point frequency scale. Part II collected the Phil-IRI post-test results in English for Grades 4, 5, and 6, classifying learners into frustration, instructional, or independent levels. Part III consisted of structured in-depth interview guide questions that explored teachers’ experiences, strategies, challenges, and perceptions regarding reading instruction in multi-grade classrooms. The instrument underwent expert validation by a senior education program specialist, a master teacher, and an education research specialist who examined clarity, appropriateness, and alignment with the research objectives. After revision, it was pilot tested with thirty multi-grade teachers from a neighboring division who shared the same characteristics as the actual respondents. Cronbach’s alpha yielded a coefficient of 0.872, indicating acceptable internal consistency and suitability for the main study.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

Approval was first obtained from the Dean of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies of PHINMA Cagayan de Oro College. A formal request was then submitted to the Schools Division Superintendent of Misamis Oriental. Upon endorsement, coordination was made with public schools’ district supervisors and school heads of the identified multi-grade schools. The researcher personally distributed the questionnaires, explained the purpose of the study, emphasized voluntary participation, and assured confidentiality. Respondents were given approximately thirty to forty minutes to complete the instrument. After retrieval of the questionnaires, structured in-depth interviews were conducted with ten multi-grade teachers—five with five or more years of experience and five with one to four years of experience—who handled Grades 4, 5, and 6. All responses were kept confidential, and the researcher managed the entire data-collection process to ensure proper handling and organization of the materials.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were used to determine the level of reading instruction practices and to summarize learners’ Phil-IRI post-test performance. Pearson’s product-moment correlation was applied to examine the relationship between the five components of reading instruction practices and learners’ reading performance at the 0.05 level of significance. Qualitative data from the in-depth interviews were analyzed thematically to provide contextual support and deeper understanding of the quantitative findings. Ethical protocols were strictly observed. Informed consent was obtained, participation was voluntary, and all personal information was treated confidentially. Data were recorded and analyzed honestly without manipulation, and the rights, privacy, and dignity of the respondents were safeguarded throughout the study.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Level of Reading Instruction Practices Among Multi-Grade Teachers

3.1.1 Learners’ Motivation

Multi-grade teachers demonstrated a high level of practice in learners’ motivation, with an overall mean of 3.81. The highest-rated indicator was making learners from all grade levels join reading activities suited to their level (mean 3.94), while the lowest was making enjoyable reading games and competitions (mean 3.65); both remained within the “At all Times / Highly Practiced” range. Interview responses indicated that experienced teachers commonly used storytelling, role-playing, and children’s literature such as fables, while newer teachers relied on colorful visuals, songs, and interactive games. Both groups employed rewards, competitions, and peer activities

to sustain interest. These results indicate that teachers consistently apply motivational strategies to keep learners engaged despite the diversity of ages and abilities in multi-grade classrooms. The findings align with Bruggink et al. (2022), who noted that regular encouragement and feedback build reading confidence, and with Gulay and Pontillas (2024), who emphasized that clear and meaningful activities increase engagement and comprehension. Bagay (2024) similarly observed that varied, enjoyable activities and recognition help sustain motivation when teachers manage multiple grade levels simultaneously.

3.1.2 Learner-Centered Reading

Teachers practiced learner-centered reading at a high level (overall mean 3.55). Collaborative reading tasks where learners work together received the highest mean (3.82), while the use of interactive activities such as role-play was the lowest (mean 3.16) yet still within the “Most of the Time / Practiced” range. Experienced teachers reported differentiated instruction and flexible grouping; newer teachers emphasized guided reading, picture-based texts, and peer support. Both groups highlighted mixed-grade reading circles and collaborative activities. The high overall rating shows that teachers actively involve learners and adapt instruction to diverse needs. This is consistent with Naparan and Alinsug (2021), who found that collaborative learning, differentiated tasks, and teacher flexibility improve participation in multi-grade settings, and with Nabong and Fernal (2025), who linked learner choice and cooperative strategies to greater engagement and comprehension. Maquiling (2025) likewise noted that flexible grouping helps teachers address varied abilities effectively.

3.1.3 Open Communication with Parents

Open communication with parents was highly practiced (overall mean 3.62). Providing parents with resources and materials to enhance reading at home obtained the highest mean (3.88), while supporting parents in creating a reading schedule that fits family lifestyle was the lowest (mean 3.00) yet still practiced most of the time. Experienced teachers relied on home visits and reading logs; newer teachers used mobile messaging, group chats, printed feedback forms, and occasional home visits. These findings demonstrate that teachers value home-school partnerships and actively equip parents to support reading. The results support Bendanillo (2021), Macalawi and Osias (2023), and Mirasol and Topacio (2021), who linked regular teacher-parent communication and guided home support to improved reading performance. Perez and Labitad (2025) and Lucas et al. (2021) similarly highlighted that strong school-home collaboration extends literacy support beyond the classroom, an especially important factor for multi-grade learners.

3.1.4 Utilization of Digital Resources

Utilization of digital resources was practiced at a moderate level (overall mean 3.09). Incorporating educational games and apps to make reading enjoyable received the highest mean (3.72), while the use of online quizzes and assessments to track progress was the lowest (mean 2.26). Teachers reported greater use of offline digital materials such as downloadable e-books, audiobooks, and educational videos; limited devices and unstable internet constrained online applications. The comparatively lower overall rating reflects practical constraints rather than lack of recognition of digital tools’ value. Judijanto and Rusiadi (2024) noted that digital resources improve engagement and skills when used regularly, yet access and training limitations reduce frequency of use. Bagay (2024) and Almacen and Labitad (2024) similarly observed that multi-grade teachers attempt integration but are hindered by infrastructure gaps, resulting in heavier reliance on offline or printed alternatives.

3.1.5 Professional Development

Professional development was highly practiced (overall mean 3.30). Collaboration with colleagues to share knowledge and strategies obtained the highest mean (3.71), while participation in online courses was the lowest (mean 2.61). Both experienced and newer teachers regularly attended Learning Action Cell sessions, district and division trainings, and workshops; they valued peer mentoring but noted that most training is not specifically designed for multi-grade classrooms. The high rating indicates active engagement in continuous learning. Dayagbil et al. (2020) and the Education Development Center (2021) emphasize that regular, targeted professional development improves instructional quality and teacher confidence, particularly for intermediate and multi-grade teachers who must support the transition from basic to higher-level reading skills. The interview data further reveal a need for more context-specific multi-grade training.

3.1.6 Overall Level of Reading Instruction Practices

Across all five components the overall mean was 3.47, interpreted as Highly Practiced. Learners’ motivation ranked highest and utilization of digital resources lowest. Teachers combined motivational strategies, differentiated instruction, parent communication, offline digital materials, and collaborative professional learning to address diverse learner needs, while citing limited devices, connectivity, and multi-grade-specific training as ongoing challenges. The consistently high practice levels demonstrate teacher commitment and adaptability. Guven and Haddad (2023), Miller (2021), and Marin and Castañeda (2022) affirm that motivational, learner-centered, and technology-supported practices enhance engagement and performance when resources permit. The findings underscore that effective multi-grade reading instruction depends on both teacher competence and adequate institutional support for digital infrastructure and contextualized professional development.

3.2 Multi-Grade Learners' Reading Performance in Phil-IRI Post-Test in English

3.2.1 Grade 4 Performance

Grade 4 learners obtained a mean of 72.33, classified as instructional level or partial comprehension. Independent readers constituted the largest group (39.57 percent), followed by instructional (38.26 percent) and frustration (22.17 percent). The result indicates that most Grade 4 learners can read with teacher guidance but have not yet reached full independence. Peng et al. (2024), Mosher and Kim (2023), and Scarborough (2023) emphasize that sustained explicit instruction and guided reading are necessary for developing readers to progress toward independence, supporting the observed need for continued scaffolding at this grade level.

3.2.2 Grade 5 Performance

Grade 5 learners recorded a mean of 73.66, also at the instructional level. Independent readers formed 40.46 percent, instructional 40.08 percent, and frustration 19.47 percent. Performance shows gradual improvement relative to Grade 4, with a slightly higher proportion of independent readers. Tomas et al. (2021) and Gagno (2022) highlight that sustained reading instruction and intervention in the intermediate grades strengthen foundational skills and comprehension, consistent with the modest upward trend observed.

3.2.3 Grade 6 Performance

Grade 6 learners achieved the highest mean of 74.07, remaining at the instructional level. Independent readers accounted for 42.83 percent, instructional 36.10 percent, and frustration 21.08 percent. The pattern of progressive improvement across grade levels suggests that cumulative exposure and practice contribute to stronger reading competence, yet many learners still require guided support. Rice et al. (2024) and Van der Sande et al. (2023) affirm the continued importance of structured instruction, professional teaching practices, and motivational support even at higher elementary grades.

3.2.4 Overall Reading Performance

The overall mean across Grades 4–6 was 73.35, classified as instructional level or partial comprehension. Performance improved modestly from Grade 4 to Grade 6, with most learners distributed between independent and instructional levels and a smaller but persistent frustration group. These results indicate that multi-grade learners have developed foundational comprehension skills but still need systematic teacher support to reach independence. Peng et al. (2024) and Alqahtani (2024) underscore that consistent, differentiated reading instruction across grade levels is essential for advancing learners beyond partial comprehension.

3.3 Relationship Between Reading Instruction Practices and Learners' Reading Performance

Pearson correlation analysis showed that learners' motivation, learner-centered reading, open communication with parents, and professional development had no statistically significant relationships with Phil-IRI performance across Grades 4, 5, 6, or overall (all $p > 0.05$). In contrast, utilization of digital resources demonstrated significant positive relationships at every grade level and overall (Grade 4: $r = 0.340$, $p = 0.041$; Grade 5: $r = 0.356$, $p = 0.032$; Grade 6: $r = 0.298$, $p = 0.048$; Overall: $r = 0.340$, $p = 0.040$). Although the significant correlations are weak, their consistency across grade levels indicates that greater use of digital resources is associated with better reading performance. Interview data reinforced that offline digital materials such as audio stories, interactive videos, and reading applications enhance engagement, attention, and comprehension. Motivation, learner-centered approaches, parent communication, and professional development create supportive conditions, yet their measurable impact on standardized reading outcomes depends on consistent application and complementary instructional tools; digital resources appear to provide one such complementary pathway in the multi-grade context examined.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

Multi-grade teachers demonstrate strong commitment to improving learners' reading performance through consistent application of motivational, learner-centered, parent-communication, and professional-development practices, yet utilization of digital resources remains comparatively limited. Learners across Grades 4–6 generally perform at the instructional level with partial comprehension and continue to require guided support to reach independence. The significant relationship found only between digital-resource use and Phil-IRI performance underscores that greater integration of accessible digital tools, alongside sustained differentiated instruction, can enhance engagement and help multi-grade learners progress toward independent reading.

Teachers should increase the use of DepEd-provided digital resources such as Reading Progress, Reading Coach, and DepEd Commons, incorporate differentiated activities including guided reading, phonics practice, and repeated reading matched to learners' decoding, fluency, and comprehension needs, and employ available digital assessment tools such as Quizizz, Google Classroom, and Kahoot whenever devices and connectivity permit in order to monitor progress and target remaining skill gaps.

5. Compliance with ethical standards

The study adhered to established ethical research protocols. Prior to data collection, the researcher obtained formal approval from the Dean of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies of PHINMA Cagayan de Oro College and secured endorsement from the Schools Division Superintendent of Misamis Oriental. Coordination with public school's district supervisors and school heads of the participating multi-grade schools was completed to ensure full compliance with division and school guidelines. All respondents received clear information about the purpose of the study and provided informed consent. Participation was entirely voluntary, with no form of coercion or monetary incentive. Personal information and responses were treated with strict confidentiality and used solely for research purposes. Data was recorded, organized, and analyzed accurately and honestly, without manipulation of results. The researcher safeguarded the rights, privacy, and dignity of all participants throughout the study.

REFERENCES

- Abril, J. P., Acerbo, F. M., & Abocejo, F. T. (2022). Reading comprehension levels and instructional support among elementary learners. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 115, 102041.
- Alicante, R., & Pontillas, P. (2025). Reading proficiency among indigenous learners in Opol District Schools, Misamis Oriental. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Analysis*, 8. <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijmra/v8-i02-36>
- Almacen, M., & Labitad, J. (2024). Students' performance using multimedia lessons in Filipino. *Philippine Journal of Literacy and Education*, 12(1), 34–45.
- Alqahtani, A. (2024). Technology-supported reading interventions for struggling readers. *Journal of Educational Technology Research*, 18(2), 101–118.
- Bagay, J. (2024). Teaching literacy in multigrade classrooms: Strategies and challenges. *Philippine Journal of Multigrade Instruction*, 5(1), 44–60.
- Barotas, H., & Palma, E. (2023). Learner engagement and reading motivation. *Journal of Basic Education Studies*, 21(3), 54–67.
- Bendanillo, R. (2021). Parent–teacher communication and reading achievement. *Philippine Journal of Educational Studies*, 15(2), 88–102.
- Bruggink, M., Goei, S. L., & van Joolingen, W. (2022). Feedback, motivation, and reading engagement in elementary education. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 54(3), 312–334.
- Buelow, S., & Frambaugh-Kritzer, C. (2025, August 20). Reading, writing, and rising: Centering literacy in learner-centered education. *Learner-Centered Collaborative*. <https://learnercentered.org/blog/literacy-in-a-learner-centered-environment/>
- Castro, Q. A. S. (2024). Frustration readers in senior high school: A case study. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 8(12), 2396–2409. <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRIS.2024.8120199>
- Cremin, T. (2022). Reading motivation and engagement among young learners. *Journal of Literacy Studies*, 14(2), 55–72.
- Crisologo, R. (2025). Multigrade literacy instruction challenges. *Philippine Education Review*, 12(1), 77–88.
- Dayagbil, F. T., Palompon, D. R., Garcia, L. L., & Olvido, M. M. (2020). Teaching and learning continuity amid and beyond the pandemic. *Frontiers in Education*, 5, 576371. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2020.576371>
- Department of Education. (2016). Policy guidelines on the implementation of the Comprehensive Reading Program (DepEd Order No. 16, s. 2016). <https://www.deped.gov.ph>
- Department of Education. (2021). Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs) initiative. <https://www.deped.gov.ph>
- Department of Education. (2022). Project Digi-Reads. <https://www.deped.gov.ph>
- Department of Education. (2024). In-Service Training (INSET) program framework. <https://www.deped.gov.ph>
- DepEd Tagbilaran City Division. (2021). Phil-IRI implementation and reading performance report. Department of Education.
- Education Development Center. (2021). Teacher training and literacy outcomes. Education Development Center.
- Funelas-Hacutina, A. (2025). Reading interventions in multigrade schools. *Mindanao Journal of Literacy and Development*, 6(1), 34–52.
- Gagno, M. (2022). Effects of reading intervention on Phil-IRI performance. *Philippine Journal of Literacy Research*, 9(2), 110–125.
- Gementiza, J. I., & Alda, R. (2023). Reading instruction in multigrade classes: A narrative inquiry. *Interdisciplinary Research Review*, 18(3), 41–48.
- Gementiza, L., & Alda, B. (2021). Reading challenges in multigrade classrooms. *Philippine Journal of Elementary Education*, 10(3), 87–101.
- Griffin, T., & Scullin, M. (2024). Multimedia literacy tools and reading comprehension. *Journal of Educational Technology*, 16(1), 77–92.
- Gulay, P., & Pontillas, P. (2024). Reading motivation and comprehension in multigrade classrooms. *Journal of Philippine Literacy Education*, 7(1), 15–31.

- Guven, S., & Haddad, J. (2023). Motivation and literacy progress. *Journal of Learning and Instruction*, 45(2), 299–315.
- Judijanto, R., & Rusiadi, B. (2024). Impact of digital learning tools on literacy. *International Journal of Digital Education*, 7(1), 55–66.
- Lucas, R. I. G., Bernardo, A. B. I., & Garcia, J. M. (2021). Home–school collaboration and learner achievement. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 22(3), 411–424.
- Macalawi, R., & Osias, K. (2023). Parental support and reading development. *Philippine Journal of Basic Education*, 18(1), 44–59.
- Maquiling, J. (2025). Flexible grouping strategies in multigrade classrooms. *Journal of Multigrade Teaching*, 8(1), 60–75.
- Marin, V., & Castañeda, L. (2022). Digital literacy in blended learning. *Journal of Digital Education*, 7(2), 112–130.
- Miller, A. (2021). Impact of guided reading on student motivation. *Reading Psychology*, 42(3), 260–278.
- Mirasol, J., & Topacio, R. (2021). Parent involvement and reading engagement. *Philippine Journal of Educational Practice*, 14(2), 72–86.
- Misanes, B. J., & Pascual, J. E. (2023). Reading frustration level among elementary learners: Basis for intervention. *Philippine Journal of Reading Research*, 10(1), 45–60.
- Mosher, C., & Kim, Y.-S. (2023). Guided reading and comprehension outcomes for struggling readers. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 58(2), 289–310.
- Nabong, P., & Ferenal, J. (2025). Digital reading habits and comprehension. *Misamis Oriental Education Journal*, 4(1), 90–104.
- Naparan, G., & Alinsug, V. (2021). Teaching strategies in multigrade classrooms. *Asia Pacific Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 9(4), 49–58.
- Natividad, L., & Tangalin, C. (2023). Reading comprehension and learner motivation. *Journal of Basic Education Studies*, 22(1), 71–82.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2023). PISA 2022 results: Reading performance. <https://www.oecd.org/pisa>
- Peng, P., Wang, W., Filderman, M. J., Zhang, W., & Lin, L. (2024). The active ingredient in reading comprehension strategy intervention for struggling readers: A Bayesian network meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 94(2), 228–267. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543231171345>
- Perez, M., & Labitad, J. (2025). Creating child-friendly school environments. *Journal of Educational Development*, 17(2), 55–70.
- Perry, S. J. A., Flores, M. L., Casing, E. B., Mandawe, R. J., & Valle, A. M. (2025). Students' reading motivation and comprehension skills. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Analysis*. <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijmra/v8-i03-16>
- PhilAtlas. (n.d.). Misamis Oriental. <https://www.philatlas.com/mindanao/r10/misamis-oriental.html>
- Po, L., Ersando, D. F. L., Ersando, M. J., Homecillo, D., Quitara, F., Amaquin, M. J., Quezon, A., Balanay, M. Z., & Mascardo, R. (2025). Leveraging tiered instruction strategy to enhance reading comprehension and quality education: An action research among early elementary learners in the Philippines. *Recoletos Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, 13(2), 35–42. <https://doi.org/10.32871/rmrj2513.02.05>
- Rice, M., Lambright, K., & Wijekumar, K. (2024). Professional development in reading comprehension. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 59(3), 424–447.
- Saguino, M. (2024). Reading readiness and Phil-IRI results. *Philippine Journal of Literacy Studies*, 11(2), 34–50.
- Scarborough, H. S. (2023). Connecting early language and reading comprehension. *Educational Psychologist*, 58(2), 61–78.
- Shulman, L. S. (1986). Those who understand: Knowledge growth in teaching. *Educational Researcher*, 15(2), 4–14.
- Suson, R., Barabate, C., Anoos, W., Ermac, E., Aranas, A. G., Malabago, N., Galamiton, N., & Capuyan, D. (2020). Differentiated instruction for basic reading comprehension in Philippine settings. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 8(9), 3814–3824. <https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2020.080904>
- Tampus, R. (2024). Post-test reading gains in Phil-IRI. *Philippine Journal of Educational Assessment*, 13(1), 15–29.
- Tolibas, J. (2025). Reading difficulties in intermediate learners. *Journal of Philippine Literacy Education*, 5(2), 67–82.
- Tomas, L. P., Villaros, R. T., & Galman, A. D. (2021). Foundational reading skills and comprehension outcomes. *Asia Pacific Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 9(4), 12–21.
- Van der Sande, L., van Steensel, R., Fikrat-Wevers, S., & Arends, L. (2023). Interventions that foster reading motivation: A meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, 35, Article 21.