

Embracing Challenges: How Elementary Teachers in District II-B of Olongapo City, Zambales, Philippines Encompass Reading Losses Ensuing the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract: After the historic school closures which happened globally due to Covid-19 pandemic, most schools around the world are now back open. Nonetheless, it is seen that education is still in recovery from the losses incurred by the pandemic, especially in reading. Thus, this paper intended to examine how elementary teachers encompass reading losses ensuing the Covid-19 pandemic. To test the hypothesis, the researcher surveyed the randomly selected elementary teachers and reading coordinators in four schools in District II-B of the Schools Division of Olongapo City, Zambales, Philippines. Findings suggested that in the new normal settings, the teachers always meet the challenges in establishing health protocols, in the development of instructional materials, in their psychosocial preparations and in the effective delivery of reading strategies. Teachers always implement strategies in maintaining the health and safety of the learners, in providing appropriate reading materials, in strengthening learning support system and mitigate the number of non-readers during the new normal. Based on the summary of the investigations conducted and the conclusions arrived at, the researcher therefore recommends that teachers in District II-B of Olongapo City may opt to pursue graduate degree programs to acquire advancement in the teaching profession. Parents and other stakeholders may extend support in providing needed resources and that teachers may propose programs in targeting the identified non-readers and find support among their parents. Teachers handling lower grade levels may seek advice from the teachers in the higher grade levels in handling the challenges of teaching reading in the new normal. Also, the school may implement a single proposed project in mitigating the non-readers or enhancing the teaching strategies in reading.

Keywords: Reading challenges, Reading interventions, Learning interventions.

1. Introduction

In December of 2019, the global outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has affected almost every country in the world. Lockdown and home quarantining strategies have been endorsed as immediate solutions in flattening the curve and in controlling the transmission of the disease (Sintema, 2020). Undeniably, Covid-19 pandemic had posted a lot of changes in various fields including the field of education. It resulted to the

closures of schools worldwide which also affects millions of students. “Emergency Remote Teaching, as a temporary solution (Bozkurt and Sharma, 2020) has been embraced by educational institutions to lessen the effects of pandemic in education. Nonetheless, despite the efforts exerted by the government, it was found that many students at home have undergone psychological distress and were unable to engage in class productively (Pokhrel, S., & Chhetri, R. (2021); Petrie, 2020). Because of such, there is a widespread concern among parents, educators, and policy makers alike that the Covid-19 pandemic will result in substantial deficits in student learning. Specifically, when it comes to formative skills such as reading and math, school closures may result in learning-loss with compounding impacts over time (Kuhfeld, Soland et al., 2020; Dorn et al., 2020). Some evidence focusing on the results of standardized assessments that focus on a suite of skills suggest relatively limited losses, especially in reading (Kuhfeld, Tarasawa et al., 2020; Renaissance Learning, 2020).

The reopening of face-to-face classes ensuing the Covid-19 pandemic entails preparation as schools had to pass the School Safety Assessment (SSAT), a guideline issued by the inter-agency task force on safe school reopening as stated under the Philippine Joint Memorandum circular 1, s. 2021, which is also a strategy based on the notion of shared responsibilities. The alarming possibility of dealing with the learning losses and gaps that might have incurred in the past two years became a huge concern for the teachers. Knowing that being in the forefront of class reopening, they were the ones given with these enormous tasks.

This study aimed to introduce the challenges faced by the elementary teachers in teaching reading in District II-B in the Division of Olongapo City ensuing Covid-19 pandemic, how their teaching was affected with these, and how they retorted to respond to its future challenges. The study also aimed to recommend ways on how the educational institutions may enrich the existing teaching strategies to enhance the reading skills of students which is seen to be one of the detriments of

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their learning.

2. Methods

Research Design: The study followed a mixed method research design where the combination of Quantitative and Qualitative design was utilized. Furthermore, the study aimed to assess the challenges met by the elementary teachers in teaching reading and the interventions they intended to do to address such. Quantitative data were the ones gathered from the respondents through survey questionnaires and were intended to test the hypotheses. The researcher also conducted qualitative research that implicates not using numbers in gathering data but by asking the school reading coordinators to answer an open-ended survey questionnaire. These questionnaires were later collected, analyzed, and interpreted to explain and support the data gathered. This led the researcher to gain further understanding of the topic which was “the result of research and is due to an iterative process in which data, concepts, and evidence relate to one another (Becker, 2017). It was much easier to identify and assess using a survey questionnaire since, “Qualitative research is an interpretive naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011).

Respondents: At the time of the conduct of the research, the four identified schools in District II-B including Barretto I Elementary School, Barretto II Elementary School, Mabayan Elementary School, and Nellie E. Brown Elementary School had a total number of 137 elementary teachers to which from such, the researcher randomly selected the eighty-six (86) respondents and eight (8) school reading coordinators (Key Stage 1 and 2) which comprises more than 60% of the total population. All the teacher respondents were public school teachers who were randomly selected from the same chosen elementary schools in District II-B of the Division of Olongapo City, Zambales, Philippines. Table 1 presents the Frequency and Distribution of the respondents included in the study.

Instrument: The researcher utilized a researcher-made questionnaire for the data gathering process to get qualitative and quantitative data. The primary aim of the questionnaire was to determine the challenges met by the elementary school teachers in teaching reading ensuing the Covid-19 pandemic. The respondents’ profiles were gathered to support the researcher’s data. The research used a four-point scale where the respondents checked if it is always, often, rarely, or never. Open-ended questions were given to the school reading coordinator participants to get their answers. Both the survey and open-ended questionnaires were initially validated by a licensed statistician and were subjected to the checking of the adviser before submission to the panel of examiners to ensure their alignment and validity for the study. The questionnaires were administered to all the intended respondents of the study. The instrument had undergone a reliability testing, and the result is presented in Table 2.

It can be seen on Table 2 that the Cronbach’s alpha coefficients in all of the variables under challenges and interventions applied are greater than 0.7.

This indicates inter-correlation and consistency in the items of each of the indicators, which means reliability of the instruments. This prompted the researcher to continue the data collection using the research instrument.

Data Collection and Analysis: Prior the data gathering procedure, the researcher made sure that the survey questionnaires were suitable, reliable, direct to the point, and were validated by the selected experts. It was further checked by the research adviser and the arrangements that had to be made were identified, making sure that the forms were valid, comprehensible, and well-organized. A letter of permission to conduct a study was made and sought for approval from the Schools Division Superintendent of the Schools Division of Olongapo City. The researcher made sure that the abovementioned letter was approved first before requesting the conduct of research from the principal of each identified school. A letter of permission to conduct a study was also constructed and sent to the school principals of the four identified schools

Table 1
Frequency and distribution of the respondents

Elementary Schools	Frequency of Elementary Teachers	Frequency of School Reading Coordinator	
		Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Barretto I	22	1	1
Barretto II	21	1	1
Mabayuan	22	1	1
Nellie E. Brown	21	1	1
Total	86	4	4

Table 2
Reliability test for the instrument

Challenges in Teaching Reading	Cronbach’s Alpha	No. of Items
Establishing Health Protocols	.843	5
Development of Instructional Materials	.840	5
Psychosocial Preparation	.740	5
Effective Delivery of Reading Strategies	.923	5
Interventions Applied in Teaching Reading	Cronbach’s Alpha	No. of items
Maintaining Learners’ Health and Safety	.783	5
Provision of Appropriate Reading Materials	.901	5
Strengthening Learning Support System	.707	5
Mitigating the Number of Non-Readers	.771	5

Note: Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient > 0.7 denotes reliability

along with the approved letter of permission to conduct a study from the Schools Division Office as an attachment and reference. The letters sent were all subjected to the approval of the school heads of the four (4) identified schools in District II-B prior to the conduct of the actual study. Evaluation checklists were given to eighty-six (86) elementary teachers and eight (8) school reading coordinators, all of whom were engaged in teaching reading. Finally, all the gathered data were strictly treated with utmost confidentiality and were made sure that are intended to be used for academic purposes only. Data taken were translated in English and were discussed clearly and thoroughly.

After collecting the data from the respondents, it was organized, recorded, tabulated, and interpreted using the appropriate statistical tools including frequency and percentage distribution, weighted mean, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), rating scale which is used for interpreting the results, and Pearson “r” Coefficient of Correlation which was used to determine the extent of linear relationship between the challenges met and the interventions applied in teaching reading during the new normal.

3. Results and Discussion

Profile of the Respondents: Profile variables were hypothesized in this study to be associated with the challenges that teachers meet in teaching reading ensuing the COVID19

pandemic and their interventions applied. Greater proportions (24.42% or 21 out of 86) of the teacher respondents belong to age band 31 – 37 while 15 (17.44%) are 38 – 44 years old. The mean age 42.39 years indicates that the respondents are middle adults. This is in accordance with Paretts (2018) who updated that mid-adulthood stage ranges from age 31 – 50.

Majority (89.53% or 77 out of 86) of the teacher respondents are female and there were 9 (10.47%) males. This indicates that the teachers in District II-B Olongapo City are mostly represented by female educators. This finding adheres to the findings of Ladea (2021) that teacher population in Olongapo is mostly represented by female educators. Majority (66.28% or 57 out of 86) of the teacher respondents are bachelor’s degree level and two (2.33%) of them already are doctoral degree holders. This implies that most of the teachers have not pursued their graduate studies for professional advancement. Greater proportions (44.19% or 38 out of 86) of the teacher respondents have been the teaching for 1-10 years while three (3.49%) of the teachers have been in the teaching service for 41 years or more. Greater proportion (22.09% or 19 out of 86) of the teacher respondents handle Grade IV and there were 9 teachers who handles Grade III level.

A. Challenges Met in Teaching Reading

Establishing Health Protocols: This refers to the detailed plans that teachers implement to ensure that health and safety of the learners are ensured. Table 4 presents the mean analysis

Table 3
Frequency distribution and percentage of teacher respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	%
Age (in years) (Mean=42.39)	24 – 30	11	12.79
	31 – 37	21	24.42
	38 – 44	15	17.44
	45 – 51	20	23.26
	52 – 59	19	22.09
Sex	Male	9	10.47
	Female	77	89.53
Highest Educational Attainment	Bachelor Degree	57	66.28
	Master Degree	27	31.40
	Doctorate	2	2.33
Length of Teaching Service	1 – 10	38	44.19
	11 – 20	20	23.26
	21 – 30	17	19.77
	31 – 40	8	9.30
	41 and above	3	3.49
Grade Level Handled	Grade I	11	12.79
	Grade II	13	15.12
	Grade III	9	10.47
	Grade IV	19	22.09
	Grade V	16	18.60
	Grade VI	18	20.93

Table 4
Establishing health protocols

Indicators	Wt. Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
I see to it that the needed preparations for the reopening of classes were made months before its actual conduct.	3.74	Always
I follow safety guidelines including the provision of a hand washing facility in the classroom, trash bins, and spacing of seating arrangements.	3.73	Always
I offer a conducive learning environment for my learners by posting signage, repainting the walls, and decorating my classroom.	3.70	Always
I receive support from the stakeholders in providing the needed resources such as cleaning materials, health kits, sanitizing materials, and the like.	3.41	Often
I find it easy to comply with all the requirements stated in the safety guideline for my classroom to pass the validation.	3.55	Always
Composite	3.63	Always

on the indicators of establishing health protocols.

It can be seen on Table 4 that the teachers garnered the highest mean rate of 3.74 which indicates that they Always see to it that the needed preparations for the reopening of classes were made months before its actual conduct. They had the lowest mean rate of 3.41 which indicates that they Often receive support from the stakeholders in providing the needed resources such as cleaning materials, health kits, sanitizing materials, and the like.

The composite value 3.63 indicates that the teachers Always follow safety guidelines including the provision of a hand washing facility in the classroom, trash bins, and spacing of seating arrangements and offer a conducive learning environment for my learners by posting signage, repainting the walls, and decorating my classroom.

Development of Instructional Materials: This covers the construction of resources that organize and support reading instructions and interventions, crafted or acquired, including textbooks, activity sheets, additional tasks, and other supplementary resources.

Table 5 presents the mean analysis on the challenges met by the teachers in the development of instructional materials.

The teachers Always (3.77) have to prepare new sets of instructional materials aligned with the Most Learning Competencies (MELCs). They garnered a lowest rating of 3.48 which indicates that they Often have access to the available reading materials in the school’s Learning Resource Center (LRC). The Composite value 3.59 indicates that the teachers Always have to prepare reading materials suitable for the reading level of the learners profiled as Beginning Readers

(Key Stage 1) and Non-Readers (Key Stage 2) and have to access to credible learning/reading materials available online. These imply that the teachers need to allot additional time for the crafting of instructional materials suited for the situation in this new normal. This reinforces the claim of the study conducted by Tarrayo & Anundin (2023) that participants shared challenges in material developments including time constraint in preparing instructional materials, limited sources, and difficulty in adjusting materials for online teaching.

Psychosocial Preparation: This refers to the range of techniques which aim to change what people think, how they feel, or what they do that affects their normal way of living after the pandemic. Table 6 shows the mean analysis on the psychosocial preparation of teachers. The teachers garnered a highest mean rate of 3.70 which indicates that they Always physically, mentally, and emotionally adjust on their first few days of teaching face-to-face classes. They had a lowest rating of 3.42 indicating that they Often notice that most of the students feel uneasy during the start of their reading practices limited face-to-face class. The composite value 3.57 indicates that the teachers Always vary the approaches and strategies they use in teaching depending on the level of the learners they handle and adjust the way they teach and interact with their learners especially those who were enrolled in distance learning modalities.

Effective Delivery of Reading Strategies: Reading strategies refer to the planned and explicit actions that help readers translate print to meaning. Table 7 shows the mean analysis on the challenges met for teachers’ effective delivery of their reading strategies.

Table 5
Development of instructional materials

Indicators	Wt. Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
I have to prepare new sets of instructional materials aligned with the Most Learning Competencies (MELCs)	3.77	Always
I prepare reading materials suitable for the reading level of the learners profiled as Beginning Readers (Key Stage 1) and Non-Readers (Key Stage 2).	3.70	Always
I craft my reading materials (e.g., video lessons, and short stories) to suit the reading level of my learners.	3.49	Often
I can easily have access to credible learning/reading materials available online	3.50	Always
I have access to the available reading materials in the school’s Learning Resource Center (LRC)	3.48	Often
Composite	3.59	Always

Table 6
Psychosocial preparation

Indicators	Wt. Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
I physically, mentally, and emotionally adjust on my first few days of teaching face-to-face classes.	3.70	Always
I notice that most of the students feel uneasy during the start of their reading practices limited face-to-face class.	3.42	Often
I adjust the way I teach and interact with my learners especially those who were enrolled in distance learning modalities.	3.63	Always
I vary the approaches and strategies I use in teaching depending on the level of the learners I handle.	3.66	Always
I can easily approach the parents and guardians of my learners whenever I have concerns about the children’s performance.	3.45	Often
Composite	3.57	Always

Table 7
Effective delivery of reading strategies

Indicators	Wt. Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
I can assure you that the reading practices I give are suitable to the learner’s level and need.	3.69	Always
I teach according to the prescribed guideline by the department.	3.74	Always
I use appropriate reading materials suitable for the grade and reading level of the respondents.	3.77	Always
I ensure the formulation of proper interventions to address the reading gaps and losses incurred due to the pandemic.	3.64	Always
I am sure that I am equipped with the proper training in teaching reading.	3.62	Always
Composite	3.69	Always

Table 8
Maintaining learners' health and safety

Indicator	Wt. Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
I ensure that all the safety and health protocols are firmly established in class.	3.84	Always
I make sure that the health protocols implemented by the school are being followed by all the learners and the parents before the start of the class.	3.84	Always
I prepare all the necessary safety and health materials and signages to ensure the safe conduct of reading practices.	3.87	Always
I schedule reading practices based on the reading level and availability of the learners.	3.69	Always
I provide facilities that promote health and safety such as washing or sanitizing hands, checking temperature before any reading practices, and the like.	3.66	Always
Composite	3.78	Always

Table 9
Provision of appropriate reading materials

Indicator	Wt. Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
I coordinate with my subject coordinator for the available reading materials and resources.	3.64	Always
I checked the availability of all the materials to be used in teaching reading before the actual reading practices with the learners.	3.72	Always
I make sure that as much as possible, there is a 1:1 ratio between the learners and the reading materials.	3.62	Always
I make sure that the reading materials to be used are updated and that the approaches are suitable for the learners.	3.67	Always
I request supplementary reading materials to support my teaching reading whenever needed.	3.53	Always
Composite	3.64	Always

Table 10
Strengthening learning support system

Indicator	Wt. Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
I collaborate with all the school's stakeholders whenever there are reading activities or practices in which they may take part.	3.50	Always
I receive support from the school and community stakeholders for the needed materials and resources for reading practices.	3.33	Often
I seek advice from my colleagues on which strategies and approaches are better to use in teaching reading.	3.69	Always
I collaborate with my colleagues in preparing or developing instructional materials for the different reading levels of our learners.	3.62	Always
I update the parents about the reading level of their children and collaborate with them for the extension of reading practices at home.	3.78	Always
Composite	3.58	Always

The teachers had the highest mean rate of 3.77 which indicates that they Always use appropriate reading materials suitable for the grade and reading level of the learners. The lowest mean rate 3.62 indicates that they are Always sure that they are equipped with the proper training in teaching reading.

The composite value 3.69 indicates that the teachers Always teach according to the prescribed guideline by the department, ensure the formulation of proper interventions to address the reading gaps and losses incurred due to the pandemic and make sure that the reading practices they give are suitable to the learner's levels and needs.

B. Interventions Applied in Teaching Reading

Maintaining Learners' Health and Safety: Table 8 presents the interventions applied in maintaining the health and safety of learners. It can be seen on Table 8 that the teachers had the highest mean rate of 3.87 which indicates that they Always they prepare all the necessary safety and health materials and signages to ensure the safe conduct of reading practices. The lowest mean rate 3.66 indicates that they Always provide activities that promote health and safety such as washing or sanitizing hands, checking temperature before any reading practices, and the like. The composite value of 3.78 indicates that the teacher Always maintain the health and safety of the learners.

They ensure that all the safety and health protocols are firmly established in class and make sure that the health protocols

implemented by the school are being followed by all the learners and the parents before the start of the class.

Provision of Appropriate Reading Materials: Table 9 presents the strategies that teachers apply to provide appropriate reading materials. It can be seen on Table 9 that the teachers had the highest mean rate of 3.72 which indicates that they Always check the availability of all the materials to be used in teaching reading before the actual reading practices with the learners.

The lowest mean rate 3.53 indicates that they Always request supplementary reading materials to support their teaching reading whenever needed. The composite value of 3.64 indicates that the teachers Always provide appropriate reading materials for the learners. They make sure that the reading materials to be used are updated and that the approaches are suitable for the learners and that there is a 1:1 ratio between the learners and the reading materials.

Strengthening Learning Support System: Table 10 presents the strategies that teachers apply in strengthening learning support system.

The teachers had the highest mean rate of 3.78 which indicates that they Always update the parents about the reading level of their children and collaborate with them for the extension of reading practices at home. The lowest mean rate 3.33 indicates that they Often receive support from the school and community stakeholders for the needed materials and resources for reading practices.

The composite value of 3.58 indicates that the teacher Always strengthen learning support system to enhance teaching learning. They always collaborate with all the school's stakeholders whenever there are reading activities or practices in which they may take part and collaborate with their colleagues in preparing or developing instructional materials for the different reading levels of our learners. This supports the findings on the study conducted by Bartolome, Mamat, & Masnan (2017) indicating that parents, teachers, and school should be working hand in hand in preparing children spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually. This is also based on the works of Epstein (1994) which stated that parents and schools recognize shared interests in and responsibilities for children, and they work together to create better programs and opportunities for students.

C. Mitigating the Number of Non-Readers

This refers to the interventions applied to zero-out learners who belong to non-reader levels. Table 11 presents the interventions applied in mitigating the number non-readers in the schools.

It can be seen on Table 11 that the teachers had the highest mean rate of 3.79 which indicates that they Always use appropriate reading materials for the practices and intervention of my learners. The lowest mean rate 3.28 indicates that they

Often propose projects targeting the development of reading of my learners identified as Non-Readers.

The composite value of 3.59 indicates that the teachers Always implement interventions to mitigate the number of non-readers in. They always monitor the reading improvements and development of my learners through the pre, during, and post-reading assessments. Moreover, reading coordinator #1 that: *"We conducted a reading parent officers, they will be the one to help me in remedial reading is part of my intervention for my struggling readers."*

D. Difference on Teachers' Challenges Met in Teaching Reading when Grouped According to Profile Variables

At .05 level, the researcher hypothesized the influence of the profile variables of teachers on the challenges met in teaching reading. Table 12 presents the summarized analyses of variances on teachers' challenges met in teaching reading.

It can be seen on Table 12 that in terms of the challenges Establishing Health Protocols (F=6.537, p=.000), Development of Instructional Materials (F=3.273, p=.010) and Effective Delivery of Reading Strategies (F=3.222, p=.011), profile variable Grade Level Handled has significance values that are less than the set alpha level ($\alpha=05$). This signifies rejection of the null hypothesis; hence, there are significant differences on the challenges that teachers met in teaching reading. Mean

Table 11
Mitigating number of non-readers

Indicator	Wt. Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
I schedule the daily reading practices of my learners identified as Non-Readers.	3.74	Always
I use appropriate reading materials for the practices and intervention of my learners.	3.79	Always
I monitor the reading improvements and development of my learners through the pre, during, and post-reading assessments.	3.77	Always
I propose projects targeting the development of reading of my learners identified as Non-Readers.	3.28	Often
I find support from the stakeholders to provide learning and other reading materials which may be of help to the learners.	3.38	Often
Composite	3.59	Always

Table 12
ANOVA on teachers' challenges met in teaching reading across profile variables

Profile Variables	Establishing Health Protocols		Development of Instructional Materials		Psychosocial Preparation		Effective Delivery of Reading Strategies	
	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.
Age (df=4, 81)	.688	.602	.020	.999	.618	.651	.807	.524
Sex (df=1, 84)	.018	.893	1.918	.170	.088	.768	.219	.641
Highest Educational Attainment (df=2, 83)	.749	.476	.595	.554	.645	.528	.487	.616
Length of Teaching Service (df=4, 81)	2.060	.094	1.149	.340	.307	.872	.215	.929
Grade Level Handled (df=5, 80)	6.537*	.000	3.273*	.010	1.756	.131	3.222*	.011

*Difference Significant at .05 level

Table 13
ANOVA on interventions applied in teaching reading across profile variables

Profile Variables	Maintaining Learners' Health and Safety		Provision of Appropriate Reading Materials		Strengthening Learning Support System		Mitigating the Number of Non-Readers	
	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.
Age (df=4, 81)	.265	.899	2.230	.073	1.449	.225	.863	.490
Sex (df=1, 84)	3.525	.064	.181	.672	.858	.357	1.248	.267
Highest Educational Attainment (df=2, 83)	1.393	.254	.334	.717	.367	.694	1.092	.340
Length of Teaching Service (df=4, 81)	.677	.610	.231	.920	.285	.887	.892	.473
Grade Level Handled (df=5, 80)	2.358*	.048	.664	.652	2.196	.063	1.934	.098

*Difference Significant at .05 level

Table 14
Correlation between challenges met and interventions applied in teaching reading

Challenges Met in Teaching Reading	Coefficients	Interventions Applied in Teaching Reading			
		Maintaining Learners' Health and Safety	Provision of Appropriate Reading Materials	Strengthening Learning Support System	Mitigating the Number of Non-Readers
Establishing Health Protocols	r	.591**	.445**	.388**	.633**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	86	86	86	86
Development of Instructional Materials	r	.542**	.536**	.449**	.632**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	86	86	86	86
Psychosocial Preparation	r	.682**	.559**	.531**	.560**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	86	86	86	86
Effective Delivery of Reading Strategies	r	.654**	.445**	.388**	.732**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	86	86	86	86

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

analysis revealed that teachers who teach in the upper-level grades have higher mean ratings which indicates that they are more often challenged by the situation of the new normal in teaching reading. This implies that teachers in the higher grade level have more experiences and have sufficient knowledge on the challenges in teaching reading.

E. Difference on Interventions Applied in Teaching Reading when Teachers are Grouped According to Profile Variables

At .05 level, the researcher hypothesized the influence of the profile variables of teachers on the interventions applied in teaching reading.

Table 13 presents the summarized analyses of variances on teachers' interventions applied in teaching reading.

In terms of the intervention Maintaining Learners' Health and Safety ($F=2.358$, $p=.048$), profile variable grade level handled has a significance value that is less than the set alpha level. This prompts rejection of the null hypothesis. Hence, there is significant difference on the interventions applied when teachers are grouped according to grade level handled. It indicates that they vary on how they maintain the health and safety of learners per grade level. It can be seen on mean analysis found in Appendix H that teachers handling the sixth-grade level had a highest mean rate compared to teachers handling lower grade levels. Reading coordinator said that "*the attitudes & values of learners in the classroom situation were so indifferent & abnormal.*" It implies that teachers in the higher grade levels face a more non-normal attitude and values of learners.

F. Relationship between Challenges Met and the Interventions Applied in Teaching Reading

Table 14 presents the correlation between the challenges that teachers meet in teaching reading and the interventions applied during the new normal.

A moderate high positive correlation existed between establishing health protocols ($r=.591$, $p=.000$), development of instructional materials ($r=.542$, $p=.000$), psychosocial preparation ($r=.682$, $p=.000$) and effective delivery of reading

strategies ($r=.654$, $p=.000$) and the maintaining learners' health and safety, which are all significant at .01 alpha level. This prompts rejection of the null hypothesis among the variables, hence, indicates a positive relationship between challenges met in establishing health protocols, in developing instructional materials, in the teachers' psychosocial preparation, in the delivery of reading strategies and the interventions they apply in order to maintain the health and safety of the learners.

A moderate low positive correlation exists between establishing health protocols ($r=.445$, $p=.000$) and effective delivery of reading strategies ($r=.445$, $p=.000$) and provision of appropriate reading materials while a moderate high positive correlation exist between development of instructional materials ($r=.536$, $p=.000$), psychosocial preparation ($r=.5599$, $p=.000$) and provision of appropriated reading materials which are significant at .01 alpha level. These summarize a positive relationship among these variables. These implies that as the teachers experience greater challenges in all of the variables taken, they are more obliged to provide appropriate reading materials for the learners that are suited to the situation in the new normal. This supports the findings from the study conducted by Reyes, et al. (2023) exploring teachers' strategies, challenges, and coping mechanisms in helping struggling readers in the new normal where results show that teachers utilize various strategies to help struggling readers such as conducting remedial classes, using phonetics, doing simultaneous reading and integrating games and reading materials.

A moderate low positive correlation exists between strengthening learning support system and establishing health protocols ($r=.388$, $p=.000$), development of instructional materials ($r=.449$, $p=.000$) and effective delivery of reading strategies ($r=.388$, $p=.000$), and a moderate high positive correlation with psychosocial preparation ($r=.531$, $p=.000$) which are significant at .01 alpha level. Hence the null hypothesis among all the variables was rejected, hence positive relationships among the variables in consideration.

A moderate high positive correlation exists between

establishing health protocols ($r=.633$, $p=.000$), development of instructional materials ($r=.632$, $p=.000$), psychosocial preparation ($r=.560$, $p=.000$) and effective delivery of reading strategies ($r=.732$, $p=.000$) and mitigating the number of non-readers, which are all significant at .01 alpha level. This prompts rejection of the null hypotheses among the variables, hence, indicates a positive relationship between challenges met in establishing in teaching reading and the interventions they apply in order to mitigate the number of non-readers. It implies as they are more challenged by their experiences in teaching reading during the new normal, they apply more interventions to mitigate the number of non-readers. It supports the findings of the study conducted by Serrano-Mendizábal, et al. (2023) which highlighted the key role of strategy instruction in fostering deep comprehension when employing interventions in task-oriented reading. These results further pointed out the need to analyze how learners manage the instructional aids offered to them.

4. Conclusion

From the findings of the study, the researcher draws the following conclusions: *First*, a typical public school teacher teaching in District II-B of Olongapo City is a mid-adult female, a baccalaureate degree holder who had been in the teaching service at least a decade handling an intermediate grade level. *Second*, in the new normal settings, the teachers always meet the challenges in establishing health protocols, in the development of instructional materials, in their psychosocial preparations and in the effective delivery of reading strategies. *Third*, the teachers had to always implement strategies in maintaining the health and safety of the learners, in providing appropriate reading materials, in strengthening learning support system and to mitigate the number of non-readers during the new normal. *Fourth*, as compared to their counterparts, teachers handling higher grade levels more frequently experience and meet the challenges establishing health protocols, in developing instructional materials and in delivering reading strategies effectively in the new normal. *Fifth*, the teachers handling higher grade level more frequently apply interventions in teaching reading in the new normal. *Lastly*, the more challenges that teachers met in teaching reading, the more that they craft and apply interventions in order to maintain the health and safety of learners, provide appropriate reading materials, strengthen learning support system and to mitigate the number of non-readers.

5. Recommendations

From the findings and conclusions draw, the researcher recommends the following actions:

1. The teachers in District II-B Olongapo City may opt to pursue graduate degree programs in order to acquire advancement in the teaching profession.
2. Parents and other stakeholders may extend support in providing needed resources in the schools in the new normal in order to ensure health and safety among the learners and in the enhancement of teaching reading

activities.

3. The teachers may propose programs in targeting the identified non-readers and find support among their parents.
4. Teachers handling lower grade levels may seek advice from the teachers in the higher grade levels in handling the challenges of teaching reading in the new normal.
5. The school may implement a single proposed project in mitigating the non-readers or enhancing the teaching strategies in reading.
6. A follow-up study may be conducted to validate and support the results of this research paper.

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