



## Perceptions of Public School Intermediate-Level Teachers in the Implementation of the Catch-Up Friday Program

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### ABSTRACT

This study explored the perceptions of intermediate-level public school teachers regarding implementing the Catch-Up Day program. Six (6) intermediate-level teachers from a public school participated in this single case study, which aimed to understand teachers' views on the program designed to support struggling learners. Data were collected using an Interview Guide. The findings revealed that teachers view the Catch-Up Day program positively, recognizing its benefits for struggling learners despite it adding to their workload. The key strategies employed by teachers included sharing lesson plans with another teacher, using interactive activities, employing basic reading skills, using peer tutoring strategies, and incorporating enhancement activities. Despite encountering challenges such as increased workload, pupils' poor reading comprehension, lack of parental support, and lack of pupils' interest, teachers managed these obstacles by materials, providing take-home activities, communicating with parents, and providing interactive reading activities. Teachers agreed on the program's effectiveness in improving students' reading skills and explained the need for adequate resources and support to ensure its continued success. The recommendations from this study could help educators, school administrators, and policymakers improve the programs and make adjustments that effectively address the needs of teachers and students.

**Keywords :** Catch-Up Friday Program, Intermediate level Teacher, Perception

### Introduction

Reading is an essential skill that is a foundation for learning. It grants individuals enhanced access to their school curriculum, improves their interpersonal skills, and broadens their understanding of the world (Anglia, 2020). The purpose of reading is comprehension (Kasmawati, 2020). It is the ultimate measure of reading proficiency, embodying the process of extracting meaning from written passages (Alghonaim, 2020). In addition, it is the main objective among professional readers and is widely regarded as the most common assumption regarding the aim of reading (William, 2019). While reading serves as the foundation for learning and personal development, many individuals worldwide struggle with mastering this skill, leading to widespread reading difficulties across various countries. As Claessen et al. (2020) coined, reading difficulties are present worldwide. Global learning literacy is at crisis levels and continues to get worse. Countries with high literacy rates include Andorra, Finland, Greenland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Norway, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and North Korea. The United States is also among those with a 99% literacy rate, sharing this status with several other nations. In contrast, countries significantly below the global average in literacy rates include Chad (26.76%), Mali (30.76%), South Sudan (34.52%), Botswana (36.75%), Afghanistan (37.27%), and Niger (37.27%) (O' Connor, 2023). In the 2022 PISA, results showed that the performance of Filipino students in the three subject domains remained stable despite the COVID-19 pandemic; no

significant improvements were noted. In math, reading, and science, the Philippines was ranked as among the lowest performers among the 81 countries under the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries. In reading, the country ranked 79th. The OECD average is at Level 2 or 476, but the Philippines is at Level 1a or 347 (Malipot, 2022). Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) scored the lowest at 71.6%. The National Capital Region, on the other hand, registered the highest functional literacy at 96.5% (Archive, 2022). In Philippine education, many programs are being implemented to enhance the reading abilities of Filipino students. Through the years, DEPED has launched several programs to cater to the reading needs of the learners. These programs constitute a comprehensive effort to improve reading skills and comprehension among students. Among them is the Every Child a Reader Program (ECARP), mandated by the Department of Education (DepEd) through DepEd Memorandum No.402 s.2004 and Administrative Order No. 324, which aims to ensure that every child achieves reading proficiency by Grade 3.

The Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) is a national assessment tool gauges students' reading levels from Grades I to VI in 2012. Reading Recovery Program (RRP), backed by central office funding, targets early identification and intervention of literacy difficulties to prevent them from impacting a child's educational journey. Together, these programs aim to enhance students' reading skills and comprehension abilities across different levels of schooling (Sherill, 2022). However, despite implementing numerous programs and the longstanding recognition of reading comprehension as a crucial aspect of the learning journey, it remains a significant challenge for schools within the Philippine education system. Statistics from Philippine education highlights that 9 out of 10 children aged ten struggle with reading simple texts. Thomas et al. (2021) found that poor reading skills among learners can be attributed to several factors within a regular classroom setting. These include the presence of learners-at-risk, such as (1) non-readers in early grades who struggle with alphabet recognition and reading certain Filipino words, (2) the inclusion of learners with special educational needs (LSENs) without tailored assessment or teaching methods, impacting overall reading performance, and (3) frequent absenteeism due to family issues, further hindering reading progress. The study underscores the critical importance of reading proficiency for academic success. DepEd has taken coordinated action to recover and accelerate learning in response to the growth in learning poverty in the Philippines. The Department of Education (DepEd) addresses this issue by implementing "Catch-up Day." Implementing "Catch-up Day" is part of the learning recovery program to help improve students' reading, analysis, and comprehension skills. DEPED Secretary VP Sara Z. Duterte announced that the Department is developing a policy for "Catch-up Friday," which will allow every Friday of the week as a time for essential education learners to improve their reading and writing skills (Barcelona, 2023). The official guidelines for the said program are provided in DepEd Memorandum No. 001, s. 2024, all Fridays throughout the school year serve as Catch-up Days. The Catch-Up Friday program aims to strengthen fundamental, social, and other crucial skills required to fulfill the objectives of primary education. DepEd anticipated that students' capacities in reading, critical thinking, analysis, and writing would be enhanced through this initiative. The program's objectives align with the National Learning Recovery Program, which aims to provide comprehensive support for students nationwide and tackle the educational obstacles brought about by the pandemic (Paculba, 2024).

The Catch-up Day program is implemented for all learners in all public elementary and secondary schools and community learning centers nationwide to enhance students' academic performance in the K to 12 Basic Education Program, considering their low proficiency levels in reading based on national and international large-scale assessments. Teaching children to read with combined reading comprehension strategies has been shown to significantly improve children's reading proficiency (Cooter, 2019). In the Catch-up Day program, pupils' progress is monitored using self-reflection journals; grades are not assigned in this curriculum. Despite offering additional support to the pupils' academics, potential challenges and limitations can hinder this program's success. The existing literature has yet to extensively address teachers' experiences or perceptions in implementing Catch-up Friday; it only tackled the reading proficiency levels and perspectives of Grade 10 pupils. Consequently, this study aimed to understand the perceptions and challenges or obstacles intermediate-level teachers face in implementing the Catch-up Friday program. The results could help school administrators and policymakers make informed decisions about program design, implementation strategies, adjustments, and resource allocation to better meet teachers' needs. This research aimed to explore the perceptions of selected intermediate-level teachers from public schools in Pagadian City, Zamboanga Del Sur, Philippines, during the 2024 academic year.

## **Research Methodology**

The researchers employed a qualitative approach, conducting a case study based on the methodology outlined by Merriam (1998). The study took place in a public school in Pagadian City, Zamboanga Del Sur, Philippines, focusing on intermediate-level teachers from Grades 4 to 6. Specifically, the study involved six (6) intermediate-level teachers from a public elementary school that implemented the Catch-up Friday program. The main instruments in this study were the researchers themselves, aided by an interview guide. An interview guide includes a list of questions written out in full to prompt the interviewer to dig deeper and ask probing questions during the interview.

The participants' responses served as preliminary data subject to analysis and interpretation. The instrument focused on the participants' perceptions regarding the specific questions that led the researcher to obtain the primary data on the perceptions of public school intermediate-level teachers in implementing the Catch-Up Day program. The researchers observed the following steps. First, the researcher sent a formal letter to the school's principal where the study was conducted. Second, the researcher sought consent from a selection of intermediate-level teachers to be the participants and informed them about the purpose of their participation. They were also given an overview of the questions to prepare them to answer. The researchers assured the confidentiality of their responses. Third, once the participants agreed, the interviews commenced. Two learners from Grade 6 used a triangulation method to explore their observations of their teachers' perspectives on the program's implementation. The learners were given an assent form. Lastly, researchers evaluated and interpreted the gathered data after the interviews to ensure valid and reliable results. The gathered data was used to formulate a conclusion to present.

The data was analyzed using Merriam's (1998) method. Merriam viewed analysis as dismantling information and perceptions and assigning significance to the components. In order to make the process of finding meaning easier, Merriam's categorical aggregation clusters data into classes or categories. This allowed for data analysis by identifying categories and patterns that arise from conversations. As a result, the researcher located patterns and connections using thematic analysis to analyze the data. After the data was complete, the study began to uncover concepts, finding data that could address the research questions. Finally, the researchers adhered to ethical considerations when treating the interview data. The study employed three (3) ethical considerations when conducting research. Firstly, the participants were given informed consent forms. The goal was for human volunteers to engage in research freely after receiving complete information about what it entails to participate and give their agreement before doing so. Second, confidentiality: all participants' responses were for the research only. Breach of confidentiality jeopardized the research's confidence and reputation and, in the long run, made it harder to participate in research in the future. Lastly, the researcher ensured that the participation of intermediate-level teachers was voluntary. The researcher scheduled an interview after the research participants agreed and provided consent.

## Results and Discussion

A comprehensive examination of the transcripts revealed the underlying meanings behind the responses of the participating teachers. The researchers identified several emerging categories about how intermediate-level teachers perceive implementing the Catch-up Friday program. The data presented below focuses on the perceptions of intermediate-level teachers in implementing the Catch-up Friday program, teachers' ways of implementing Catch-up Friday, the challenges encountered by intermediate-level teachers in implementing Catch-up Friday, their coping mechanisms, the effectiveness of the Catch-up Friday program, and their recommendations for the implementation of Catch-up Friday—the research participants coded as intermediate-level teachers 1 (ILT 1- ILT 6).

### *Intermediate-level Teachers' Perceptions of Catch-up Day Program*

The researchers asked the intermediate-level teachers about their perceptions of the Catch-up Day program, and two categories emerged: additional work for teachers and beneficial for struggling readers. *Additional work for teachers*. Many intermediate-level teachers have claimed that the Catch-up Day program is additional work. The research participants shared:

*"As a teacher, this is additional work for most of us, not just for me but for most of us."* ILT 4.1

*"We are sad because implementing the program requires teachers to create lesson plans for all subjects, which is quite difficult. It is not easy to make lesson plans while also helping with reading the Catch-Up Friday program".* ILT 4.2

*"It adds extra activities, which can be a burden for the teacher"* ILT 4

*"My initial reaction to Catch-up Friday was additional work and preparation ."* ILT 5

*"The Catch-Up Day program is difficult for teachers because we do not have pre-made reading materials. Preparing these materials requires a lot of time, even though we have an orientation. We still need to spend additional time to make the program better and more effective".* ILT 6.2

The study found that many intermediate-level teachers view the Catch-up Day program as an additional workload. Teachers reported that the program requires significant extra effort, as they must create lesson plans for all subjects and prepare reading materials without sufficient pre-made resources. This study finds support in Malipot (2024), which highlights that the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) criticized Catch-Up Fridays as a superficial solution to the deepening learning crisis in the country. ACT emphasizes that teachers in public schools are burdened with additional tasks of providing learning materials for the program. After a month of implementing Catch-Up Fridays, ACT noted that teachers bear the brunt of the additional workload in preparation and implementation. Work overload significantly contributes to burnout among teachers, diminishing physical and emotional energy (Malik, 2019).

*Beneficial for struggling readers.* Many intermediate-level teachers have claimed that the Catch-up Day program benefits pupils with reading difficulties. The research participants shared:

*"We were all genuinely happy with our initial reaction. As teachers, we were thrilled to hear about Catch-Up Friday because that is what we wanted, especially for our higher-grade pupils. We were genuinely happy; our prayers were answered, especially as the children are still products of this modular setup".* ILT 6.1

*"My perception is that the Catch-Up Day is positive for the children because it can enhance their reading skills."* ILT 4.2

*"As a grade 4 teacher, I found the Catch-Up Friday program very helpful, especially for pupils who are slow readers and struggle to keep up. This program is essential for helping them develop their reading skills because they missed out on face-to-face teaching during the pandemic."* ILT 4.3

*"My perception of Catch-Up Friday was that, at first, we were simply going to catch up on lessons. Since the catch-up lessons were initially shortened, it felt challenging. However, as we continued, I realized that the guidelines focus on reading enhancement, which is very beneficial for the pupils".* ILT 5

The study found that many intermediate-level teachers perceive the Catch-up Friday program as highly beneficial for pupils with reading difficulties. Teachers expressed genuine happiness and optimism about the program, noting its potential to significantly enhance reading skills, particularly for higher-grade pupils who are the product of the pandemic. The students themselves confirmed these positive perceptions, expressing enjoyment and learning during the Catch-up Friday sessions. This result is supported by Cayabyab et al. (2023), who stated that a remedial reading program for struggling readers is effective. The study draws its theoretical framework from the Scaffolding Theory, proposed by Vygotsky (1978), which contends that learners can achieve higher levels of competence with the support of more knowledgeable individuals, gradually decreasing assistance as they develop mastery. In the Catch-up Friday program context, teachers serve as knowledgeable others, providing support and guidance to struggling learners. This aligns with scaffolding theory as teachers scaffold students' learning experiences to enhance their reading skills and academic success.

#### *Teachers' Ways of Implementing Catch-up Day in Public Schools*

The researchers asked the intermediate-level teachers how they implemented the Catch-up Day program, and several categories emerged. These categories are Sharing lesson plans with other teachers, Using interactive activities, Employing basic reading skills, Using peer tutoring strategies, and Incorporating enhancement activities. *They were sharing lesson plans with other teachers.* The intermediate-level teachers share how they collaborate with other teachers. The research participants shared:

*"Before we began, we had an orientation with our principal and teachers. We had collaboration. To reduce our workload, we assigned someone to prepare the lesson plan and another to prepare activities. Collaboration is essential for us. In grade 6, we have a nice setup because we practice team teaching to reduce the workload."* ILT 6.1

*"I share resources with my co-teachers at our grade level. We collaborate and plan what to do every Friday, discussing our plans together."* ILT 5

The study found that intermediate-level teachers highly value collaboration in their professional practice. Teachers described various forms of collaboration, such as joint orientations with principals and colleagues, resource sharing within grade levels, and collaborative planning sessions. Gamboa (2022) found that teacher collaboration enhances faculty members' instructional effectiveness and contributes to high-quality education. *They were using interactive activities.* One of the intermediate-level teachers used interactive activities to teach Catch-up Day. The research participants shared:

*"Sometimes, we don't use chairs; instead, we use floor mats or carpets, or I borrow gymnastic mats to excite the children. I also prepare small tokens with my own money to make them happy. I design interactive activities to keep them from getting bored. Like spelling and finding words, those are some of the activities."* ILT 4.2

The study found that one intermediate-level teacher effectively utilized interactive activities to engage students during Catch-up Day. Geng et al. (2019) discovered that interactive teaching methods enhanced students' communication skills, teamwork abilities, and self-directed learning aptitudes. *They are employing basic reading skills.* The intermediate-level teacher employs basic reading skills for pupils who have reading difficulties. The research participants shared:

*"I truly implement Catch-Up Friday because some of my pupils struggle with reading. While 90% can read, there is still a 10% who cannot. I have them read simple stories and then ask comprehensive questions. If they struggle to answer, I simplify it further. We revisit basic reading skills like blending, pairing, CVC, and others."* ILT 5

The study found that intermediate-level teachers use basic reading skills to support pupils with reading difficulties. Bantayan et al. (2023) found that phoneme instruction and consonant-vowel-consonant techniques significantly improved reading performance among grade school students. *They were using a peer tutoring strategy.*

The intermediate-level teacher used a peer tutoring strategy in teaching the Catch-up Day program.

*"For those pupils who do not know how to read, I employ the strategy of peer tutoring, where the fast learners assist the slow learners and vocabulary activities . "* ILT 6.2

The study found that intermediate-level teachers use peer tutoring as a strategy in the Catch-up Day program to support pupils with reading difficulties. Gubalani et al. (2023) suggest that peer tutoring provides a straightforward and practical approach that can be easily implemented. It effectively addresses disparities among learners from different academic and cultural backgrounds within a classroom setting, especially when resources are limited.

*Incorporating enhancement activities.* The intermediate-level teacher used enhancement activities to teach the Catch-up Day program. The research participants shared:

*"I incorporate enhancement activities into our sessions. For those who are non-readers, I implement intervention strategies to help them improve. Additionally, I focus on developing their reading comprehension skills."* ILT 6.1

The study found that intermediate-level teachers incorporated enhancement activities in the Catch-up Day program to support reading improvement. Teacher-made reading activities effectively improved learners' reading comprehension skills (Capin, 2023). The study draws its theoretical framework from the concept of Scaffolding Theory, proposed by Vygotsky (1978), in which intermediate-level teachers' collaborative efforts, resource sharing, and instructional strategies align with scaffolding principles. By sharing instructional materials and planning collaboratively, teachers scaffold students' learning experiences, providing the necessary support for their academic development. Interactive activities, peer tutoring, and intervention strategies scaffold learning, providing structured support tailored to students' needs. These practices create scaffolded learning environments, facilitating students' academic growth and development.

#### *Challenges Encountered by Intermediate-level Teachers in Catch-up Day Implementation*

When the researchers asked the intermediate-level teachers about the challenges they had encountered during the implementation of the catch—up day program, several categories emerged. These categories are Increased workload, Pupils' poor reading comprehension, Lack of parental support, and Lack of pupils' interest.

*Increased workload.* The intermediate-level teachers express their thoughts that implementing Catch-up Day adds to their workload. The research participants shared:

*"As I mentioned earlier, it is an additional workload compared to our normal routine because it is just based on the MELC. Now, I have to think about the activities to do on Fridays. Aside from that, we also need to create a separate lesson plan for Catch-Up Day, which is additional work. Plus, I still need to reproduce activity sheets".* ILT 4.1

*"It is quite difficult for teachers. It is not easy to create lesson plans and develop numerous activities to capture the pupils' attention while also focusing on improving their reading skills".* ILT 4.2

*"The workload has indeed doubled now. Just imagine, on Fridays, you have to prepare activities and lesson plans, and then you have to do it all over again from Monday to Thursday."* ILT 6.1

This study is supported by Malipot (2024), who stated that ACT criticized Catch-Up Fridays as a superficial solution to the deepening learning crisis in the country, highlighting that teachers in public schools are burdened with additional tasks of providing learning materials for the program. When educators are overwhelmed by stress and workload, their ability to maintain focus and motivation may suffer, negatively impacting their efficiency and capacity to provide students with quality education (Hester et al., 2020). *Pupils' poor reading comprehension.* The intermediate-level teacher shared that some of her students struggled to comprehend what they had read. The research participants shared:

*"About 75% of the students can understand what they read, while 25% struggle to comprehend the material".* ILT 4.3

According to World Bank data from 2022, 90% of Filipino children aged ten struggle with reading comprehension, with a pre-pandemic learning poverty rate of 70% (Chi, 2024). A 2018 PISA study also found that the Philippines ranked lowest in reading comprehension, scoring 340 among 79 countries. *Lack of parental support.* The intermediate-level teacher shares that one of her challenges is a lack of parental support and not allowing their child to attend school. The research participants shared:

*"Some parents allow their children to be absent during Fridays to help them sell."* ILT 4.2

The study reveals that lack of parental cooperation presents a significant challenge for the intermediate-level teachers, as highlighted by their observation that some parents allow their children to be absent on Fridays to assist with selling activities. This is supported by the factors contributing to their irregular class attendance, which includes assisting their parents with household responsibilities such as caring for younger siblings and contributing to family income through fishing; parental constraints on supervising reading practice at home; and the student's lack of enthusiasm for reading activities (Tomelden, 2019). *Lack of pupils' interest.* The intermediate-level teachers shared

that some pupils became bored or not interested and fell asleep. The research participants shared:

*"Some children fall asleep during class. Aside from that, some pupils are not interested in participating".* ILT 4.1

The study found that intermediate-level teachers observed student disengagement in their classrooms. This result is supported by Chi (2024), which stated that in Manila, Philippines, two teacher associations have called upon the Department of Education to halt the implementation of Catch-Up Fridays. They point to a growing trend of student absenteeism on Fridays, citing a need for more engagement programs, particularly in schools facing limited reading materials. The study draws its theoretical framework from the concept of Scaffolding Theory, proposed by Vygotsky (1978). Intermediate-level teachers report that the Catch-up Friday program increases their workload, requiring additional planning and preparation. This aligns with Vygotsky's scaffolding theory, which emphasizes the need for structured support to help students achieve higher levels of understanding. However, the increased workload challenges teachers' ability to provide this support effectively. Additionally, poor reading comprehension, lack of parental support, and student disinterest highlight the need for improved scaffolding strategies, such as engaging activities, targeted interventions, and greater parental involvement to enhance student learning outcomes.

#### *Coping Mechanism Employed by Intermediate-level Teachers to Address Challenges*

The researchers asked the intermediate-level teachers how they coped with the challenges they encountered in implementing the Catch-up Day program, and several categories emerged. These categories are Sharing materials, Providing take-home activities, Communicating with parents, and Providing interactive reading activities.

*Sharing of materials*. The intermediate-level teachers shared that they exchanged materials with their co-level teachers. The research participants shared:

*"We are co-teachers same grade level is mag sharing lang mi ug resources ug ideas sa mga activities, para less among buhatonon ."* [We co-teachers at the same grade level share resources and ideas for activities to reduce our workload] ILT 6.1

*"Gasabot mi mga teachers na mag amot para pampalit og materials online kay wala man mi ge tagaan og ready-made materials, dayun share dayun mi sa materials".* [We teachers agreed to contribute money to buy materials online because we were not provided with ready-made materials, then we shared the materials]. ILT 4.2

Teaching effectiveness can be enhanced by creating an environment that promotes collaborative planning, reflection, and knowledge sharing among educators, ultimately leading to better student learning outcomes (Nasir & Mydin, 2023). *They were providing take-home activities*. The intermediate-level teachers shared how she deals with poor reading comprehension. The research participants shared:

*"To address the challenge of the 25% of students who struggle to understand, I provide them with take-home activities to be completed with the guidance of their parents."* ILT 4.3

This result is supported by Cusinato et al. (2020), which stated that parents can support their children's learning in various ways, including homework. This study also aligns with Collison et al. (2019), who noted that parents who help their children with homework can better ensure they fully grasp the concepts and are prepared for related examinations or assignments. Additionally, Xu et al. (2020) found that parents who help with homework may identify problem areas and help their children improve in those areas.

*They are communicating with parents*. The intermediate-level teacher shared how she deals with the parents who let their children be absent during the Catch Up Day program. The research participants shared:

*"To cope with the challenge, I always remind parents that this program is significant for their children."* ILT 4.2

This result is supported by research showing that parental engagement in children's schooling can significantly impact their success (Tran et al., 2020). Evidence indicates that students achieve academically, attend school more consistently, and score higher on standardized tests when their parents are involved in their education (Castillo et al., 2020).

*They were providing interactive reading activities*. The intermediate-level teacher provides information on how he deals with students who are not interested in class, feel bored, and fall asleep. The research participants shared:

*"I gave them interactive reading activities to keep them engaged and prevent them from falling asleep. Sometimes, I also offer prizes as incentives."* ILT 4.1

This result is also supported by De Villa (2024), who stated that other teachers spend their money on prizes and incentives to encourage more students to participate in the Department of Education's (DepEd) latest initiative to improve the reading proficiency levels of Filipino learners. This ungraded activity has been plagued by absenteeism. Another study has presented a similar result, which indicates that giving learners enough praise, encouragement, and rewards increases their motivation to learn (Gumapac et al., 2021). The study draws its theoretical framework from the concept of Scaffolding Theory, proposed by Vygotsky (1978). Intermediate-level teachers share materials and ideas with co-teachers to reduce workload, reflecting Vygotsky's principle of collaborative learning. This sharing

supports scaffolding by providing teachers with resources to help students better. Teachers also utilize online resources for interactive activities, aligning with scaffolding through structured support. Addressing poor reading comprehension, teachers provide take-home activities for parental guidance, extending scaffolding beyond the classroom. Additionally, communication with parents emphasizes the importance of the program, reinforcing a supportive learning environment.

#### *Intermediate-level Teachers' Perspectives on the Effectiveness of the Catch-up Friday Program*

The intermediate-level teachers provided the following responses on their perspective on the effectiveness of the Catch-up Day program. This category emerged from "Improves learners' reading skills."

*Improves learners' reading skills.* The intermediate-level teacher provides on how the catch-up day program has improved learners' reading skills. The research participants shared:

*"There has been improvement, although I still have a few students—almost half of my pupils—who could not read at the beginning of the month. Now, we are almost at the end of the class, since it was already May. So, there has been progress. Perhaps half of my pupils could not read before, but now they are able to."* ILT 4.1

*"For the effectiveness of Catch-up Friday sa akoang section ang akong learner nga slow mi improve jud sya "* [The effectiveness of "Catch-up Friday" in my section is evident, as it has significantly improved the performance of my slower learners] . ILT 4.2

*" Siguro mga 70% effective ka madevelop nimo ang reading ability sa mga brick. Ma-check nimo ang ilahang pronunciation because they are going to read out loud, then mafollow -up pud nimo ang ilahang comprehension" [It is probably about 70% effective because you can develop the children's reading ability. You can check their pronunciation because they are going to read out loud, and you can also follow up on their comprehension ]* . ILT 4.3

*"Oo, para nako , effective kay more time man gud yes sa reading. Ma-improve pud siya kung sa normal nga schedule mo -stick jud ka kay wa man kay apson . Para nako , ang Catch-up Friday kay effective sa brother class in the sense na need jud come on please help, especially reading , dayon kuan pud i -impart ang values."* [Yes, for me, it is effective because there is more time for reading. It can also improve if you stick to the normal schedule because there is no rush. For me, Catch-up Friday is effective in my class in the sense that they really need help, especially with reading, and also to impart ILT 5 values].

*"Almost half of my pupils could not read before, but now there has been an improvement ."* ILT 6.1

*" It's effective pero ma-double among buluhaton kay magpabasa sa buntag and then pagkahapon kay naa pay other subjects, tulo ka subject itudlo ."* [It is effective, but our workload doubles because we do reading in the morning and then in the afternoon, there are three other subjects to teach] 6.2

Saro et al. (2024) research study on the effectiveness of Catch-Up sessions supports these results. The findings highlight the efficacy of Catch-Up Friday sessions in enhancing reading proficiency and cultivating an engaging learning environment that fosters academic growth and development. It improves their reading skills through consistent engagement and dedicated time each week. The study draws its theoretical framework from the Scaffolding Theory proposed by Vygotsky (1978). It suggests that learners receive support structures to achieve higher levels of understanding and skill acquisition, gradually removing these supports as they become more professional. In this study of the Catch-up Friday program, intermediate-level teachers provide valuable insights into its effectiveness in improving learners' reading skills. Through the responses of the research participants, it becomes evident that the Catch-up Friday program serves as a scaffold for enhancing students' reading abilities. This aligns with Vygotsky's concept of scaffolding, as the program provides structured support tailored to the student's needs, allowing them to develop their reading proficiency gradually.

#### *Intermediate-level Teachers' Recommendations for the Improvement of the Catch-up Friday Program*

The intermediate-level teachers provided the following recommendations for improving the Catch-up Day program: The category is the Necessity of providing Catch-up resources.

*Necessity of providing Catch-up resources.* The intermediate-level teachers shared the lack of resources in the program. The research participants shared:

*"Camel well prepared ang DepEd ang nahitabo namalit mi og commercial aron lang jud ma-cater namo ang mga bata og aron ma-guided mi".* [We hope that DepEd is well-prepared. What happened is, we bought commercial materials just so we can really cater to the children and so we can be guided as well]. ILT 4.1

*"My insight for the implementation of the Catch-up Day program can be that they are going to provide us the materials so that it is easier to implement in our children."* [My insight regarding the implementation of the Catch-up Day program is that they should provide us with materials to facilitate implementation for our children]. ILT 4.2

*"Hoping that DepEd will provide resources or materials that teachers can freely select according to what is appropriate for learners' capacity."* ILT 4.3

*"Sa resources ang gehatag man gud sa DepEd is example ra , guide ra yes , Ikaw judge mo formulate. Grabe lisod judge kaayo kay mag pangita Paka . Naa raman sa YT pero short ra yes . If sa gray hair grade level mag*



*pangita judge please ug resources. We are co-teachers same grade level is mag sharing lang mi. Good thing ka naa Nakoy Kaila . Pero can nanghatag judge camel sila para smooth ang pagtudlo "*. [The resources provided by DepEd are just examples and guides, you have to formulate them yourself. It is really difficult because you have to search for them. They are available on YouTube but they are usually short. If it is for other grade levels, they really search for resources. We teachers in the same grade level, we just share among ourselves. It is a good thing I know someone. But they should really provide resources for smooth teaching]. ILT 5

*"They have to provide the materials, teaching guide, ready-made teaching guide nga e follow nalang teacher namo para-automatic nalang "*. [They need to provide the materials, teaching guides, ready-made teaching guides that teachers can simply follow, making it automatic]. ILT 6.1

*" Got the maghatag number please ug mga strategy ba or mga handouts, Kanang prototype bitaw na mga lesson plan for teaching guide nga right come back ba sa year 2016 katu bitaw e kuan nalang nila e prototype na given na daan ang buhatonon "*. [They should provide strategies and handouts, like prototype lesson plans for teaching guides that resemble those from 2016, where they prototyped them in advance, and everything is already laid out]. ILT 6.2

The insights highlight the crucial role of adequate resources in facilitating smooth implementation and optimizing teaching effectiveness within the Catch-up Friday program. Teachers practically need DepEd's support for the program's reading materials, so they have to shoulder the costs. That is where the problem lies, explained Benjo Basas, chair of the Teachers' Dignity Coalition (TDC), in a telephone interview with the Inquirer. Quoting his fellow teachers, Basas mentioned that they shell out at least P300 monthly expenses to cover the materials (Villa, 2024). The study draws its theoretical framework from the concept of Scaffolding Theory, proposed by Vygotsky (1978). Intermediate-level teachers advocate for more resources in implementing the Catch-up Friday program, aligning with Vygotsky's concept of structured support for skill advancement. Adequate resources provide the necessary scaffolding for effective teaching and learning, empowering teachers to support students' learning effectively.

## Conclusion

The researchers concluded that the research participants perceived implementing the Catch-up Friday program as challenging and potentially beneficial for pupils. The program demands additional effort from educators but is viewed positively for its effectiveness in improving student's reading skills, a crucial benefit highlighted by teachers. Despite encountering obstacles such as increased workload, students' comprehension difficulties, and limited parental cooperation, intermediate-level teachers have demonstrated resilience and innovation in their approach. They implement the program through collaborative efforts like sharing lesson plans, using interactive teaching methods, employing peer tutoring, employing basic reading skills, and integrating enrichment activities. To address challenges, teachers employ resource sharing, provision of take-home activities, and active communication with parents, indicating their proactive stance in enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes. Their recommendations emphasize the importance of sustained support and adequate resources to optimize the Catch-up Friday program's impact on student achievement and educational equity.

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