

# Implementation of School-Based Reading Programs in Public Elementary Schools of San Narciso District II, Division of Quezon: A SWOT-Grounded Basis for District-Wide Reading Program Development

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school-based reading program, reading program implementation, SWOT analysis, mixed-methods research, elementary education, Philippines, District-Based Reading Enha

**Abstract.** Developing learners' reading skills has been a perennial challenge in many schools, necessitating systematic evaluation of school-based interventions. This study assessed the implementation of school-based reading programs in public elementary schools in San Narciso District II, Division of Quezon, Philippines, to provide an empirical basis for developing a district-wide reading program. Employing a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, quantitative data were gathered from 100 teachers through a researcher-developed checklist questionnaire, while qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews with nine reading coordinators. Quantitative data were analyzed using weighted means, while qualitative data were processed through coding and thematic analysis. Results revealed that the school-based reading programs attained an overall Grand Mean of 3.44, interpreted as Highly Evident-Highly Implemented (HE-HI) across five dimensions: Goals and Objectives (M = 3.51), Instructional Program (M = 3.48), Professional Development (M = 3.43), and Program Output (M = 3.54), with Materials and Resources registering the lowest composite mean at 3.22 (Evident-Moderately Implemented). SWOT analysis identified structured, data-driven instruction and peer/learner collaboration as dominant internal strengths; resource constraints, implementation variability, and parental involvement gaps as key weaknesses; technology enhancement, stakeholder engagement, and professional development as opportunities; and attendance disruptions, operational limitations, and home reinforcement gaps as prevailing threats. Thematic analysis generated four overarching themes: Structured and Differentiated Literacy Instruction; Implementation and Resource Constraints; Collaborative and Technological Opportunities for Scaling; and Contextual and Systemic Threats to Sustainability. Findings informed the development of a proposed District-Based Reading Enhancement Program (DBREP) anchored in structured differentiation, collaborative governance, and strategic resource mobilization. The study underscores the importance of addressing resource adequacy and home-school partnerships to sustain reading program gains in Philippine elementary.

## Introduction

Developing learners' reading skills has been a perennial challenge in Philippine public schools. Despite persistent programmatic efforts, the number of struggling readers continues to rise, exacerbated by the shift to distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Reading is an essential foundational skill; its mastery is a prerequisite for success across all subject areas. Reading comprehension underpins academic achievement, broader literacy development, and productive engagement in society (Brandon, 2021; Eastern Washington University, 2026). National and international assessments confirm the gravity of the Philippines' reading crisis. In the 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Philippines ranked near the bottom in reading with a mean score of 347 (Thomas et al.,

2022). The World Bank's State of Global Learning Report, cited by Paez (2022), noted that 9 out of 10 Filipino children at late primary age are not proficient in reading—a crisis further deepened by pandemic-era schooling disruptions. In response, the Department of Education (DepEd) strengthened its Every Child A Reader Program (ECARP) and launched the Hamon: Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative), calling on all levels of the educational system to address non-readership (DepEd Order No. 173, s. 2019).

In San Narciso District II, the District Monitoring Evaluation and Plan Adjustment (DSMEPA) report documented that 38% of all enrolled pupils—832 out of 2,179—across grade levels were identified as non-readers, representing an average annual increase of 16% over five years. In response, elementary schools in the district implemented various school-based reading programs, including Project BaKya, Project CREATE, Project READ, Project DREAM, Project SPGA, Project PABASA, Project CHARTS, Kahon ng Karunungan, and Project Repak.

Despite the proliferation of these initiatives, a systematic, evidence-based evaluation of their implementation had yet to be conducted in the district. According to the Indeed Editorial Team (2020), program evaluation is an organized, systematic process for collecting information about a program, enabling informed decision-making and improvements in functionality. Given the alarming non-readership rate and the absence of a standardized district-wide approach, this study is both timely and necessary.

This study, therefore, aimed to assess the implementation of school-based reading programs in the public elementary schools of San Narciso District II using a SWOT analytical framework, and to utilize the findings as an empirical basis for developing a proposed district-wide reading program.

### *Research Questions*

This study specifically addressed the following research questions:

1. What is the level of implementation of the school-based reading program in terms of: (a) Goals and Objectives; (b) Instructional Program; (c) Materials and Resources; (d) Professional Development; and (e) Program Output, as assessed by teachers?
2. How may the school-based reading program be described in terms of: (a) Strengths; (b) Weaknesses; (c) Opportunities; and (d) Threats?
3. What district-wide reading program may be designed based on the findings of the study?

## **Methodology**

### *Research Design*

This study employed a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design. According to Creswell (2012), this approach involves the sequential collection and integration of quantitative and qualitative data, with the quantitative phase informing and shaping the subsequent qualitative phase. Quantitative data provided a statistical assessment of reading program implementation levels, while qualitative data—gathered through semi-structured interviews—explained and contextualized the quantitative findings through SWOT-based thematic analysis.

### *Research Locale and Population*

The study was conducted in San Narciso, Quezon, a coastal municipality in the Province of Quezon comprising nine public elementary schools under District II. The locale was selected due to the documented increase in non-readers as per the DSMEPA records and the researcher's professional engagement in the district. The study covered all 100 elementary teachers and nine reading coordinators from the nine schools, selected through complete enumeration (census sampling) to ensure a comprehensive and accurate assessment.

<b>Public Elementary School</b>	<b>No. of Teachers</b>	<b>No. of Reading Coordinators</b>
Abuyon Elementary School	35	1
Maguiting Elementary School	8	1
Guinhalinan Elementary School	15	1
Lacdayan Elementary School	5	1
Bani Elementary School	8	1

San Isidro Elementary School	4	1
Bangkuro Elementary School	7	1
Pinagasama Elementary School	8	1
Calwit Elementary School	10	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>9</b>

Note. Distribution of teacher and reading coordinator respondents across the nine public elementary schools in San Narciso District II.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents Across Schools

### Research Instruments

Two researcher-developed instruments were used. For the quantitative phase, a checklist questionnaire assessed reading program implementation across five dimensions: Goals and Objectives; Instructional Program; Materials and Resources; Professional Development; and Program Output. Items were derived from reviewed literature and validated by five research experts, including reading teachers, a DepEd reading supervisor, and research practitioners. Responses were rated using a four-point Likert scale (4 = Highly Evident, 3 = Evident, 2 = Moderately Evident, 1 = Not Evident), with corresponding implementation descriptors (Highly Implemented, Moderately Implemented, Less Implemented, Not at All Implemented). For the qualitative phase, a semi-structured interview guide was developed to explore SWOT dimensions with reading coordinators at each school. The guide was likewise validated for structure and content. A SWOT analysis template was also used to systematically organize and present internal and external program factors.

### Data Gathering Procedures

Permission to conduct the study was secured from the Schools Division Superintendent of DepEd Quezon and from the respective school heads. Survey questionnaires were administered to teachers in the quantitative phase. Semi-structured interviews were then conducted with reading coordinators. SWOT analysis templates were completed subsequent to thematic coding of interview responses. Ethical standards were observed throughout: informed consent was obtained, anonymity and confidentiality were assured, data were stored in compliance with the Data Privacy Act of the Philippines, and no conflict of interest existed.

### Data Analysis

Weighted means were used to assess the level of reading program implementation across all quantitative dimensions. The grand mean of all dimensions served as the overall measure of implementation. For the qualitative data, verbatim responses from reading coordinators were subjected to coding and thematic analysis, yielding four overarching themes. SWOT findings were triangulated with the quantitative results to inform the proposed district-wide program.

## Results and Discussion

### Level of Implementation of the School-Based Reading Program

Dimension	Composite Mean	Verbal Description	Rank
Goals and Objectives	3.51	HE-HI	2
Instructional Program	3.48	HE-HI	3
Materials and Resources	3.22	E-MI	5
Professional Development	3.43	HE-HI	4
Program Output	3.54	HE-HI	1
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.44</b>	<b>HE-HI</b>	-

Note. HE-HI = Highly Evident-Highly Implemented (3.25-4.00); E-MI = Evident-Moderately Implemented (2.50-3.24).

Table 2. Level of Reading Program Implementation Across Five Dimensions

The school-based reading programs in San Narciso District II attained a Grand Mean of 3.44, interpreted as Highly Evident–Highly Implemented (HE–HI). This overall rating confirms that the core structures, instructional processes, and monitoring systems of the reading programs are firmly established and consistently practiced across schools. However, variations across dimensions point to specific areas requiring strategic enhancement.

Goals and Objectives registered the second-highest composite mean of 3.51 (HE–HI), reflecting strong strategic clarity and policy congruence. The highest-rated indicator—the presence of a clear program "road map" or blueprint (M = 3.56)—demonstrates coherent planning and a shared directional framework among teacher-implementers. Alignment with DepEd’s grade-level literacy targets (M = 3.48) further confirms structural fidelity. These findings align with DepEd’s MATATAG curriculum emphasis on structured, learner-centered literacy goals and with Abril et al.’s (2022) finding that programs with explicit, measurable objectives significantly improve foundational reading proficiency in Grades 1–3.

The Instructional Program obtained a composite mean of 3.48 (HE–HI), reflecting effective pedagogical delivery. The highest-rated practice—flexible movement of pupils across groups based on reading progress (M = 3.66)—demonstrates robust differentiated instruction and responsiveness to learner variability. However, the relatively lower mean for sufficient guided practice for struggling readers (M = 3.03, E–MI) signals a notable implementation gap. This finding suggests that while instructional structures are robust, the intensity and frequency of targeted remediation need strengthening. These results are consistent with J-PAL Southeast Asia’s (2024) evaluation of primary reading programs in the Philippines and with Tolentin’s (2023) study on reading interventions, which similarly identified objective attainment as trailing behind structural implementation.

Materials and Resources yielded the lowest composite mean of 3.22 (E–MI), positioning it as the program’s most significant constraint. While the use of valid assessment tools (M = 3.48) and contextualized reading materials (M = 3.48) were rated highly, the availability of sufficient instructional materials (M = 3.00), leveled and decodable texts (M = 3.08), and age-appropriate resources (M = 3.07) fell within the Evident–Moderately Implemented range. These findings echo the resource scarcity documented by Bongolo (2025) and Cabahug (2025), who underscored the need for abundant localized and decodable materials to sustain intervention fidelity in Philippine elementary contexts.

Professional Development attained a composite mean of 3.43 (HE–HI), reflecting sustained institutional support for teacher capacity-building. The highest-rated indicator—conduct and dissemination of action research (M = 3.46)—signals a culture of reflective, evidence-based practice. Regular instructional monitoring by school heads (M = 3.45) further demonstrates administrative accountability. These findings align with the Basa Pilipinas project’s teacher-training model (Education Development Center [EDC], 2025) and Al Otaiba et al.’s (2020) meta-analysis, which demonstrated significant gains in reading outcomes when sustained professional development was combined with modeling and feedback.

Program Output recorded the highest composite mean of 3.54 (HE–HI), underscoring strong monitoring and outcome-based implementation. Regular monitoring to ensure attainment of outputs (M = 3.58) and systematic measurement of learners’ improvement in word reading and comprehension (M = 3.56) indicate a results-oriented culture. These results align with DepEd’s National Reading Program (NRP) emphasis on outcome-based monitoring and with Velarde et al.’s (2023) longitudinal study of Phil-IRI implementation, which documented enhanced accountability when coordinators systematically aggregated data for division-level adjustments.

*SWOT Analysis of the School-Based Reading Program*

Figure 1 presents the consolidated SWOT analysis derived from thematic coding of reading coordinator responses (RC1–RC9).

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structured and data-driven instruction</li> <li>• Peer/learner collaboration</li> <li>• Teacher capacity and monitoring</li> <li>• Contextual and localized resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource constraints (material insufficiency)</li> <li>• Implementation variability across schools</li> <li>• Parental involvement gaps</li> <li>• Attendance and access barriers</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology enhancement and digital tools</li> <li>• Stakeholder engagement (parents, community)</li> <li>• Professional development and action research</li> <li>• Interactive learner strategies (game-based, peer tutoring)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance disruptions and absenteeism</li> <li>• Operational limitations (time, budget)</li> <li>• Home reinforcement gaps</li> <li>• Instructional mismatch in heterogeneous classes</li> </ul>
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Figure 1. SWOT Analysis of the School-Based Reading Program

Internally, structured and data-driven instruction emerged as the most dominant strength, aligning with Dela Cruz and Garcia (2022), who found that differentiated, systematic interventions significantly enhance comprehension and fluency in Philippine elementary schools. Peer/learner collaboration and strong teacher capacity further reinforce the program's pedagogical soundness. Conversely, resource constraints and implementation variability constitute key weaknesses, mirroring challenges documented by Ramos et al. (2023). Parental involvement gaps compound these issues, consistent with the Philippine Department of Education's (2024) evaluations linking low home reinforcement to persistent literacy deficits.

Externally, technology enhancement and stakeholder engagement represent viable expansion pathways, as evidenced by ASEAN Education Cluster (2022) findings on digital tools in underserved areas and Johnson and Smith's (2021) SWOT analysis of literacy training. Threats predominantly involve attendance disruptions—identified by all nine coordinators—and operational limitations paralleling World Bank (2023) analyses of irregular participation undermining reading programs globally. Instructional mismatch in heterogeneous classes, as raised by RC2, reflects the cognitive overload risks documented by Frontiers in Education (2025) when differentiation is inconsistently applied.

Integrating these elements, strengths such as peer collaboration and structured monitoring can be leveraged as SO strategies against attendance threats through home-school technology links. Weaknesses in resource availability may be addressed through WO strategies involving community partnerships and professional development, as advocated by David (2020) in educational strategic management. The SWOT positions the program as resilient and strategically sound, yet vulnerable to material shortfalls and external socioeconomic pressures common in Philippine public schooling.

#### Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Findings

Four overarching themes emerged from thematic analysis of reading coordinator responses.

**Theme 1: Structured and Differentiated Literacy Instruction.** This theme encapsulates the program's systematic, data-informed instructional design. Coordinators consistently described structured goal-oriented frameworks (RC1, RC2, RC5), differentiated learner grouping based on reading levels (RC5, RC6), and scaffolded instruction models including teacher read-aloud, guided reading, and independent reading (RC9). Peer-assisted learning, as embodied in Project PARES (RC3), further strengthened learner agency and confidence. Contemporary research supports this theme: Lexia Learning (2025) identifies structured, explicit, systematic, and cumulative instruction as the gold standard for foundational literacy, while Araújo et al. (2024) validate peer-collaborative structures in enhancing literacy acquisition in early grades.

**Theme 2: Implementation and Resource Constraints.** Despite robust instructional design, participants reported implementation fidelity variability: some teachers were inconsistent in deploying agreed strategies (RC5, RC6), and resource limitations—insufficient materials (RC2, RC7) and high student-to-material ratios—constrained program intensity. Parental involvement gaps (RC6, RC8, RC9) further weakened home reinforcement. Mitigation strategies included coaching, classroom observation, Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, and reading logs. These findings align with IES (2025) identification of dosage, adherence, and delivery quality as the three pillars of program fidelity.

**Theme 3: Collaborative and Technological Opportunities for Scaling.** Coordinators consistently identified technology as a strategic lever: digital tools (RC1), technology integration (RC7), and online resources (RC9) were cited as pathways for broadening reading access. Stakeholder engagement was also foregrounded, with RC2 proposing partnerships and fundraising and RC9 noting growing parental interest in literacy events. This theme aligns with World Bank GALOP initiatives (2025–2028) prioritizing adaptive and personalized literacy technologies, and with Ignacio et al.'s (2022) findings that post-pandemic shifts have accelerated community receptiveness to school-based literacy programs.

**Theme 4: Contextual and Systemic Threats to Sustainability.** Attendance disruptions were the most pervasive threat, described by all nine coordinators as slowing or undermining reading progress. Operational constraints (limited time, competing school activities) diluted intervention focus, while RC2's identification of a "one-size-fits-all" approach in

heterogeneous classes signaled instructional mismatch risks. Home reinforcement gaps, as noted by RC8 and RC9, remain a structural vulnerability. These findings are corroborated by *Frontiers in Education* (2025) on cognitive overload in non-differentiated instruction and Utami's (2022) confirmation that parental involvement buffers against socioeconomic disadvantage in sustaining literacy gains.

#### *Proposed District-Based Reading Enhancement Program (DBREP)*

The findings collectively informed the development of the Proposed District-Based Reading Enhancement Program (DBREP) for Public Elementary Schools in San Narciso District II. The DBREP is structured around five components directly responsive to study findings: (1) Materials Development (procurement and localization of leveled/decodable texts to address the lowest-rated domain); (2) Instructional Enhancement (training on guided practice routines and intensifying Big Five component delivery); (3) Professional Development (quarterly LAC sessions on reading psychology, assessment, and action research dissemination); (4) Stakeholder Engagement (monthly parent seminars, reading logs, barangay linkages); and (5) Technology Integration (deployment of digital reading platforms and attendance tracking tools). Planned for implementation in SY 2026–2027, the DBREP targets all Grades 1–3 non-readers and at-risk learners across the nine schools. Monitoring indicators include Phil-IRI pre- and post-test gains, compliance checklists, and end-of-term factor analysis.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

This study demonstrated that school-based reading programs in public elementary schools in San Narciso District II, Division of Quezon, are being implemented at a high level overall (Grand Mean = 3.44, HE–HI). Four of five dimensions—Goals and Objectives, Instructional Program, Professional Development, and Program Output—registered Highly Evident–Highly Implemented ratings, affirming that structured instructional planning, differentiated delivery, teacher capacity-building, and systematic monitoring are well-established. However, Materials and Resources emerged as the weakest dimension (M = 3.22, E–MI), confirming that material sufficiency, leveled/decodable texts, and age-appropriate resources remain critical gaps that constrain instructional intensity and equity.

The SWOT analysis, corroborated by thematic analysis, positions the program as resilient and pedagogically sound, yet vulnerable to resource inadequacy, implementation variability, and the persistent challenge of home reinforcement. The four thematic domains—Structured and Differentiated Literacy Instruction; Implementation and Resource Constraints; Collaborative and Technological Opportunities for Scaling; and Contextual and Systemic Threats to Sustainability—provide a comprehensive explanatory framework for the quantitative findings.

These findings carry significant implications for practice and policy. District offices should prioritize the procurement and localization of leveled reading materials in partnership with PTAs and community organizations. School heads should institutionalize action research and coaching cycles to address implementation variability. Digital tools and home-school communication platforms should be deployed to mitigate absenteeism and strengthen parental engagement. Longitudinal Phil-IRI tracking post-DBREP implementation is recommended to validate improvements and inform sustained program refinement in alignment with DepEd's MATATAG literacy benchmarks.

Future studies may replicate the assessment in other districts to establish comparative benchmarks. The DBREP's effectiveness should be evaluated through pre- and post-implementation assessments to determine its utility as a scalable model for district-wide reading program governance across Philippine contexts.

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## Competing Interests Statement

The author declares no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this article.

## Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to ethical and institutional constraints. Survey instruments and interview guides are available in the study appendices.

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## Appendices

No appendices are attached to this study.