



PEDAGOGICAL LEARNING PRACTICES SUPPORT AIDES AND THE READING PERFORMANCE OF LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the pedagogical practices of learning support aides and the reading performance of learners. It identified the respondents through purposive sampling that obtained 18 LSAs as respondents and 337 Grade 2 pupils as subjects. This was conducted at selected Municipalities of third District in the Province of North Cotabato, Cotabato Division using a self-made questionnaire that was validated and tested its reliability using Cronbach's Alpha, which derived a 0.941 result. To describe the level of pedagogical practices of learning support aides and the reading performance of learners, it utilized mean and weighted mean.

Further, it employed Pearson Product-Moment correlation and multiple linear regression analysis to test the hypotheses. The pedagogical practices of the learning support aides (LSA) intensely practiced the teaching approaches, learning activities, and nurturing to enhance the reading performance of learners. Further, the LSAs' practices in terms of teaching approaches, learning activities, and nurturing abilities had a significant association with the learners' reading performance.

Introduction

Effective teaching strategies are crucial for student success, but finding the right approach for diverse learners and classroom environments is key. While schools often use various instructional methods, research suggests that teachers who believe in their students' abilities and utilize diverse strategies are most effective (Tuhoy, 2017).

The shift to online learning has presented new challenges for educators. Collaborative learning opportunities are essential for students to succeed in reading (Briones, 2020).

The role of Learning Support Aides (LSAs) has become increasingly important. While they assist with academic and social learning needs (Ward, 2016), there is a need for further research on their training and impact, particularly in the following areas: Standardized Training there is a lack of standardized training programs to equip LSAs with the necessary pedagogical skills (Groom & Rose, 2015).

Impact on Student Learning limited research exists on how LSA training levels influence student outcomes, especially for students with disabilities (Blatchford et al., 2016). Collaboration with Teachers while role clarity and communication are important, research on best practices for fostering effective collaboration between teachers and LSAs is limited (Webster et al., 2016).

Technology Integration research on how LSAs can effectively use educational technology to enhance student engagement and learning is lacking (Tømte et al., 2019). Emotional and Social Aspects the emotional and social aspects of the LSA role, such as job satisfaction, stress, and the impact on student motivation, need further investigation.

Addressing these research gaps is crucial for maximizing the role of LSAs in modern classrooms and improving student outcomes.

Statement of the Problem

This study determined the correlation of pedagogical practices and learning support aides with the reading performance of pupils, which specifically endeavored to respond to the following questions.

- What is the extent of pedagogical practices of learning support aides in terms of teaching approaches, learning activities, evaluation, giving feedback, and nurturing skills?
- What is the level of reading performance of pupils in terms of word recognition and reading comprehension?
- Is there a significant relationship between the level of practices of learning support aides and the level of reading performance of the pupils?
- Do the pedagogical practices of learning support aides significantly influence the learners reading performance?

1.2. Theoretical Framework

This study draws on the principles of Behaviorism and Cognitive Theory to explore the role of educational assistants. Behaviorism, a learning theory that emphasizes the role of environmental influences on behavior, suggests that teachers can understand and manage student behavior by recognizing how their actions are shaped by their surroundings (Miltiadou & Savenye, 2015).

According to behaviorist principles, all behaviors are learned through interactions with the environment. This theory emphasizes the importance of recognizing how a student's home life and experiences impact their behavior in the classroom (Zhou & Brown, 2015).

The Department of Education often employs paraprofessionals to support teachers, particularly in situations where there is a teacher shortage. Paraprofessionals play a crucial role in providing academic instruction, assisting students with learning disabilities, and offering physical care and support.

Behaviorism focuses on observable and measurable behaviors. This theory emphasizes that behavior changes occur as a result of associations between stimuli and responses. In other words, environmental stimuli trigger specific behaviors (Parkay & Hass, 2016).

2. Methods

This chapter contains the discussion of the researcher design, locale of the study, research respondents, sampling procedure, research instrument, the data gathering procedures, and statistical analysis.

2.1 Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative research approach, specifically a descriptive correlational design (Routledge, 2015), to investigate the relationship between the pedagogical practices of learning support aides (LSAs) and the reading performance of students. Data was collected from 18 LSAs and 337 students to assess the level of pedagogical practices employed by LSAs and their potential impact on students' reading abilities.

The research aimed to describe and analyze the relationship between the independent variable (LSAs' pedagogical practices) and the dependent variable (student reading performance). Statistical analysis was used to interpret the strength and direction of this relationship.

2.2. Research Respondents

The participants in this study were the 18 Learning Support Aids (LSAs) who work with Grade 2 students requiring additional assistance in the municipalities of Carmen, Kabacan, and Matalam in the Division of Cotabato. These LSAs are responsible for providing support to a total of 337 students in the selected schools.

2.3. Research Procedure

This study used a multi-stage sampling technique (Glen, 2015) to select schools and teachers for participation.

Municipality Selection: Three municipalities in North Cotabato's third district were chosen based on specific criteria:

Accessibility: Schools located along national highways and easily accessible by land transportation.

Proximity: Schools in geographically neighboring areas.

Peace and Order: Favorable peace and order conditions in the surrounding areas.

School Selection: A list of schools in each chosen municipality was obtained with the help of the school principals.

Teacher Selection:

Proportional Allocation: Teachers were selected proportionally based on the size of each school.

Random Sampling: Teachers were randomly chosen from each school using a lottery method.

Sample Size Calculation: The number of teachers selected was determined using Slovin's formula.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N e^2} \quad \text{where:}$$

n = Sample size

N = population size/total population of 3 districts

e = Desired margin of error at 5% at 95% level of confidence

1 = Constant

The researcher calculated the proportion of the sample size relative to the total population. This proportion was then used to determine the number of participants to be selected from each sub-population.

To gather the data, the researcher worked with the school principal to ensure a smooth implementation of the study. The researcher provided questionnaires to the selected participants and collected the completed surveys immediately after they were finished.

2.4. Research Instrument

The researcher used two questionnaires to gather data for the study:

Pedagogical Learning Practices: A self-developed questionnaire (Jenkins, 2019) focused on assessing the pedagogical practices of learning support aides.

Reading Performance: A modified questionnaire (Tuhoy, 2015) was used to measure the reading performance of students.

Both questionnaires underwent validation and pilot-testing using Cronbach's Alpha to ensure their reliability. The questionnaires were divided into three parts:

Focused on pedagogical learning practices and included indicators such as teaching approaches, learning activities, evaluation methods, feedback strategies, and nurturing skills. Each indicator includes five items. The following scale was used in the study:

Likert's Scale to measure the pedagogical practices of LSAS

Level	Range	Description	Descriptive Interpretation	%
5	4.50-5.00	Intensely Practiced	The indicator is rated within the range of	81-100%
4	3.50-4.49	Practiced	The indicator is rated within the range of	61-80%
3	2.50-3.49	Moderately Practiced	The indicator is rated within the range of	41-60%
2	1.50-2.49	Slightly Practiced	The indicator is rated within the range of	21-40%
1	1.0-1.49	Very Slightly Practiced	The indicator is rated within the range of	01-20%

2.5. Data Gathering Procedure

To conduct the study, the researcher obtained permission from the Schools Division Superintendent and district supervisors. This involved writing letters requesting approval to conduct research in the municipalities of Carmen, Kabacan, and Matalam (Tuhoy, 2015).

With the necessary permissions in place, the researcher coordinated with school principals to facilitate the survey process. The researcher provided ample time for participants to carefully consider and answer each question in the questionnaire. Once all the data was collected, it was meticulously tallied and tabulated for statistical analysis and interpretation.

2.6. Data Analysis

The study utilized a quantitative approach to analyze the data, given its descriptive-correlational nature (Patton, 2015). The collected data was organized and processed using a coding sheet and then analyzed with the help of a statistician.

To describe the pedagogical practices of learning support aides and the reading performance of students, mean and weighted mean were used (Garambas, 2016).

To determine if a significant relationship exists between the levels of LSAs' pedagogical practices and student reading performance, Pearson Product Moment/Correlation analysis was employed (Pearson, 1896). Additionally, Multiple Linear Regression Analysis was used to identify the significant influence of the independent and dependent variables on each other.

3..Results

The following are the findings of this study:

This research investigated the connection between the teaching practices of Learning Support Aides (LSAs) and the reading abilities of students. It aimed to understand how LSAs utilize different teaching strategies, assess student learning, provide feedback, and foster a supportive learning environment. The study also explored students' proficiency in word recognition and reading comprehension.

Recommendation

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations were drawn:

- School administrators and teachers should provide ongoing support and training to LSAs to enhance their pedagogical practices, particularly in assisting struggling readers. This could involve workshops, professional development opportunities, and access to resources.
- LSAs should continue to implement their effective pedagogical practices, focusing on key areas like vocabulary building, decoding skills, and phonemic awareness. These practices have been proven to positively impact students' reading progress.
- Students should actively participate in reading activities and work closely with LSAs to improve their decoding, listening, and comprehension skills.
- Schools should consider providing specialized training programs for LSAs to enhance their skills in supporting reading development.

Researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies in other settings, incorporating additional variables and indicators to validate the findings of this study and gain further insights into the role of LSAs in supporting reading development.

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