



THE IMPACT OF THE READING ENGAGEMENT ADVOCACY AND DEVELOPMENT (READ) PROGRAM IN THE NEW NORMAL

Cantery, Al L.
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The Impact of the Reading Engagement Advocacy and Development (READ) Program in the New Normal

Cantery, Al L.

Teacher III

Zamboanga del Norte National High School
Department of Education, Division of Dipolog City
al.cantery001@deped.gov.ph
09684584982

Abstract

This action research aimed to determine the impact of the Reading Engagement Advocacy and Development (READ) Program among its 556 completers and to disclose the reading comprehension level of Grade 7 learners of Zamboanga del Norte National High School for school year 2020-2021. After the ZNNHS Association of Reading Teachers (ART) conducted the Phil-IRI Group Screening Test (GST) among 952 Grade 7 learners, the result showed that 152 (15.97%) learners comprising 62 males and 90 females were considered independent readers while 800 (84.03%) learners consisting of 365 males and 435 turned out to frustration readers. Due to lack of distance communication access and affliction of COVID-19 among reading teachers, only 556 out of 800 frustration readers undergone a one-on-one reading interventions and a Grade 7 reading comprehension level posttest using Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) passages. The posttest showed that the Program eradicated the number of frustration readers and yielded 377 (67.81%) independent readers composed of 162 males and 215 females; and 179 (32.19) instructional readers comprising 80 males and 99 females. Hence, the Program has been proven impactful for those who undergone the reading intervention. The study recommends that one-on-one reading activities shall be part of the mainstream in English 7 curriculum; the ART shall conduct an annual reading interventions among Grade 7 learners to ensure the standard reading level of learners; conduct further reading interventions to remaining frustration readers; and recruit more ART members and capacitate them with the reading intervention procedures.

Keywords: Phil-IRI passages, reading interventions, independent readers, instructional readers, and frustration readers.

Acknowledgment

The researcher expresses her wholehearted appreciation and unfathomable gratitude to the following who have done much for the successful realization of this research:

JEHOVAH God, for His calling to take action for learners who had difficulty achieving the standard reading level this school year;

Dr. Joselito S. Tizon, Principal IV of Zamboanga del Norte National High School, and Luz D. Cortez, Head Teacher III of the English Department, for providing the needed financial backing for the instructional materials and temporary office for the READ Program;

The selfless and altruistic members of the Association of Reading Teachers (ART), for their professional expertise and selfless commitment in conducting the pre-assessment, one-on-one reading interventions, and post-assessment among Grade 7 learners providing the needed data for the research thereof;

Mr. Jeovanny A. Marticion and Josephine M. Cuenca for giving technical assistance as to the subtleties of this research;

Parents of the READ Program beneficiaries, for their resourcefulness in finding access to distance learning communication and for being the strong support system of their children; and

The READ Program beneficiaries, for their willingness and perseverance undergo a two-month reading interventions.

-The Researcher

Context and Rationale

Zamboanga del Norte National High School, the only mega school in Dipolog City, has beset with the depressing reality last school year 2019-2020 when after having conducted the pre-assessment using the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory Group Screening Test (Phil-IRI GST), 89% or 879 out of 986 of our Grade 7 learners did not reach the minimum level of proficiency in reading. Having conducted the same test this school year 2020-2021, another new sad revelation unfolded: 84% or 800 out of 952 Grade 7 learners are below their standard reading level.

The results manifested the learners' difficulty or inability to understand the meaning of what they read. The Association of Reading Teachers (ART) called it poor reading comprehension – a silent cry that demands the attention not only of the school but also of DepEd Dipolog and the entire community of Dipolog City.

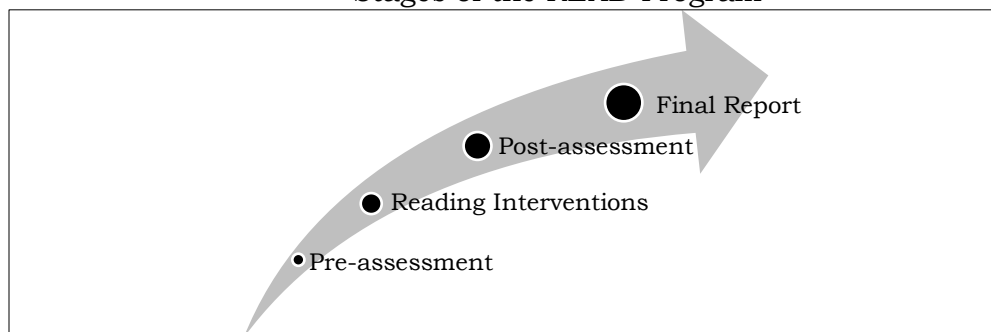
The Association clearly heard this silent cry and established a reading intervention program which now evolved into Reading Engagement Advocacy and Development (READ) Program – a program that provides pre-assessment, two-month one-on-one reading intervention, and post-assessment to each of its recipients. Its sole objective is to produce at least Grade 7 level instructional or independent readers.

This action research aimed to determine the impact of the READ Program among Grade 7 frustration readers who had access to distance learning and to disclose the reading comprehension level of Grade 7 learners of Zamboanga del Norte National High School for school year 2020-2021. It also exhibited the altruistic spirits and concerted efforts of the members of the ART as they extended commitment in their calling to advocate the Program which supports ZNNHS School Improvement Plan and champion the “Every Child a Reader Program” of the Department of Education.

Innovation, Intervention, and Strategy

The study adapted the reading intervention procedure elucidated in the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (PHIL-IRI) Manual 2018. The procedure undergone four stages: pre-assessment stage, one-on-one reading interventions stage, post-assessment stage, and final report stage. This school year, the READ Program evolved to distance learning modality.

Stages of the READ Program



Pre-assessment Stage. In the first quarter of the school year, assigned reading teachers conducted the Phil-IRI Group Screening Test (GST) among all Grade 7 learners. Results per class were submitted to the Phil-IRI Coordinator who consolidated the data and determined the number of non-passers who shall undergo the READ Program. Identified passers were considered independent readers thereby exempted to the Program.

This school year, after the GST was conducted within December 1-11, 2021, only 152 (15.97%) learners comprising 62 males and 90 females, passed the test. These learners were exempted from undergoing the READ Program since they are considered as independent readers.

Since the remaining 800 (84.03%) learners, comprising 365 males and 435 females failed GST, they would undergo the Program because they were considered frustration readers. ART members coordinated with the Grade 7 class advisers in orienting the parents of the frustration readers on the mechanisms of the Program and conducted the Phil-IRI Grade 7 pretest within January 10-14, 2022.

Reading Intervention Stage. With their respective reading teachers, identified frustration readers had to undergo the two-month one-on-one reading interventions using the 28 Phil-IRI passages classified as Grade 4 level, Grade 5 level, Grade 6 level, and Grade 7 level. Reading teachers monitored the reading development of each learner using the reading level monitoring chart.

Post-assessment Stage. Having passed the Grade 7 pretests, the learners were now ready to take the crucial stage of this Program - Grade 7 posttest passages. Each reading teacher shall submit a copy of the reading level monitoring chart to the coordinator who would consolidate and determine the number of frustration readers, instructional readers, and independent readers.

Final Report Stage. This is the stage when the coordinator consolidated the pre-assessment and the post-assessment of the identified learners. This stage provides answers to the action research questions and recommendations for further studies.

Action Research Questions

The study aimed to determine the impact of the Reading Engagement Advocacy and Development (READ) Program among identified Grade 7 frustration readers who had access to distance learning and to disclose the reading comprehension level of Grade 7 learners of Zamboanga del Norte National High School for school year 2020-2021.

Specifically, it aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the reading level of Grade 7 students before the conduct of the READ Program?
2. What is the reading level of Grade 7 students after the conduct of the reading program?
3. What is the reading level of Grade 7 students before and after the conduct of the READ Program when grouped according to gender?
4. How does the READ Program help eradicate the number of Grade 7 frustration readers?

Action Research Methods

Research Design

The researcher of the study employed descriptive research design. Grade 7 learners' reading level were pre-assessed using the Phil-IRI Group Screening Test. Only the non-passers will undergo the READ Program through distance learning.

Participants and Other Sources of Data Information

Supposedly, there were 800 (365 males and 435 females) Grade 7 frustration readers of Zamboanga del Norte National High School for school year 2020-2021. Due

to lack of access to distance learning communication and some ART members were afflicted with COVID-19, only 556 (242 males and 314 females) frustration readers undergone the READ Program.

Table 1 provides the list of ART members with their respective sections assigned, the number of frustration readers, and the number of actual frustration readers who participated in the READ Program.

Table 1: ART Members, Their Respective Assigned Number of Frustration Readers, and Number of Actual READ Program Participants

Reading Teacher (ART Member)	Section	No. of Frustration Readers			No. of Actual READ Program Participants		
		MALE	FEMAL	TOTAL	MALE	FEMAL	TOTAL
Reading Teacher 1	Aquarius	1	9	10	1	9	10
Reading Teacher 2	Pisces	6	16	22	6	16	22
Reading Teacher 3	Cherry Pink	20	28	48	6	8	14
Reading Teacher 4	Gray	19	19	38	12	13	25
Reading Teacher 5	Brown	22	24	46	14	20	34
Reading Teacher 6	Yellow	21	31	52	16	21	37
Reading Teacher 7	Violet	16	26	42	10	15	25
Reading Teacher 8	Fuchsia	24	23	47	13	14	27
Reading Teacher 9	Aquamarine	28	24	52	0	0	0
Reading Teacher 10	Magenta	19	25	44	4	8	12
Reading Teacher 11	Purple	26	25	51	14	22	36
Reading Teacher 12	Scarlet	28	26	54	14	13	27
Reading Teacher 13	Newsvine	8	17	25	8	16	24
Reading Teacher 14	Amorsolo	13	9	22	10	6	16
Reading Teacher 15	Green	16	18	34	16	18	34
Reading Teacher 16	Red	11	17	28	11	17	28
Reading Teacher 17	Tangerine	18	20	38	18	20	38
Reading Teacher 18	Ivory	16	14	30	16	14	30
Reading Teacher 19	Orange	12	16	28	12	16	28
Reading Teacher 20	Sky Blue	17	19	36	17	19	36
Reading Teacher 21	Plane	14	26	40	14	26	40
Reading Teacher 22	Hercules	10	3	13	10	3	13
TOTAL		365	435	800	242	314	556

Research Instrument

The researcher utilized assessment tools in the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (PHIL-IRI) Manual 2018 namely: the Grade 7 Group Screening Test, Grades 4 to 6 passage with reading monitoring chart, Grade 7 pretest and posttest, and Grade 7 post assessment report.

Data Gathering Procedure

With the assistance of Grade 7 class advisers, ART members provided each of their respective frustration readers a READ Program Booklet containing 32 Phil-IRI passages for Grade 4 level readers and 24 Phil-IRI passages for Grade 5 level readers.

Using *Messenger*, *Google Meet*, and cellular phones, each ART member established class routines and conducted a one-on-one reading interventions using the Phil-IRI passages within the March 1, 2021 to July 14, 2021. Within this period, the City Government of Dipolog through the City Social Welfare and Development (CSWD) recognized the READ Program as one of the MUGNA Award Top Finalists and granted the ART with P 10 000.00 cash prize. The prize alleviated the communication expenses of ART members for each was given P 300.00 communication allowance and up to P 400.00 communication contingency fund for learners who were financially constrained but had access to distance learning communication.

After the vigorous intervention, the learners took the Phil-IRI posttest to determine their respective reading level within July 15-16, 2021. Consequently, ART members submitted their respective reading monitoring charts and post assessment reports to the coordinator within July 28-30, 2021.

Data Analysis

The researcher consolidated, tabulated, and interpreted the pre-assessment and post assessment results of the Program using descriptive statistics.

Results and Discussion

The researcher presented first figures or tables followed by the discussion for easy understanding of the results of the study's findings.

Reading Level of Learners Before and After the Conduct of the READ Program. Understanding the reading levels of learners before the conduct of the READ Program is a crucial step in designing effective interventions. It helps educators identify students' strengths, challenges, and individual needs. By addressing specific areas of improvement and providing targeted support, the READ Program can have a more significant impact on enhancing students' reading skills, comprehension, and overall learning experience.

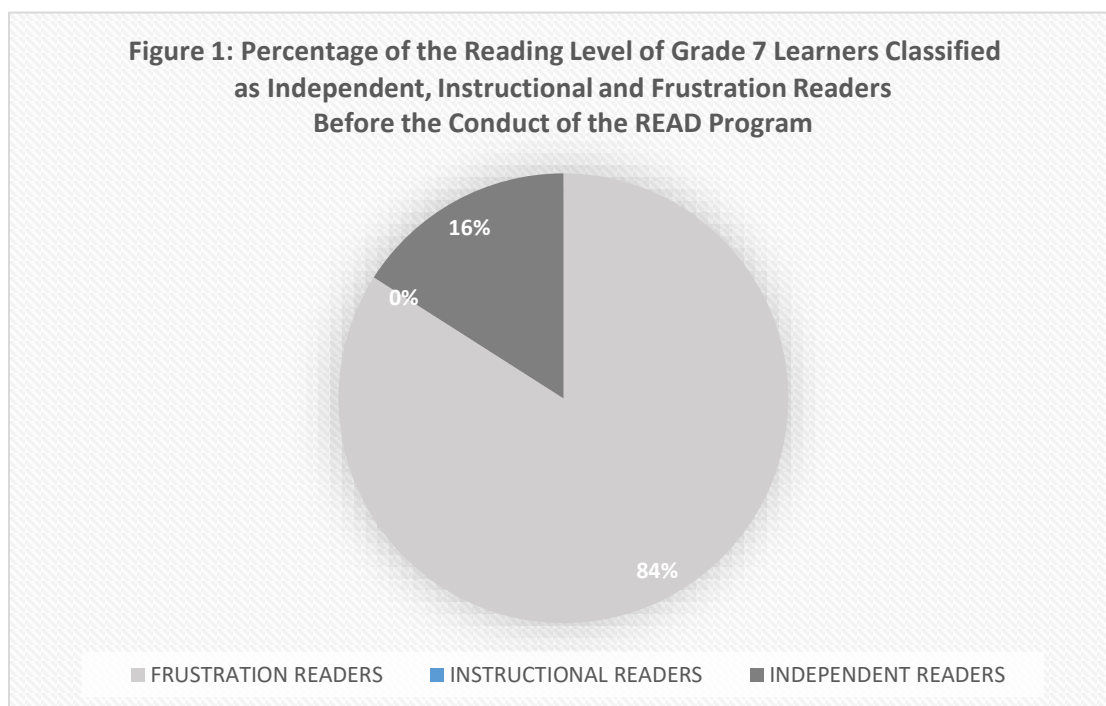


Figure 1 shows the percentage of students classified as independent, instructional and frustrated readers before the intervention. The highest percentage of 84% or 800 of the respondents were classified as frustration readers. It was followed by 16% or 152 of the respondents were classified as independent readers. No one belonged to instructional readers.

The result implies that 800 Grade 7 learners found reading materials so difficult that they cannot successfully respond to them (The Philippine Informal Reading Inventory 2018 -25). The result silently screamed for reading intervention.

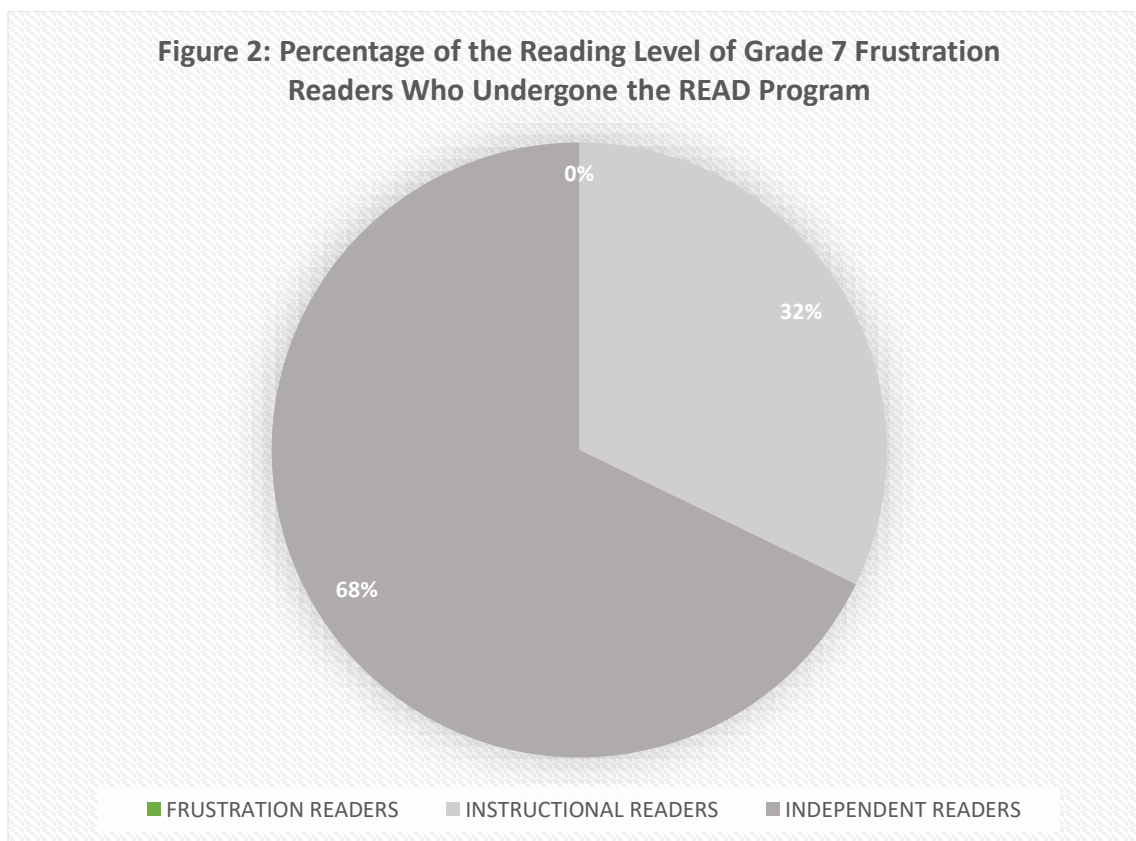


Figure 2 shows the percentage of frustration readers who undergone the READ Program classified as independent, instructional and frustrated readers after the intervention. The highest percentage of 68% or 377 learners were classified as independent readers. It was followed by 32% or 179 instructional readers. No one classified as frustration readers.

This implies that the READ Program eradicated the number of frustration readers turning majority of them to become independent readers. Participants of the Program found the sincerity in the reading advocacy of dedicated ART members and the visible support from their respective parents; hence, the learners committed themselves to reach the standard reading level.

ART members generally observed that scaffolding students to reach their standard reading level demanded time and one-on-one focus. This meant sacrifice for both learners and teachers. However, both knew those sacrifices were worth a struggle.

Figure 3: Percentage of the Reading Level of Grade 7 Learners Classified as Independent, Instructional and Frustration Readers After the Conduct of the READ Program

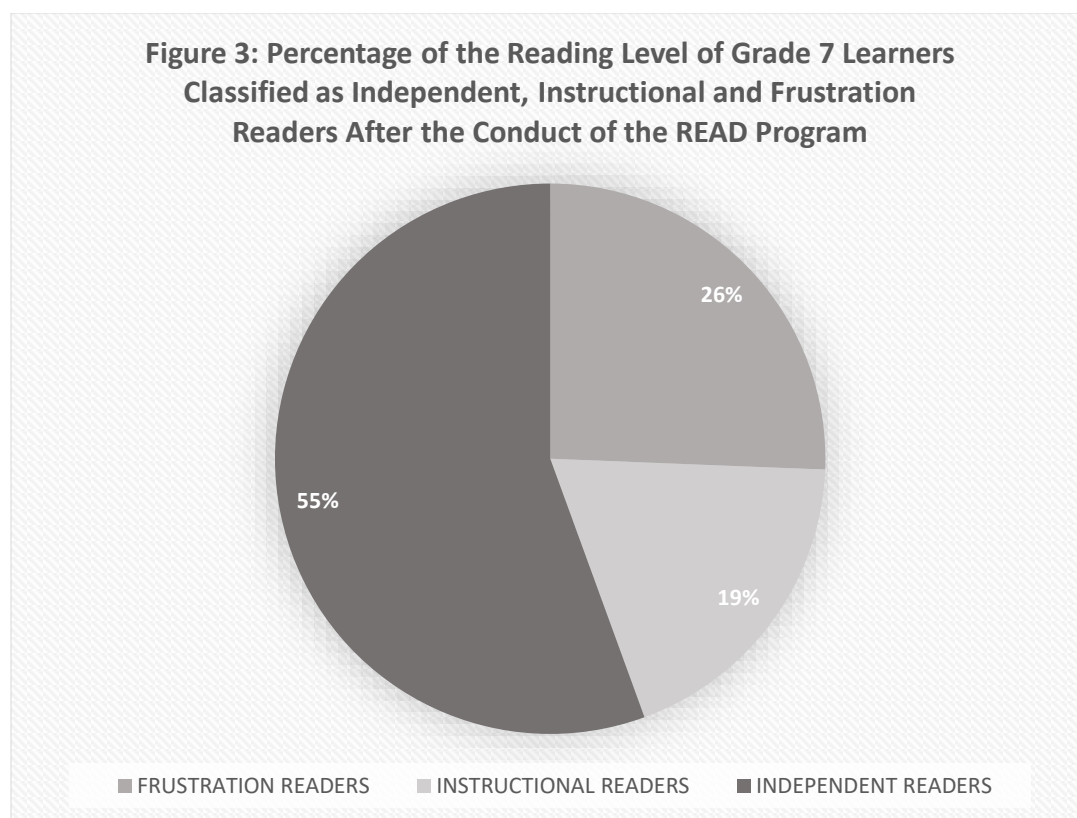


Figure 3 shows the percentage of the reading level of grade 7 learners classified as independent, instructional and frustration readers after the conduct of the READ Program. The highest percentage of 55% or 529 learners were classified as independent readers. It was followed by 26% or 244 learners who remained as frustration readers while 19% or 179 learners were considered instructional readers.

This implies that the Program helped increase the number of independent readers this school year. The Program also hauled 179 Grade 7 level instructional readers the level at which readers profit the most from teacher directed instruction in reading (The Philippine Informal Reading Inventory 2018 -25). Due to lack of access to distance learning communication and some of the ART members were afflicted with COVID-19, the remaining 224 frustration readers (123 males and 121 females) failed to undergo with the Program. ART members considered these unforeseen circumstances as beyond their control.

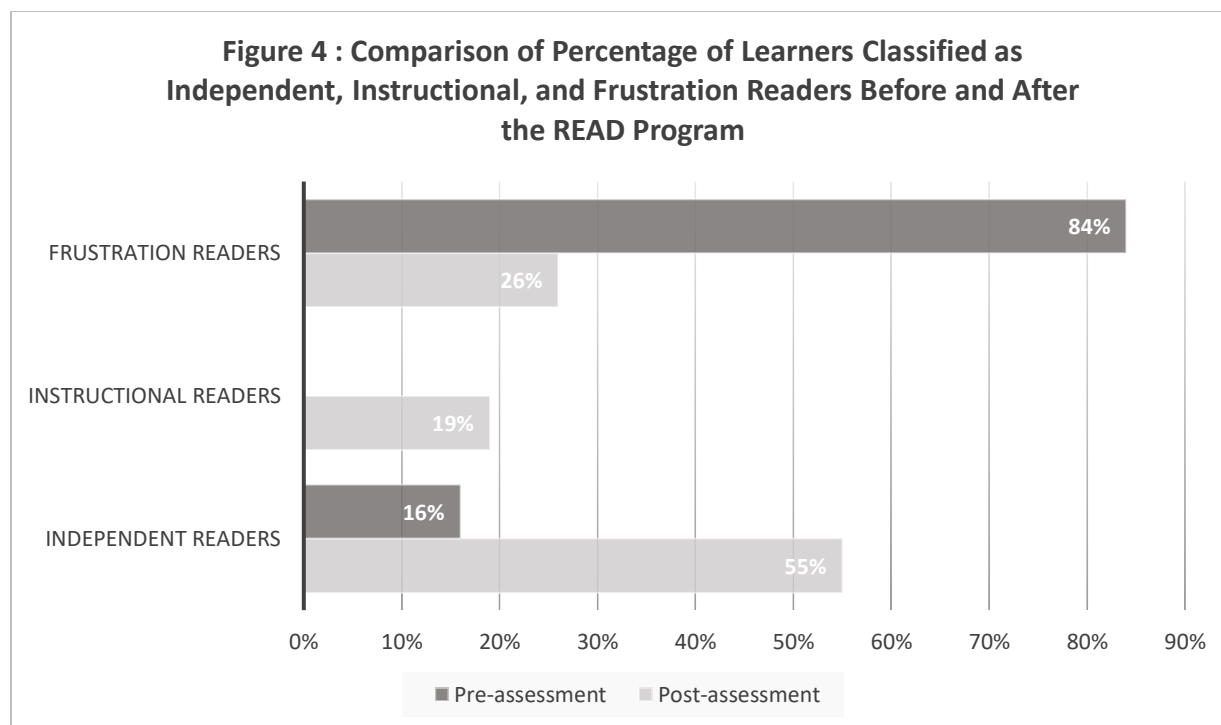


Figure 4 shows the chart comparing the percentage of learners in classified as independent, instructional, and frustration readers before and after the conduct of the READ Program. The graph showed a sharp increase of independent readers from 16% or 152 to 55% or 529 after the intervention.

In the post-assessment, only 19% or 179 learners reached Grade 7 instructional level. In contrast, the graph showed a sudden backlash of frustration readers from 84% or 800 to 26% or 244.

This means that the Program was able to dramatically increase the number independent readers. If all identified beneficiaries of the Program had access to distance learning communication, the Program would have eradicated the number of frustration readers.

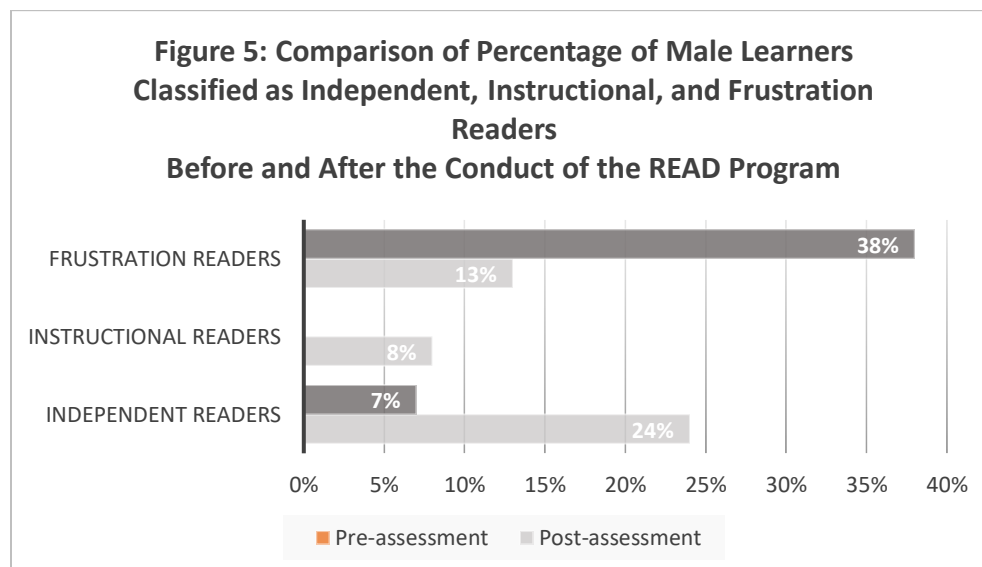


Figure 5 shows the comparison of percentage of male learners classified as independent, instructional and frustrated readers before and after the conduct of the READ Program. The graph showed more than a threefold increase of independent readers after the Program from 7% or 62 learners to 24% or 224 learners. The Program had also produced 8% or 80 instructional readers. Finally, the number of frustration readers plummeted almost threefold from 38% or 365 learners to 13% or 123 learners.

This implies that most of the male readers were classified as independent readers while 123 of the males who remained frustration readers had no access to distance learning communication or might not be tapped by the ART members who were afflicted by COVID-19.

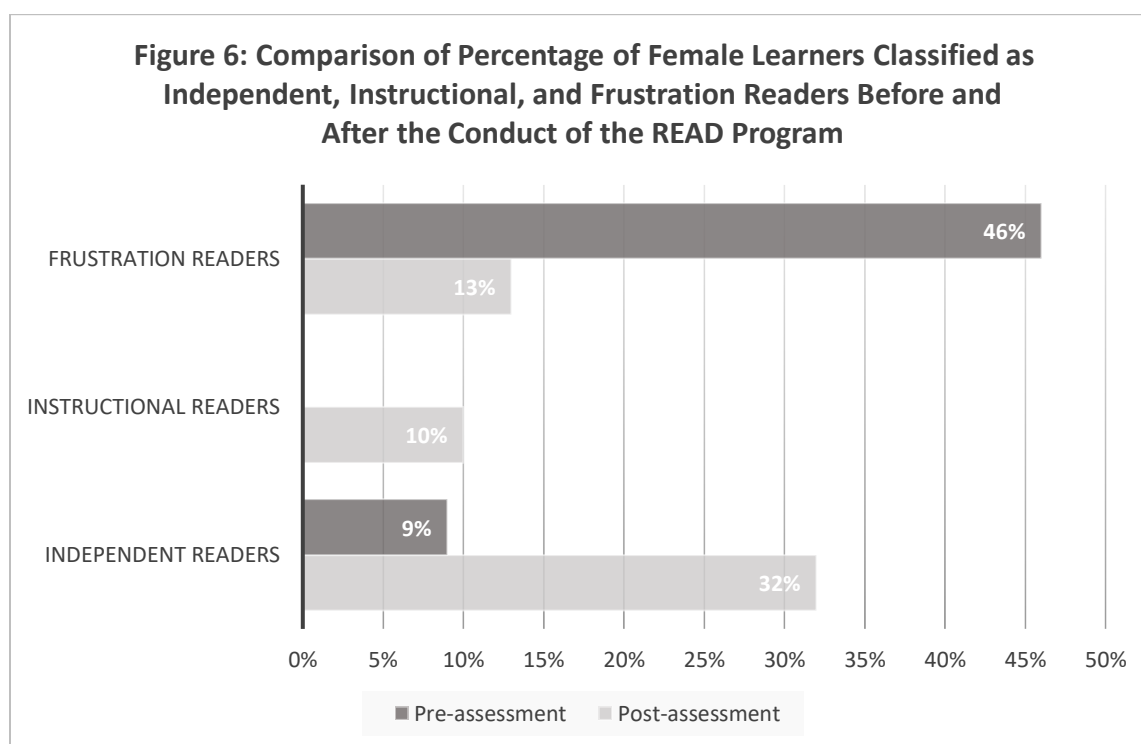


Figure 6 shows the comparison of percentage of female learners classified as independent, instructional and frustrated readers before and after the READ Program. The graph shows over a five-fold increase of independent readers after the Program from 9% or 90 learners to 46% or 305 learners. The Program produced 10% or 99 instructional readers. Finally, there was also a sharp decline of frustration readers from 46% or 435 learners to 13% or 121 learners.

This implies how majority of female readers turned out to become independent readers after conduct of the Program while the 121 who remained frustration readers had no access to distance learning communication or might not be tapped by the ART members who were afflicted by COVID-19.

Figure 7. Comparison of Percentage of Male and Female Learners Classified as Independent, Instructional, and Frustration Readers before and after the Conduct of the READ Program

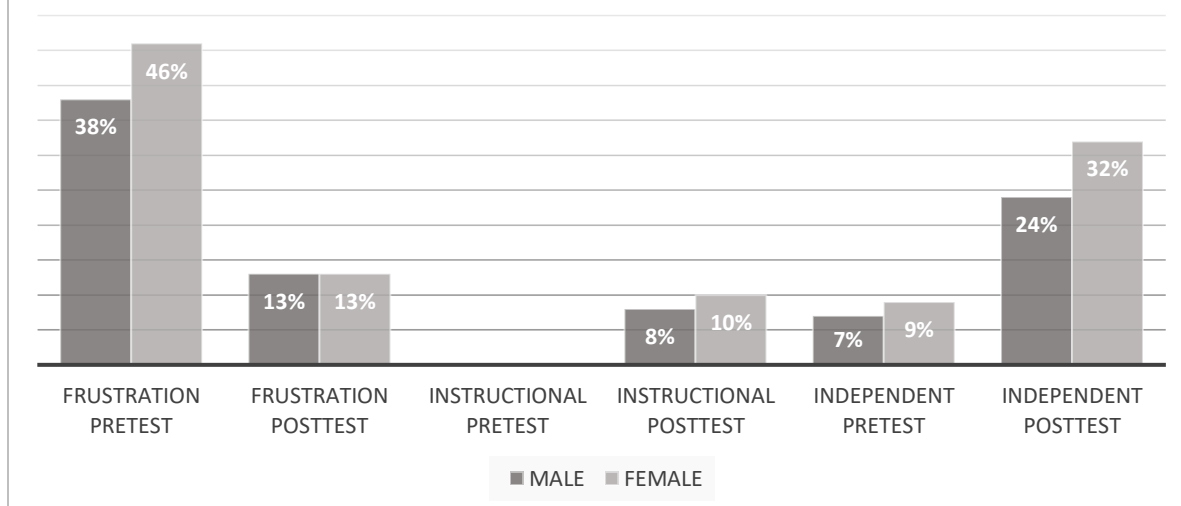


Figure 7 shows the comparison of male and female Grade 7 students classified as frustration, instructional and independent readers before and after the conduct of the READ Program. The graph showed that during before the conduct of the Program, the percentage of female frustration readers was 8% higher than males; both sexes were not classified as instructional readers; and the percentage of female independent readers was 2% higher than males. After the conduct of the Program, frustration readers of both sexes shared the same percentage; instructional readers were produced comprising 10% females and 8% males; and the percentage of female independent readers turned out to be 8% higher than males.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This action research aimed to determine the impact of the Reading Engagement Advocacy and Development (READ) Program among its 556 completers and to disclose the reading comprehension level of Grade 7 learners of Zamboanga del Norte National High School for school year 2020-2021. After the ZNNHS Association of Reading Teachers (ART) conducted the Phil-IRI Group Screening Test (GST) among 952 Grade 7 learners, the result showed that 152 (15.97%) learners comprising 62 males and 90 females were considered independent readers while 800 (84.03%) learners consisting of 365 males and 435 turned out to frustration readers. Due to lack of distance communication access and affliction of COVID-19 among reading teachers, only 556 out of 800 frustration readers undergone a one-on-one reading interventions and a Grade 7 reading comprehension level posttest using Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) passages. The posttest showed that the Program eradicated the number of frustration readers and yielded 377 (67.81%) independent readers composed of 162 males and 215 females; and 179 (32.19) instructional readers comprising 80 males and 99 females. Hence, the Program has been proven impactful for those who undergone the reading intervention. The study recommends that one-on-one reading activity as exemplified in the Phil-IRI 2018 Manual shall be part of the mainstream in English 7 curriculum; the ART shall conduct an annual reading interventions among

Grade 7 learners to ensure the standard reading level of learners; pre-assessment for reading comprehension level using the Phil-IRI Group Screening Test must be conducted within first month of the school year to prepare for the early conduct of the READ Program; communication challenges beset the ART members for the implementation of the READ Program for school year 2021-2020, hence, the organization must seek financial assistance from benevolent stakeholder or win the prize for community initiative competition such as the MUGNA Award by the City Government of Dipolog through the City Social Welfare and Development; as what happened this school year, COVID-19 may still afflict some of the ART members which may cripple them to further the conduct the Program; the ART coordinator must seek contingency plan to ensure the continuity of the Program and shall recruit more ART members and capacitate them with the reading intervention procedures; there should be a study on the impact of the READ Program in every school in Dipolog City Division; and the next action research shall focus on the three-year implementation of the READ Program.

Action Plan

ACTIVITY	OBJECTIVES	STRATEGY/ IES	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE	RESOURCES	SUCCESS INDICATORS
Information Dissemination	To inform and disseminate the result of the action research (AR) to the school principal and reading teachers.	To inform and disseminate the result of the action research (AR) to the school principal and reading teachers during the first LAC session of the school year 2022-2023.	School Principal, English Department Head, Filipino Department Head, Master Teachers in English and Filipino, and Researcher/School Reading Coordinators	August 2022 onward	Completed AR READ Program Portfolio for School Year 2022-2022 PowerPoint Smart TV Laptop	Informed and disseminated the result of the action research
Mentoring	To reorient or recapacitate reading teachers with the READ Program.	Conduct reorientation/LAC sessions on READ Program.	School Principal, English Department Head, Filipino Department Head, Master Teachers in English and Filipino, and Researcher/School Reading Coordinators	August 2022 onward	Completed AR READ Program Project Design for School Year 2022-2023. The Philippine Informal Reading Inventory Manual 2018	High level of awareness on READ Program among reading teachers

					PowerPoint Smart TV Laptop	
Instructional Monitoring	To monitor the implementation of the READ Program	LAC sessions and consultative conferences	School Principal, English Department Head, Filipino Department Head, Master Teachers in English and Filipino, and Researcher/School Reading Coordinators	September 2022 onward	Completed AR READ Program Project Design for School Year 2022-2023. The Philippine Informal Reading Inventory Manual 2018 PowerPoint Smart TV Laptop	READ Program Monitoring Chart; GST report; and pre and post assessment report
Evaluation	To evaluate the outcome of the READ Program	Gather the needed data for the evaluation	School Principal, English Department Head, Filipino Department Head, Master Teachers in English and	July 2023	READ Program Monitoring Chart; GST report; and pre and post	Sustainability Plan and Re-adoption of the Materials

			Filipino, and Researcher/School Reading Coordinators		assessment report	
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References

- Department of Education Bureau of Learning Resources. 2018. *The Philippine Informal Reading Inventory Manual 2018*. <https://lrmds.deped.gov.ph/detail/13908>
- DepEd Order No. 12 s. 2015. *Guidelines on the Early Language, Literacy, and Numeracy Program: Professional Development Component*. https://www.deped.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/DO_s2015_12.pdf
- DepEd Order No. 14 s. 2018. *Policy Guidelines on the Administration of the Revised Philippine Informal Reading Inventory*. https://www.deped.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/DO_s2018_014.pdf

Financial Report

PARTICULARS	AMOUNT	SOURCE OF FUND
1. Reproduction of the Reading Intervention Materials (25.00 x 800 beneficiaries)	20 000.00	School's MOOE
2. Documentation Expenses (50.00 x 25 [22 sections and 3 copies of coordinator's documents])	1 250.00	School's MOOE
3. Reading Teacher's Communication Allowance (300.00 x 19 Teachers)	5 700.00	MUGNA Award Fund
4. Action Research Expenses	3 000.00	ART Coordinator
5. Communication Expenses for the Beneficiaries		Respective Parents of the Beneficiaries/ART members
6. Contingency Fund (Beneficiaries who cannot afford the communication expenses)	4 300.00	MUGNA Award Fund
TOTAL	34 250.00	

Since this program is part of ZNNHS School Improvement Plan, the cost shall mostly be funded by the school through Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE). The MUGNA Award Fund shall cover reading teachers' communication allowance, action research, and contingency fund particularly for the beneficiaries who can hardly afford communication expenses. The rests shall be shouldered by the parents of the beneficiaries and members of ART.

Appendix A
Assent Form

I, _____, parent of _____
allow my son/daughter _____ to undergo the Reading Engagement Advocacy and Development (READ) Program for school year 2021-2022.

I am fully aware that the READ Program' aimed only at improving the reading level of my son/daughter but also retrieving his/her reading profile as basis for action research.

Participant:

Name of Parent/Guardian

Signature

Date

Researcher:

Name of Researcher

Signature

Date