School-Team Advancement Program (STAP) and Students' Reading Skills in English

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Abstract— Reading is an indispensable skill in various life contexts. Improving students' reading skills is integral to effectively acquire information, communicate ideas and avail professional development opportunities. However, this is somewhat a difficult skill, requiring massive effort to comprehend the ideas and critical thinking to practice a meaningful reading process. Students should have rich vocabulary, knowledge of grammar, structure, meanings and other prerequisites for significant reading. Hence, this study tested the level of STAP implementation to Grade 7 students of LNHS. Based on their pre and post test scores in reading skills such as vocabulary, reading fluency and reading comprehension to see its significant relationship utilizing the Quasi- Experimental Research Design. The researcher collected data through criterion sampling, pretest and posttest, and survey questionnaires. The implementation of STAP is anchored on the Phil-IRI manual of the DepEd. The research findings imply that there is a significant difference between the pre and posttest scores of the students in vocabulary, reading fluency and comprehension skills. The study reveals that that the STAP implementation has strong positive correlation to the vocabulary (r=0.74) and reading comprehension skills (r=0.75) while moderate positive correlation to reading fluency (r=0.44). It shows that the implementation of STAP, which covers assessment, strategies, student participation, schedule and materials plays a vital role in enhancing students' reading skills in English. Thus, there is a glaring need to integrate collaboration between the school personnel to an effective teaching-reading.

Keywords— School-Team Advancement Program, Reading Skills in English, Vocabulary, Reading Fluency, Reading Comprehension

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's interconnected world, reading literacy is a fundamental skill that plays an increasingly crucial role in the success student's academic and overall development. However, students in geographically remote schools often face unique challenges in developing their reading literacy skills.

Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018 results revealed that 80% of Filipino students did not reach the minimum level of proficiency in reading. In January 2023, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported in the Philippine Daily Inquirer that the Philippines ranked 2nd to worst in students' reading and math skills in Southeast Asia.

The National Achievement Test (NAT) result of Grade 6 and Grade 10 students published by the region showed that Region 12 Divisions were less proficient in literacy and numeracy skills. Specifically, Sultan Kudarat Division marked a low level of proficiency in literacy and numeracy skills even before the pandemic. Such result shows that reading literacy skills need attention.

The HAMON: BAWAT BATA BUMABASA 2019 (3Bs Initiative), Every Child a Reader Program (ECARP) as stipulated in the DepEd Order Nos. 7, s. 2008 and 12, s. 2015 and Philippine Informal Reading Inventory

(Phil-IRI) 2019 are some implemented reading programs of the Department of Education to solve the reading crisis. However, reading literacy is still a problem and the number of struggling readers continuously grow.

The Department of Education stands immovably in its commitment to delivering relevant, quality, responsive and inclusive basic education. DepEd Memorandum No. 001 s. 2024 ordered the Implementation of Catch-Up Fridays beginning January 12, 2024 across elementary, secondary and community learning centers nationwide. It focuses on the operationalizing the National Reading Program (NRP) during the first half of the day and the "Drop Everything and Read" (DEAR) is again brought out to dedicate the learners to reading activities and processes.

Barton and McKay (2016) believe that educators play a vital role in how they respond to students who encounter challenges in learning particularly, in relation to reading outcomes. On the other hand, Cataraja (2022) concluded that learners need a various reading strategy to enhance their reading comprehension. Naval (2023) seconded that supplementary reading materials are crucial in improving students' overall reading learning outcomes.

Thus, this paper investigated the effectiveness and the quality of the delivery of School-Team Advancement Program (STAP) in improving the reading literacy skills of students such as vocabulary, reading fluency and reading comprehension in a geographically remote school.

Overall, this study sought to shed light on the significance of providing comprehensive support to the students' needs in a geographically remote school particularly in their reading literacy skills in English. By understanding the impact of STAP, we can work towards bridging the gap and ensuring equal opportunities for students in remote educational settings.

Statement of the Problem

Generally, this study aimed to identify the learner's needs to overcome the reading literacy gaps and determine the effectiveness of the STAP in the development and improvement of Reading Literacy skills of the Grade 7 students. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of implementation of the STAP in terms of:

    1.1. assessment;
    1.2. strategies;
    1.3. student participation;
    1.4. schedule; and
    1.5. materials?

2. What is the pretest and posttest scores of the students in terms of:

    a. vocabulary;

    b. reading fluency; and

    c. reading comprehension?

3. Is there a significant difference in the pretest and posttest scores of the students in terms of:

    a. vocabulary;

    b. reading fluency; and

    c. reading comprehension?

4. Is the quality of STAP implementation significantly related to the students' reading skills in English?

II. METHODS

Research Design

The researcher used the descriptive evaluative research design to determine the quality of STAP implementation in terms of assessment, strategies, students' participation, materials, and schedule.

Furthermore, this study employed the Quasi-Experimental Research Design to determine the effectiveness of the STAP on the Reading Literacy Skills of the students in terms of vocabulary, reading fluency, and reading comprehension. The data were gathered using Pretest and Posttest to evaluate the Reading literacy skills of the Grade 7 students before and after the program implementation. It was scrutinized, described, and tabulated to yield answers to the specific questions drawn from the problem statement.

Participants of the Study

Nineteen Grade 7 students were the final participants of the study based on the result of the screening test. Those who scored 1 to 7 points grouped in frustration level were taken from the population of grade 7 and served as the participants of the study.

The Grade 7 students were the chosen participants since their grade level got the highest number of struggling readers based on the report of the School Reading Coordinator. The teachers of the mentioned grade level supported the report regarding the student's performance in the first quarter.

Research Instrument

The research instrument of the study is the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory Manual of the Department of Education. This instrument had a pretest and posttest, which is used to identify the reading literacy skills of the students, whether they are reading at, below, or above their grade level. Identifying the students' reading literacy skills helped the researcher identify who has needs and what level of instruction they need.

The Phil-IRI also includes differentiated Instructional materials designed to aid the students'

vocabulary, fluency, and reading comprehension. These differentiated instructional materials are arranged from simple to complex to develop or enhance the student's reading fluency. Reading comprehension text and questions are given in sets for every grade level, and vocabulary taken from the reading text (Phil-IRI 2018). This material used as a prime treatment instrument to address the needs of the students through the help of the school-team in the process of instruction.

The researcher also used a self-made Survey Questionnaire to measure the quality of the implementation of STAP. The Survey Validation Rubric for Expert Panel – VREP was adapted and modified by the researcher from Marilyn K. Simon with input from Jacquelyn White. It was validated by four (4) full-pledge Master's Degree holder DepEd teachers, one Master Teacher II, one Master Teacher I and two Teacher III one from the locale and three from the nearby schools.

The following rating scales and interpretation were applied in different purposes.

Table 1: Rating Scale and Interpretation of the validity of the survey questionnaire

Numerical Rating	Mean Rating	Descriptive Rating	Interpretation
5	4.30-5.00	Excellent	meets 81-100% of the expected level of delivery performance
4	3.40-4.29	Very Satisfactory	meets 61-80% of the expected level of delivery performance
3	2.60-3.39	Satisfactory	meets 41-60% of the expected level of delivery performance
2	1.80-2.59	Fair	meets 21-40% of the expected level of delivery performance
1	1.00-1.79	Poor	below 21% of the expected level of delivery performance

(Adapted from Socion 2020).

Table 2: Rating Scale and Interpretation on the Quality of Delivery of STAP.

Rating	Range of Mean	Descriptive Rating	Interpretation
4	3.50- 4.0	Exceeds Expectations	Meets 90% and above quality standard
3	2.50-3.49	Meets Expectations	Meets 75% and above quality standard
2	1.50- 2.49	Below Expectations	Meets 55% and above quality standard
1	1.00- 1.49	Not Acceptable	Meets 35% and below quality standard

(Adapted from the study of Protacio 2014).

Table 3: Pre-Screening Test Scoring Matrix.

If the raw score in the GST is	Start with a Graded Passage that is	Level
0-7 points	Three (3) Grade levels lower than current level	Frustration
8-13 points	Two (2) Grade levels lower than current level	Instructional
14 points and above	Discontinue testing	Independent

(Adapted from Phil-IRI Manual 2018)

Table 4: Phil-IRI Reading Profile in Percent

Oral Reading Level	Word Reading Score (in %)		Comprehension Score (in %)		Vocabulary Score (in %)	
Independent	99-102	97-100%	16-20	80-100%	14-20	70-100%
Instructional	90-96	92-98%	11-15	59-79 %	8-13	40-69%
Frustration	89 and below	91% and below	10 and below	58 % and below	7 and below	39 % and below

(Adapted from Phil-IRI Manual 2018)

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher secured a permit to conduct the study from the office of the Dean of the Graduate School of Sultan Kudarat State University.

Afterward, a permission from the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division of Sultan Kudarat was sought through a letter request. The researcher sent a letter to the school principal of Lebak National High School and then wrote a consent letter to participants of the study.

The researcher conducted a pre-screening test to all grade 7 students to identify the study participants and undergo the STAP. Then, the implementation of STAP took place for 1 grading period. The posttest was administered to assess if there is progress on the learners' reading skills and collecting their views on the program through answering survey questionnaire on the program quality of implementation.

Lastly, after the retrieval of the data, the consolidation, interpretation and analysis of data took place paired with the application of the statistical treatment made for the study.

Statistical Treatment

The results of pretest and posttest were recorded, arranged, assessed and interpreted. This study used varied statistical treatments to analyze its results. The statistical instruments were utilized to address the research questions presented in Chapter I. Mean and standard deviation were utilized to evaluate the quality of the delivery of the STAP.

For the second research question, the researcher utilized the mean and standard deviation to determine the students' vocabulary, reading fluency and reading comprehension level in the pretest and posttest. For the third research question, the researcher used a t-test analysis to determine the significant difference between the students' pretest and posttest scores in vocabulary, reading fluency and reading comprehension.

Lastly, for the fourth research question, to determine the significant relationship of the students' reading skills in English and the level of implementation of the STAP, the researcher used the Pearson r correlation. All the statistical treatments used a 0.05 level of significance.

III.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of STAP on the reading skills of grade 7 students. It determined on the pretest and posttest scores of the students in vocabulary, reading fluency and reading comprehension. Various table of result are presented below.

Table 5: Summary Table on the Assessment of the STAP implementation

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
Assessment	4.39	0.64	Excellent
Strategies	4.41	0.65	Excellent
Student Participation	4.36	0.64	Excellent
Schedule	4.38	0.90	Excellent
Materials	4.33	0.78	Excellent
Overall	4.37	0.72	Excellent

The result shows that in terms of assessment, strategies, student participation, schedule and materials, the STAP implementation is "excellent" as evidenced by the overall mean of 4.37 (SD = 0.72). It implies that the program is effective. The assessment conducted was appropriate, strategies were interesting, students were encouraged to participate, schedule was convenient and material was valid and reliable and can be used as intervention material for the improvement of students' reading skills in English.

Therefore, the program passed the qualities expected by the target participants which are the grade 7 struggling readers. The implementation of the program in all aspect meets 81% and above quality of delivery performance.

Of these factors, Bunagan (2018) corroborated this claim stating that the program must revolve around the students for them to be independent in their academics. The students also understand that the information has been customized to their needs and interests. Popoola (2020) supported that the efficacy of students' academic achievements is adversely affected by the educational materials utilized.

Table 6: Frequency Distribution of the Pre and Post- test Scores in terms of Vocabulary

Reading Skills Level	Pre-test Scores		Post-test Scores	
	f	f%	f	f%
Frustration	19	100	5	26.32
Instructional	0	0	14	73.68
Independent	0	0	0	0
	19	100	19	100
	Mean = 4.21		Mean = 9.11	
	SD = 1.81		SD = 1.61	
	Description = Frustration		Description = Instructional	

Table 6 reveals the reading level and pre and post- test scores of the grade 7 participants in terms of vocabulary. Based on the result, the vocabulary skills of the students before the implementation of the STAP program was determined as frustration with the mean of 4.21 (SD=1.81). This implies that the students struggled in terms of vocabulary. In this matter, a certain intervention must be taken to solve this problem. Individual reading, partner reading, picture recognition, unlocking of difficulties and individual silent reading and questions answering are some activities employed to address their poor vocabulary.

On the other hand, after the program intervention post- test was administered to determine the reading level of the students in terms of vocabulary. It was found out that there were 14 or 73.68% of the students were belong to instructional level. Meanwhile, there were 5 or 26.32% of them are still belong to frustration level.

Such result shows that the program activities are effective. Though there are 5 participants who remained in the frustration level, their scores in the posttest increase. And so, concluded that there is a significant difference in the pretest and posttest scores of the students in terms of vocabulary skill development. An evident of the effectiveness of the STAP implementation.

Risonar, et al., (2021) agreed to this finding claiming that Story Retelling promotes vocabulary development and enhancing students' ability to understand text structure. It is supported by Anto, et al., (2022) asserting that reading remediation provide positive outcomes, including increased reading fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. Although, vocabulary awareness is arduous to measure. It is, however, very significant in reading literacy and in future reading development (Pang, et al., 2013).

Table 7: Frequency Distribution of the Pre and Post- test Scores in terms of Reading Fluency

Reading Skills Level	Pre-test Scores		Post-test Scores	
	f	f%	f	f%
Frustration	17	89.47	5	26.32
Instructional	2	10.53	3	15.79
Independent	0	0	11	57.89
Total	19	100	19	100

Mean = 63.26	Mean = 92.88
SD = 17.78	SD = 9.00
Description = Frustration	Description = Instructional

The table 7 shows the reading fluency level of the participants in the pre and post- test. The result clearly reveals that the reading fluency of the participants is poor before the program is being implemented based on its

mean score 63.26 (SD=17.78) "frustration" level. It is very evident that the participants need to undergo the program to enhance their reading fluency. Word recognition process such as Marungko approach was implemented where words are learned from simple to complex.

After the implementation of the program, the mean scores the students' reading fluency skill is 92.88 (SD=9.0). Evidently implies the progress of the participants. 11 participants (57.89%) stepped up from frustration to independent level, 3 (15.79%) were instructional and 5 (26.32%) are still in frustration level. The program is undeniably effective in enhancing the reading fluency as most of the participants turned to be independent readers after attending the program. Therefore, there is a significant difference in the pretest and posttest scores of the students in terms of reading fluency.

The findings of Navarra (2020) in his Whole School Approach, agreed with the findings of this study. It was proven that students' reading and writing literacy skills improve through various strategies and activities. It enhances word recognition and comprehension and promotes social, emotional, and behavioral adjustment and other outcomes, including educational attainment. Jalotjot (2023) added that using simplified PVC reading approach, the word recognition and comprehension skills for students with reading difficulties and suggests a continuous development.

Table 8: Frequency Distribution of the Pre and Post- test Scores in terms of Reading Comprehension

Reading Skills Level	Pre-test Scores		Post-test Scores	
	f	f%	f	f%
Frustration	19	100	4	21.05
Instructional	0	0	14	73.68
Independent	0	0	1	5.27
Total	19	100	19	100

Mean = 7.42	Mean = 12.47
SD = 1.95	SD = 1.17
Description = Frustration	Description = Instructional

Table 8 shows that prior to the implementation of STAP, the reading comprehension of the students are low (m=7.42 and SD=1.95). This implies that the students' reading comprehension profile is in frustration level. They hardly understand the ideas and concept of the text they are reading, a ground that clearly shows that they need interventions or programs to help them develop their comprehension skills for better and effective schooling.

The posttest result obviously shows the improvement on reading comprehension of the students after the 10 weeks of attending the reading program. 1 participant (5.27%) participant leveled up from frustration to independent level, 14 participants (73.68%) improved to instructional level but there are 4 participants (21.05%) who remained in the frustration level.

Such result reflects that there is a significant difference in the pretest and posttest scores of the students in terms of reading comprehension. A factual evidence that the STAP plays on the development of the participants reading comprehension skill garnering the mean of 12.47 (SD=1.17) in the posttest.

Catraja (2022) supported this finding as revealed in the impact of the SQ3R Method is effectively improved students' reading comprehension. She concluded that students need reading intervention and different reading strategy to improve their reading comprehension, and using the SQ3R improved their performance.

Table 9: Significant Difference on Pre vs. Post- Test Scores

Variables	Mean	t value	p value	Interpretation
Pre – Vocabulary	4.21	10.685	.000	Significant
Post – Vocabulary	9.11			
Pre –Reading Fluency	63.26	7.440	.000	Significant
Post -Reading Fluency	92.88			
Pre –Reading Comprehension	7.42	12.608	.000	Significant
Post –Reading Comprehension	12.47			

Note: p <.05, significant

Table 5 reveals the significant difference in the means of pre and post- test scores in terms of vocabulary (t value = 10.685, p = .000) which means that the null hypothesis 1 is rejected. Likewise, there was a significant difference in the means of pre and post- test scores in terms of reading fluency (t value = 7.440, p = .000) subject to the rejection of null hypothesis 2. Finally, there was a significant difference in the means of pre and post- test scores in terms of reading comprehension (t value = 12.608, p = .000) which rejects the null hypothesis 3.

These findings show that the implementation of the School-Team Advancement Program (STAP) is significantly related to the students' reading skills in English as indicated by the participants' achievements in vocabulary, reading fluency and reading comprehension. It

was observed that during the intervention students were actively participated in the discussions and activities given to them. This implies that students were eager to improve their reading abilities using through the program.

Anto, et al., (2022) asserted that reading remediation provide positive outcomes, including increased reading fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. Remote reading remediation has been conducted to improve the reading performance of non-readers, turning non-readers into readers.

It is being supported by the findings of Mara (2024) teachers should provide reading programs and activities that will cater the students who struggle in reading. She went on to say that educators ought to ask for help from interested parties in order to provide reading materials that are suitable for the grade level of students. Tolentin (2023) added and defines reading intervention program to a pedagogical approach aimed at enhancing the fluency and comprehension skills of those who experience difficulties in Reading. The instructional approach encompasses strategies to enhance word reading abilities, develop fluency, expand vocabulary, and improve comprehension.

Table 10: Correlational analysis between reading skills in English and the implementation of STAP

Reading Skills	STAP Implementation	Interpretation
Vocabulary	0.77	Significant
Reading Fluency	0.44	Not significant
Reading Comprehension	0.75	Significant

Note: Citical r @.05 = 0.456

The analysis showed a strong positive correlation between vocabulary and the implementation of STAP (r = 0.77). This indicates that as the implementation of STAP increases, the students' vocabulary skills also improve significantly. The computed r value of 0.77 is greater than the critical r value of 0.456 at the 0.05 level of significance implying that the relationship between vocabulary and STAP implementation is statistically significant. Moreover, a moderate positive correlation was observed between reading fluency and the implementation of STAP (r = 0.44). This means that as the implementation of STAP increases, the students' reading fluency also improves, but to a lesser extent compared to vocabulary. The computed r value of 0.44 is less than the critical r value of 0.456, indicating that the relationship between reading fluency and STAP implementation is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

As regards reading comprehension, the analysis revealed a strong positive correlation with the implementation of STAP (r = 0.75). This suggests that as

the implementation of STAP increases, the students' reading comprehension skills also improve significantly. The computed r value of 0.75 is greater than the critical r value of 0.456, suggesting that the relationship between reading comprehension and STAP implementation is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

IV. CONCLUSION

The STAP implementation in terms of assessment, strategies, student participation, schedule and materials is outstanding. Besides, the students' vocabulary, reading fluency and reading comprehension skills were poor before the experimentation otherwise, showed noticeable increase in the posttest as students who hardly read and comprehend managed to read, understand and grasp by the guidance of their teachers. Moreover, the pretest and posttest of the participants in vocabulary, reading fluency and reading comprehension have significant differences insinuating that the students' reading skills in English were enhanced through participation in STAP implementation. Likewise, the relationship of STAP and the vocabulary and reading comprehension skills has strong positive correlation and moderate positive correlation was observed on the reading fluency skill of the students.

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