

Boosting Literacy: Evaluating the Impact and Satisfaction of Project DARA (Daily Reading Activities)

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Abstract. This study provides a comprehensive analysis of pre-reading activities, post-reading activities, and satisfaction levels across several dimensions: Program Experience, Reading Improvement, Personal Impact, and Program Feedback, as detailed in various tables. The pre-reading activity highlighted significant gender disparities and varying difficulties with word lengths across different grades. The post-reading assessment demonstrated substantial progress in reading abilities across all grade levels, affirming the program's effectiveness. The findings revealed notable gender disparities in learner distribution across all grades, with a higher number of female learners, indicating the need for tailored interventions. The post-reading assessment showed significant improvements in reading abilities, including comprehension, speed, and fluency, across all grades. Learners exhibited increased confidence, engagement, and motivation, with some even tutoring peers, underscoring the program's impact beyond technical skills. Additionally, participants reported high satisfaction levels across various aspects of the program, including organization, materials, instructor quality, and program content. They experienced increased confidence, independence, enjoyment of reading, and improved academic performance, indicating a positive personal impact. This research underscores the efficacy of the 90-day reading program in addressing foundational literacy challenges, fostering independent reading habits, and positively influencing learners' personal and academic lives. The findings emphasize the importance of tailored interventions, supportive environments, and ongoing support in enhancing reading abilities and promoting lifelong learning.

Keywords: Reading improvement; Reading program; Project evaluation.

1.0 Introduction

Reading, the process of interpreting written or printed material, is a fundamental skill essential for acquiring knowledge and enjoyment from text. It encompasses deciphering words, sentences, and paragraphs to comprehend the conveyed information or story. Reading manifests in various forms, such as leisure, educational, or professional reading, and significantly enhances vocabulary, critical thinking, and overall cognitive abilities.

The importance of reading lies in its multifaceted benefits. It serves as a gateway to knowledge and diverse perspectives, expanding vocabulary and language skills. Reading fosters critical thinking by encouraging analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of text, thereby honing cognitive abilities. The act of reading also cultivates focus and concentration, contributing to improved attention spans and mental acuity. Additionally, reading offers relaxation and stress reduction through immersion in literary worlds, while exposure to different writing styles sharpens communication skills. The cognitive stimulation from reading is beneficial for brain health, potentially staving off cognitive decline. Thus, reading enriches lives and provides numerous cognitive, emotional, and mental advantages (National Reading Panel, 2000).

Improving students' reading skills involves diverse strategies and approaches. Fundamental aspects include teaching phonemic awareness and phonics, crucial for decoding words. Vocabulary development, achieved through exposure and direct instruction, enhances understanding. Reading fluency improves with repeated reading and reading aloud, focusing on speed, accuracy, and expression. Comprehension strategies like making predictions, visualizing, summarizing, and questioning the text, alongside graphic organizers, help students structure thoughts and better understand the material (Shaywitz, 2003).

Fostering a love for reading is vital, achieved by providing diverse reading materials, creating a reading-friendly environment, and allowing time for pleasure reading. Classroom techniques such as guided reading, shared reading, independent reading, and literature circles play significant roles. Guided reading involves small group instruction tailored to reading levels, focusing on decoding, fluency, and comprehension with teacher support. Shared reading allows the class to read together, helping students see and hear words simultaneously while the teacher models fluent reading and comprehension strategies. Independent reading lets students choose books that interest them, promoting ownership and motivation. Literature circles encourage critical thinking and discussion through small, student-led groups with assigned roles (Hart & Risley, 1995).

Assessment and feedback are critical, with formative assessments like quizzes, reading logs, and informal observations providing ongoing progress monitoring and immediate feedback. Summative assessments, such as standardized tests and end-of-unit exams, evaluate overall reading proficiency and inform future instruction. Support for struggling readers includes individualized instruction, one-on-one tutoring, small group sessions, and using technology like educational software and apps for interactive reading practice, along with audiobooks and e-readers to accommodate diverse learning styles (Neuman & Celano, 2001).

Students face numerous challenges in developing reading abilities, significantly impacting their academic performance and overall literacy. Learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, affect the ability to recognize and process written words, requiring specialized instruction and interventions (Shaywitz, 2003). Children lacking early exposure to books, storytelling, and rich language experiences often enter school with limited vocabulary and poor phonemic awareness, creating an early literacy gap (Hart & Risley, 1995).

Socioeconomic factors exacerbate reading difficulties, as students from low-income families face barriers like limited access to books and educational resources, less parental involvement due to work constraints, and under-resourced schools, contributing to lower reading achievement and literacy rates (Neuman & Celano, 2001). Inadequate phonics instruction also impedes reading development; without a strong phonics foundation, students struggle with reading accuracy and fluency, leading to frustration and disinterest in reading (National Reading Panel, 2000).

Limited reading motivation and engagement often stem from a lack of reading materials reflecting students' interests or cultural backgrounds, negative reading experiences, and a failure to view reading as meaningful or enjoyable, leading to minimal practice and slower skill development (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). Even with word decoding skills, comprehension challenges arise due to limited vocabulary, poor background knowledge, and weak inferential thinking skills, making it hard to grasp texts' deeper meanings (Kintsch, 1998). Reading instruction quality varies widely between schools and teachers, with inconsistent or ineffective methods leaving students without the necessary skills and strategies to become proficient readers (Allington, 2013). A strong focus on standardized testing can lead to teaching to the test rather than fostering a love of reading and deep comprehension skills, neglecting critical reading instruction aspects like critical thinking and independent reading (Au, 2007). Emotional and psychological factors, such as anxiety, low self-esteem, or lack of confidence in reading abilities, also cause students to avoid reading tasks and fail to engage fully in learning opportunities (Chapman, Tunmer, & Prochnow, 2000). The prevalence of digital devices and social media further distracts students from reading; although technology can enhance reading skills, it often competes with traditional reading activities for students' attention, reducing time spent on focused, sustained reading (Rideout, Foehr, & Roberts, 2010).

Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach, including early intervention, customized instruction, parental and community involvement, and diverse and engaging reading materials. Recognizing and

tackling these issues enables educators to better support students in developing strong reading skills essential for their academic and personal success.

Given the increasing number of students struggling with reading, Project DARA (Daily Reading Activities) was implemented to address these issues among students at Amando Carlos Lahoz National High School, Culandandum, Bataraza, Palawan. The 90-day initiative targets junior high school students identified as struggling readers during a pre-reading activity conducted by the school. The primary objectives of Project DARA are to reduce the number of struggling readers, foster a habit of reading, instill an appreciation for reading, and enhance reading comprehension skills. The project, implemented by reading teachers at ACLNHS, involves a comprehensive action plan.

The implementation plan includes developing an action plan through a faculty meeting, engaging stakeholders, conducting a pre-assessment to determine reading profiles, screening results, and deliberating on the final list of program beneficiaries. A meeting and orientation with parents and guardians will discuss their roles in supporting the program. The 90-day reading program includes various reading activities, followed by a post-reading activity evaluation. Results will be discussed in a post-conference session, and a post-conference with program beneficiaries will recognize their successful completion.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

In this research work, the researcher used mixed method research methodology exploratory design (qualitative-quantitative). Mixed methods research is valued for its ability to provide a more comprehensive understanding of a research problem by leveraging the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. It allows researchers to explore different aspects of a phenomenon, validate findings across methods, and gain richer insights than using either method alone.

Exploratory research design is a flexible and open-ended methodology used to investigate problems that are not well-defined, aiming to gain insights, discover new ideas, and understand phenomena more deeply. It typically employs qualitative methods such as interviews, focus groups, case studies, and literature reviews, allowing researchers to adapt their approach as new information emerges. This design is often the first step in research, helping to clarify concepts, define problems, and generate hypotheses, rather than testing them, making it especially useful for studying new or poorly understood topics.

2.2 Research Participants

The participants of this research study were thirty-six (36) learners purposively selected based on the results of a pre-reading assessment conducted at Amando Carlos Lahoz National High School. These learners were identified as struggling readers, making them the appropriate participants for this study. By targeting students who demonstrated difficulties in reading, the research aims to directly address and measure the efficacy of the intervention program. This focused selection allows for a more precise evaluation of the program's impact on improving reading abilities and satisfaction among those most in need of assistance. This approach ensures that the study's findings are relevant and applicable to addressing foundational literacy challenges within this specific educational context.

2.3 Research Instrument

To fully understand the existing phenomena happening using qualitative and quantitative data, the researchers made use of the following instruments:

Guided Reading Observation Form. A tool used by educators to observe and evaluate guided reading lessons in small groups. It helps teachers track student progress, identify areas for improvement, and ensure effective instruction during guided reading sessions. The form typically includes fields for recording details such as the book title, reading level, date, specific skills addressed, and any additional notes. Teachers can use this form to monitor student engagement, comprehension, and fluency during guided reading activities.

Anecdotal Record. An anecdotal record is a detailed descriptive narrative recorded after a specific behavior or interaction occurs. Teachers use anecdotal records to: a. Plan learning experiences By observing and documenting children's behaviors, teachers gain insights into their interests, strengths, and areas for growth. This information helps them tailor activities and lessons to meet individual needs. b. Provide information to families: Anecdotal records allow teachers to share specific examples of a child's progress, challenges, and achievements with parents or guardians during parent-teacher conferences or other communication. c. Identify possible developmental delays: By closely observing children's actions, teachers can detect any signs of developmental delays or areas where additional support may be needed. These records serve as valuable tools for understanding each child's unique development and adjusting teaching strategies accordingly.

Researcher-made instrument. This research instrument is a Likert-scale survey questionnaire.

2.4 Data Gathering Procedure

As part of the data gathering procedure for this study, several steps will be undertaken to ensure the successful implementation of Project DARA. Initially, a faculty meeting will be conducted to prepare an action plan. Following this, a meeting with stakeholders will be held to present the plan and gather support for its implementation. A pre-assessment will then be prepared for the learners of ACLNHS to identify their reading abilities. The results of this pre-reading assessment will be screened to identify the learners who will benefit from the program. Once the final list of program beneficiaries is deliberated, a meeting will be conducted with their parents and guardians. Subsequently, Project DARA will be implemented which will last for ninety (90) days. The quality assurance and evaluation of the program beneficiaries will follow. This will be done by language teachers who are not involved the reading program, the purpose of this procedure is to test the quality of the program since it will quality assured by other teachers . A survey will then be conducted with the program beneficiaries. Finally, a post-conference will be held to review the outcomes.

2.5 Ethical Considerations

When undertaking research focused on "Project DARA (Daily Reading Activities): Efficacy and Satisfaction," it is essential to carefully consider various ethical considerations to protect the rights and well-being of participants and stakeholders involved. Key ethical issues that must be addressed including the following: Informed Consent: When involving students in any research or assessment related to the reading program, it's essential to respect their autonomy. Obtaining informed consent from students (or their parents/guardians) ensures transparency. Clearly explain the purpose, procedures, and potential risks or benefits of participation. This ensures that students and their families understand what is expected of them. Confidentiality: Protecting student privacy is paramount. Safeguard personal information, assessment results, and reading progress. Avoid sharing identifiable data without proper consent. Securely store student records and limit access to authorized personnel. Using codes when reporting findings maintains confidentiality. Equity and Fairness: The reading program should not discriminate based on race, gender, socioeconomic status, or other factors. Provide equal opportunities for all students. Be aware of existing disparities in access to resources (e.g., books, technology) and customized the program to meet diverse needs. Beneficence and Non-Maleficence: Strive to enhance students' reading skills, comprehension, and enjoyment. Consider the potential positive impact of the program. At the same time, minimize any negative consequences associated with assessments or interventions. Regularly monitor student well-being throughout the program. Professional Integrity: Uphold honesty and integrity in reporting. Present accurate data and findings without manipulation or bias. Avoid misrepresenting student progress or program effectiveness. Prioritize student learning over personal gain or external pressures.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1. Demographics

The pre-reading activity conducted by teachers provided an overview of the reading ability of the learners. As shown in Table 1, in Grade 7, there are 50 learners, with 22 males and 28 females. Grade 8 has 65 learners, comprising 21 males and 44 females. In Grade 9, there are 41 learners, with 23 males and 18 females, while Grade 10 has 33 learners, with 14 males and 19 females. Overall, the total number of learners is 189, with 80 males and 109 females.

The assessment of reading abilities revealed varying difficulties with word lengths across different grades. In Grade 7, six learners struggled with 2-letter words, three with 3-letter words, one with 4-letter words, and ten with 5, 6-letter words and more. Grade 8 saw one learner struggling with 3-letter words, five with 4-letter words, and five with 5, 6-letter words and more. In Grade 9, four learners had difficulties with 4-letter words, and two with 5, 6-letter words and more.

Table 1. Data of learners assessed during the pre-reading activity

Grade Level	Male	Female	Number of Learners Tested
Grade 7	22	28	50
Grade 8	21	44	65
Grade 9	23	18	41
Grade 10	14	19	33
TOTAL	80	109	189

These findings have several implications. Firstly, there is a notable gender disparity, with more female learners (109) than male learners (80) across all grades, especially pronounced in Grade 8. This suggests that interventions and support strategies need to consider this gender distribution, considering approaches to the larger female cohorts. Secondly, the reading challenges indicate that many Grade 7 learners face fundamental literacy issues, struggling with very basic words. As learners progress to higher grades, the difficulties shift towards longer words, showing an improvement in overall literacy levels.

Grade-level specific needs also emerge from the data. In Grade 7, interventions should focus on foundational reading skills, including phonetics and basic vocabulary building. Grade 8 requires differentiated instruction strategies to address a wide range of reading difficulties. For Grade 9, the emphasis should be on advanced reading skills, including reading comprehension and context-based learning.

To address these challenges, it is recommended to implement targeted reading intervention programs starting from Grade 7, progressively increasing in complexity for higher grades. Developing gender-sensitive instructional strategies will ensure equitable support for both male and female learners. Regular reading assessments should be conducted to monitor progress and adjust teaching strategies. Teacher training is essential to help educators recognize and address varying levels of reading difficulties using differentiated instruction techniques. Additionally, involving parents in the literacy development process by providing them with tools and resources to support reading at home is crucial.

The data indicates a need for comprehensive, multifaceted reading intervention strategies that address foundational literacy challenges in lower grades and progressively tackle more complex reading difficulties in higher grades. Gender disparities must be considered to ensure equitable educational support, with regular assessments and adaptive teaching methods being crucial for improving overall reading abilities across the student population.

3.2 Results of the Reading Program after the Implementation of Project DARA

The post-reading assessment demonstrates the substantial progress made by learners after participating in a 90-day reading program. The assessment covered learners from Grades 7 to 9 who initially exhibited difficulties with reading words of varying lengths, ranging from simple 2-letter words to more complex 5 and 6-letter words.

Learners in Grade 7 initially faced significant challenges, with difficulties spanning from 2-letter to 6-letter words. However, the post-assessment results show a dramatic transformation. All Grade 7 learners now read independently, with several capable of tutoring their peers. Teachers highlighted that these learners not only read multiple words and sentences but also actively participate in reading activities, demonstrating a high level of engagement and confidence. This improvement indicates that the program effectively addressed foundational literacy skills, allowing learners to build a solid reading base.

Grade 8 learners initially struggled with words ranging from 3-letter to 6-letter words. Post-assessment results reveal that these learners have also made significant strides, achieving independent reading status. Teachers emphasized improvements in both reading comprehension and the ability to read long words and sentences. This

suggests that the reading program successfully helped learners enhance their overall literacy, enabling them to tackle more complex reading tasks and improving their understanding and retention of the material.

In Grade 9, learners who initially had difficulties with 4-letter to 6-letter words showed marked improvement, becoming independent readers. Teachers noted that these learners addressed their reading problems effectively, with the ability to read long words and sentences fluently. This indicates that the program not only helped learners overcome specific reading challenges but also equipped them with the skills necessary for more advanced reading and comprehension tasks.

The data reveals several key implications and insights regarding the effectiveness of the 90-day reading program. Firstly, the program was highly effective across all grade levels, with all learners showing significant improvements in becoming independent readers and exhibiting enhanced reading comprehension and engagement. The transition of learners to independent reading serves as a major success indicator, reflecting the program's effectiveness in fostering self-reliant reading habits and boosting learners' confidence in their reading abilities. Improvements in reading comprehension across all grades indicate that the program not only helped learners read words but also better understand and retain the material, which is crucial for their overall academic success.

In a study of Slavin, R.E., et.al. (2011) on methods for improving reading outcomes for struggling readers aged 5-10. They examined one-to-one tutoring, small-group tutorials, classroom instructional processes, and computer-assisted instruction across 97 students. The findings indicate that one-to-one tutoring, especially with a phonics focus, is highly effective, with teachers being more effective tutors than paraprofessionals or volunteers. Small-group phonetic tutorials are also effective, but less so than one-to-one tutoring. Classroom instructional programs, particularly cooperative learning, show positive effects, while computer-assisted instruction has minimal impact. The review recommends enhancing classroom instruction and providing targeted one-to-one phonetic tutoring for struggling readers.

Moreover, the significant progress made by learners who initially struggled with basic words demonstrates the program's ability to effectively address foundational literacy skills, thereby setting a strong base for further learning. Additionally, several learners have become capable of tutoring their peers, which reinforces their own learning and fosters a collaborative learning environment. Increased active participation in reading activities reflects a boost in learners' engagement and confidence. However, some learners still face challenges with pronunciation and occasionally forget long words, highlighting the need for continuous practice and additional focused interventions to reinforce these areas.

3.3 Satisfaction Levels Across Multiple Variables

The analysis of the pre-reading and post-reading assessments reveals significant differences in learner improvement across different grade levels following a 90-day reading program. In the pre-reading assessment, gender disparity is evident, with more female learners (109) than male learners (80) across all grades, particularly noticeable in Grade 8. This highlights the importance of considering interventions to address the needs of the larger female cohorts, ensuring equitable support. Additionally, the assessment highlights varying difficulties with word lengths across grades. Grade 7 learners struggle with basic words, while challenges shift towards longer words in higher grades, indicating an improvement in overall literacy levels as learners progress.

The post-reading assessment showcases significant progress across all grade levels. Grade 7 learners, who initially faced fundamental literacy issues, demonstrated remarkable improvement, with all learners reading independently and some capable of tutoring peers. Grade 8 and Grade 9 learners also made substantial strides, achieving independent reading status and showing enhancements in reading comprehension and engagement. The transition to independent reading is particularly noteworthy, indicating the program's success in fostering self-reliant reading habits and boosting learners' confidence.

Implications and insights from the post-reading assessment highlight the effectiveness of the 90-day reading program in addressing foundational literacy skills and enhancing overall reading abilities. The program's success in fostering independent reading, improving comprehension, and promoting engagement underscores its

significance in facilitating meaningful learning outcomes. However, ongoing challenges, such as pronunciation issues and occasional forgetfulness of long words, necessitate continuous practice and targeted interventions to reinforce learning.

Recommendations include the implementation of sustained reading programs, differentiated instruction to address individual learner needs, encouragement of parental involvement, regular assessments to monitor progress, and ongoing teacher training to utilize effective literacy improvement strategies. The post-reading assessment data provides compelling evidence of the positive impact of the 90-day reading program on learner improvement. Moving forward, sustained support, targeted interventions, and collaborative efforts will be essential to ensure all learners reach their full reading potential and achieve academic success.

Table 2. Satisfaction level in program experience

PROGRAM EXPERIENCE	MEAN	INTERPRETATION
The reading program was well-organized.	4.78	Strongly Satisfied
The materials provided in the program were helpful.	4.72	Strongly Satisfied
The reading sessions were conducted at convenient times.	4.72	Strongly Satisfied
The duration of each session was appropriate.	4.27	Strongly Satisfied
The program environment was conducive to learning.	4.72	Strongly Satisfied
The reading teachers were knowledgeable about the subject matter.	4.64	Strongly Satisfied
The reading teachers were approachable and supportive.	4.64	Strongly Satisfied
The reading teachers were clear and easy to follow.	4.53	Strongly Satisfied
The program included a variety of reading activities.	4.56	Strongly Satisfied
The pace of the program was suitable for my learning needs.	4.27	Strongly Satisfied
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN	4.59	Strongly Satisfied

The data presented in Table 2 offers a comprehensive insight into participants' satisfaction levels across various aspects of a reading program. Each aspect is rated on a scale from 0 to 5, with verbal interpretations provided to clarify the degree of satisfaction. Overall, the results indicate a high level of satisfaction among participants, with most aspects receiving ratings indicating strong satisfaction.

The highest-rated aspect of the program was its organization, with a weighted mean score of 4.78, indicating that participants were strongly satisfied with how the program was structured and planned. This suggests that the program's framework met or even exceeded participants' expectations, contributing positively to their overall experience. Similarly, the materials provided in the program received a high satisfaction rating of 4.72, indicating that participants found them to be helpful in enhancing their learning experience. This suggests that the resources provided were relevant, engaging, and supportive of the program's objectives.

The convenience of the reading sessions also received a high satisfaction rating of 4.72, suggesting that participants found the timing of the sessions to be suitable for their schedules. This indicates that the program was considerate of participants' time constraints and commitments, contributing to their overall satisfaction. Although slightly lower, the duration of each session still received a strong satisfaction rating of 4.27. This suggests that while participants may have found some sessions to be slightly lengthy, overall, they felt that the duration was appropriate and did not detract significantly from their experience.

The program environment was also highly rated, with a satisfaction score of 4.72. This suggests that participants found the learning environment to be conducive to their learning experience, which likely contributed to their overall satisfaction and engagement with the program. Additionally, participants expressed high satisfaction with the reading teachers, rating them highly in terms of knowledgeability (4.64), approachability and supportiveness (4.64), and clarity (4.53). These ratings suggest that participants felt supported and guided by knowledgeable and engaging teachers, which positively impacted their learning experience.

Moreover, the program's inclusion of a variety of reading activities received a strong satisfaction rating of 4.56, indicating that participants appreciated the diversity and engagement provided by the activities included in the program. Finally, while the pace of the program received a slightly lower satisfaction rating of 4.27, it still indicates strong satisfaction overall. This suggests that while most participants found the pace suitable for their learning needs, there may have been some variability in individual preferences regarding the program's pacing.

An overall weighted mean of 4.59 shows a strong satisfaction among program beneficiaries in terms of Program Experience. The data highlights the effectiveness of the reading program in meeting participants' needs and expectations, as evidenced by the high satisfaction ratings across various aspects. These findings have implications for program development, emphasizing the importance of continued attention to organization, resource provision, teacher quality, and program pacing to ensure a positive and engaging learning experience for participants.

Table 3. Satisfaction level in reading improvement

READING IMPROVEMENT	MEAN	INTERPRETATION
My reading skills have improved since joining the program.	4.67	Strongly Satisfied
I find it easier to understand what I read now.	4.27	Strongly Satisfied
I have increased my reading speed.	4.56	Strongly Satisfied
My ability to comprehend complex texts has improved.	4.0	Satisfied
I feel more confident when reading aloud.	4.50	Strongly Satisfied
I have developed better strategies for understanding new vocabulary.	4.61	Strongly Satisfied
I am more motivated to read because of the program.	4.67	Strongly Satisfied
My reading fluency has improved.	3.94	Satisfied
I can now identify and correct my reading mistakes more effectively.	4.78	Strongly Satisfied
My overall academic performance has improved due to better reading skills.	4.61	Strongly Satisfied
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN	4.46	Strongly Satisfied

Table 3 provides a detailed analysis of participants' satisfaction levels regarding the improvement in their reading skills after joining the program. The weighted mean scores, ranging from 0 to 5, are accompanied by verbal interpretations to elucidate the degree of satisfaction. Overall, the results indicate a strong sense of satisfaction among participants, with most aspects of reading improvement receiving high ratings.

Participants reported significant improvements in various aspects of their reading skills. The highest-rated statement was "My reading skills have improved since joining the program," with a weighted mean score of 4.67, indicating a strong sense of satisfaction. This suggests that participants perceived tangible progress in their reading abilities as a direct result of their participation in the program.

Similarly, participants expressed strong satisfaction with their increased ability to understand what they read (4.27), increased reading speed (4.56), and improved comprehension of complex texts (4.0). These findings indicate that the program effectively enhanced participants' fundamental reading skills, including comprehension and speed, contributing to their overall satisfaction and confidence in their reading abilities.

Participants also reported improvements in more specific aspects of reading, such as feeling more confident when reading aloud (4.50), developing better strategies for understanding new vocabulary (4.61), and being more motivated to read because of the program (4.67). These findings suggest that the program not only improved participants' technical reading skills but also positively impacted their attitudes and motivation towards reading, fostering a more positive and engaged reading experience.

However, some aspects of reading improvement received slightly lower satisfaction ratings. For example, participants rated their improvement in reading fluency at 3.94, indicating satisfaction but with room for further enhancement. Similarly, while participants expressed strong satisfaction with their ability to identify and correct reading mistakes (4.78), indicating effective skill development, there may still be opportunities for refinement in this area.

Lastly, participants reported a strong positive correlation between their improved reading skills and overall academic performance (4.61). This suggests that the benefits of the reading program extended beyond the realm of reading itself, positively impacting participants' academic achievements across various subjects.

An overall weighted mean of 4.46 shows a strong satisfaction of the program beneficiaries in terms of Reading Improvements. The data from Table 3 highlights the effectiveness of the reading program in improving participants' reading skills and fostering a positive reading experience. These findings have significant implications for program evaluation and development, highlighting the importance of continued focus on enhancing fundamental reading skills, fostering positive attitudes towards reading, and integrating reading skill

development with broader academic goals. Overall, the data reflects a successful outcome of the program in empowering participants with essential reading abilities and positively impacting their academic journey.

Lee, E. H., & Park, M. R. (2019) introduced an on/offline extensive reading program to enhance practical English skills. Over three years (2012-2014), six Korean and one native English teacher developed and implemented this program with middle school students. The program included weekly 45-minute reading sessions and evaluated students through vocabulary tests and satisfaction surveys. In 2014, 797 students participated, showing improved vocabulary and high satisfaction with the program. This study is notable for its extended duration and large participant size, confirming findings from previous research on the benefits of extensive reading.

Table 4. Satisfaction level in personal impact

PERSONAL IMPACT	MEAN	INTERPRETATION
My self-confidence has increased as a result of this program.	4.61	Strongly Satisfied
I feel more independent in my learning.	4.44	Strongly Satisfied
I enjoy reading more than I did before joining the program.	4.83	Strongly Satisfied
I feel less anxious about reading tasks.	4.06	Strongly Satisfied
The program has positively impacted other areas of my life.	4.61	Strongly Satisfied
I am more likely to pursue further education or training because of my improved reading skills.	4.56	Strongly Satisfied
I feel a greater sense of achievement due to my progress in the program.	4.22	Strongly Satisfied
My family and friends have noticed an improvement in my reading abilities.	4.69	Strongly Satisfied
I have developed a habit of reading regularly.	4.39	Strongly Satisfied
I am more engaged in classroom activities because of my improved reading skills.	4.39	Strongly Satisfied
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN	4.48	Strongly Satisfied

Table 4 presents an in-depth analysis of participants' perceptions regarding the personal impact of the reading program on various aspects of their lives. The weighted mean scores, alongside verbal interpretations, elucidate the extent of satisfaction across different dimensions. Overall, the results reveal a strong sense of satisfaction among participants, with the majority expressing strong satisfaction across all measured areas.

One significant outcome highlighted in the data is the positive effect of the program on participants' self-confidence. With a weighted mean score of 4.61, participants reported feeling significantly more confident as a result of their participation in the program. This suggests that the program not only improved participants' reading skills but also positively influenced their self-perception and belief in their abilities. Similarly, participants reported feeling more independent in their learning (4.44) and enjoying reading more than before joining the program (4.83). These findings indicate that the program fostered a sense of autonomy and enjoyment in learning, contributing to participants' overall satisfaction and engagement.

The program also had a notable impact on participants' emotional well-being, with participants reporting feeling less anxious about reading tasks (4.06) and experiencing a greater sense of achievement due to their progress (4.22). These results suggest that the program not only improved participants' technical reading skills but also alleviated negative emotions associated with reading difficulties, leading to a more positive and rewarding learning experience. Furthermore, participants reported that the program positively impacted other areas of their lives (4.61), suggesting that the benefits of improved reading skills extended beyond the realm of reading itself. Additionally, participants expressed a greater likelihood of pursuing further education or training as a result of their improved reading skills (4.56), highlighting the broader impact of the program on participants' educational and career aspirations.

The data also indicates that participants' improved reading skills were recognized by their family and friends, as evidenced by the high satisfaction rating for the statement "My family and friends have noticed an improvement in my reading abilities" (4.69). This suggests that the positive effects of the program were observable and acknowledged by those closest to the participants, further affirming the program's efficacy. Moreover, participants reported developing a habit of reading regularly (4.39) and increased engagement in classroom activities (4.39) as a result of their improved reading skills. These findings suggest that the program not only enhanced participants' reading abilities but also fostered a lifelong love for reading and active participation in learning activities.

The data from Table 4 indicates a highly successful outcome of the reading program, with participants experiencing significant personal growth and positive transformations in various aspects of their lives. These

findings highlights the importance of literacy programs in not only improving technical reading skills but also fostering confidence, independence, and a love for learning. The high satisfaction expressed by participants highlights the program's effectiveness in empowering individuals and positively impacting their personal and academic journeys.

Table 5. Satisfaction level in program feedback

PROGRAM FEEDBACK	MEAN	INTERPRETATION
I would recommend this program to other struggling readers.	4.17	Strongly Satisfied
The program met my expectations.	4.25	Strongly Satisfied
The feedback provided by the instructors was constructive.	4.44	Strongly Satisfied
The program content was relevant to my needs.	4.5	Strongly Satisfied
I was satisfied with the overall quality of the program.	4.5	Strongly Satisfied
I believe the program offers good value for its cost.	4.33	Strongly Satisfied
I feel the program length was adequate for significant improvement.	4.0	Strongly Satisfied
I appreciated the support provided by the program staff.	4.42	Strongly Satisfied
The program helped me set and achieve my reading goals.	4.53	Strongly Satisfied
I would be interested in participating in advanced reading programs offered by the same organization.	4.44	Strongly Satisfied
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN	4.36	Strongly Satisfied

Table 5 presents a comprehensive analysis of participants' feedback regarding the personal impact of the program, encompassing various dimensions of satisfaction and experience. With weighted mean scores ranging from 4.0 to 4.53, participants expressed a strong sense of satisfaction across all measured aspects, indicative of the program's effectiveness in meeting their needs and expectations. Participants overwhelmingly endorsed the program, with a strong willingness to recommend it to other struggling readers (4.17). This suggests a high level of satisfaction and confidence in the program's ability to benefit others facing similar challenges. Additionally, participants reported that the program met or exceeded their expectations (4.25), indicating that it effectively addressed their anticipated needs and objectives.

Constructive feedback provided by instructors received high praise from participants (4.44), highlighting the program's emphasis on supportive and helpful guidance. Similarly, participants found the program content to be highly relevant to their needs (4.5), suggesting that it was crafted to address their specific challenges and goals effectively. The overall quality of the program was rated highly (4.5), reflecting participants' satisfaction with its design, delivery, and outcomes. Moreover, participants perceived the program as offering good value for its cost (4.33), indicating that they considered it to be a worthwhile investment in their personal and academic development.

Participants also expressed satisfaction with the program's length, deeming it adequate for significant improvement (4.0). This suggests that the program duration was well-calibrated to facilitate meaningful progress without feeling overly rushed or prolonged. Furthermore, participants appreciated the support provided by program staff (4.42), indicating that they felt well-supported throughout their journey. The program was also instrumental in helping participants set and achieve their reading goals (4.53), highlighting its efficacy in empowering individuals to make tangible progress. Lastly, participants expressed a strong interest in participating in advanced reading programs offered by the same organization (4.44), indicating a desire for continued growth and development in their literacy skills.

The data from Table 4 indicates a highly positive reception of the program among participants, with strong endorsements and satisfaction across various dimensions. These findings underscore the program's effectiveness in meeting participants' needs, providing valuable support and guidance, and empowering individuals to achieve their reading goals. The high satisfaction expressed by participants reflects the program's impact and value, affirming its role in facilitating personal growth and academic success.

3.4 Overall Satisfaction Levels

Table 6 presents an overview of participants' overall satisfaction levels across four key criteria: Program Experience, Reading Improvement, Personal Impact, and Program Feedback. The weighted mean scores, ranging from 4.36 to 4.59, are accompanied by verbal interpretations to elucidate the degree of satisfaction. Overall, the data reveals a consistent pattern of strong satisfaction across all measured criteria, with participants expressing high levels of contentment with their experience in the program.

Table 6. Overall satisfaction level

CRITERIA	MEAN	INTERPRETATION
Program Experience	4.59	Strongly Satisfied
Reading Improvement	4.46	Strongly Satisfied
Personal Impact	4.48	Strongly Satisfied
Program Feedback	4.36	Strongly Satisfied
Overall Mean	4.47	Strongly Satisfied

In terms of Program Experience, participants reported a weighted mean score of 4.59, indicating a strong sense of satisfaction. This suggests that participants found the program well-organized, engaging, and effectively delivered, contributing positively to their overall experience. Similarly, participants reported a high level of satisfaction with Reading Improvement, with a weighted mean score of 4.46. This suggests that participants perceived tangible improvements in their reading skills as a result of their participation in the program, leading to increased confidence and proficiency in reading.

The Personal Impact of the program also received a high satisfaction rating, with a weighted mean score of 4.48. This indicates that participants experienced positive changes in various aspects of their lives, including increased confidence, independence, and enjoyment of reading, as well as reduced anxiety and improved academic performance. Participants' feedback on the program was overwhelmingly positive, with a weighted mean score of 4.36. This suggests that participants were highly satisfied with the program content, delivery, and support provided by program staff, as well as the value and impact of the program on their personal and academic growth.

The overall mean score of 4.47 reflects a consistently high level of satisfaction across all criteria, indicating that participants perceived the program as highly effective in meeting their needs and goals. These findings highlight the program's success in delivering a positive and impactful learning experience, fostering significant improvements in participants' reading skills, and empowering individuals to achieve their personal and academic aspirations. The strong satisfaction expressed by participants underscores the program's value and effectiveness in facilitating meaningful growth and development.

3.5 Program Improvement and Action Plan

**Figure 1.** Conceptual Framework of Project DARA for Program Improvement

TASK	TARGET/OBJECTIVES	STRATEGY	PERSONS INVOLVED	TIMELINE	EXPECTED OUTPUT
ENHANCED DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION	Develop and implement differentiated lesson plans suited to individual reading levels and needs, aiming to increase student engagement and comprehension across all levels.	Develop lesson plan catering to the varying reading levels	Reading Teachers	Beginning of School Year	Increased engagement of program beneficiaries and improved reading levels across the spectrum
CONTINUOUS AND COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENTS	Increase the frequency of reading assessments to bi-weekly intervals, aiming to accurately track student progress and identify areas requiring intervention promptly.	Increase frequency of reading assessments	Reading Teachers	During the implementation of the Reading Program	More accurate tracking of progress and quicker interventions.
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF READING TEACHERS	Provide at least five professional development sessions covering topics such as differentiated instruction, technology integration, and literacy engagement strategies, with the goal of improving teacher proficiency in implementing effective reading instruction methods.	Schedule ongoing training sessions to reading teachers	School Head	During the implementation of the Reading Program	Increases implementation of best practices and improved student outcomes
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT	Establish at least two family literacy workshops and distribute reading materials for parents, aiming to increase parental involvement in supporting their children's reading development at home.	Develop family literacy programs	School Head Reading Teachers	During the implementation of the Reading Program	Increased parental involvement and improved home support for literacy.
ADDRESSING SPECIFIC LITERACY CHALLENGES	Develop and implement intervention sessions focusing on pronunciation and long word retention, with the objective of improving these specific literacy skills among targeted students by at least one grade level.	Develop intervention sessions for pronunciation and long words.	Reading Teachers	During the implementation of the Reading Program	Improves pronunciation and retention of long words
IMPROVED LEARNING MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Procure and diversify reading materials and digital resources to cater to various interests and reading levels, aiming to increase student engagement and exposure to diverse content.	Procure diverse reading materials and digital resources	School Head Procurement Members Reading Teachers	Before the implementation of the Reading Program	Increased engagement and exposure to diverse content.
ENCOURAGING A READING CULTURE	Organize at least three school-wide reading events and establish a peer tutoring program, with the objective of fostering a culture of reading and peer support, leading to increased participation and improved reading skills among students.	Organize reading initiatives and peer tutoring programs	School Head Reading Teachers	During the implementation of the Reading Program	Increased participation in reading events and improved peer support.
SUSTAINED SUPPORT AND FOLLOW-UP	Develop post-program support resources and implement a long-term monitoring plan within the next six months, aiming to ensure continued progress and improvement in reading skills even after the completion of the program, with the objective of maintaining or exceeding initial gains over time.	Develop post-program support resources and long-term monitoring plan	School Head Reading Teachers	After the implementation of the Reading Program	Continued progress even after program completion and sustained improvement over time.

4.0 Conclusion

The research findings from the pre-reading and post-reading assessments, along with participant satisfaction data, lead to several important conclusions regarding the effectiveness and impact of the 90-day reading program, Project DARA. This study makes significant contributions to the field of educational research by demonstrating the program's effectiveness in enhancing reading abilities across all grade levels. Learners exhibited substantial progress, transitioning to independent reading and showing marked improvements in comprehension and engagement. By addressing foundational literacy skills, particularly for Grade 7 learners who initially struggled with basic words, Project DARA effectively elevated literacy levels as learners advanced through grades, with challenges shifting towards longer and more complex words.

The study also highlighted a notable gender disparity, with a higher participation rate among female learners, especially in Grade 8. This finding underscores the need for gender-sensitive instructional strategies to ensure equitable support and intervention. Additionally, the program successfully fostered increased self-reliance among learners, as evidenced by their transition to independent reading and their ability to tutor peers. Enhanced engagement in reading activities and a more positive attitude towards reading were also observed, indicating that the program not only improved technical reading skills but also positively influenced learners' motivation and enjoyment.

Despite these successes, some ongoing challenges remain. Certain learners continued to face difficulties with pronunciation and occasionally forgetting long words, highlighting the need for continuous practice and targeted interventions to reinforce these areas. Nevertheless, participants expressed high satisfaction levels across all aspects of the program, including its organization, effectiveness in reading improvement, and personal impact. The positive feedback shows the program's success in meeting learners' needs and expectations, with broader impacts on self-confidence, independence in learning, and overall academic performance. The program also fostered a habit of regular reading and increased engagement in classroom activities.

Project DARA significantly improved the reading skills and overall literacy of learners, fostering independent reading habits and enhancing self-confidence. The program's success demonstrates the importance of sustained, multifaceted reading interventions and highlights areas for continuous improvement to support all learners effectively. Future studies could explore the long-term impacts of such reading programs, investigate the specific strategies that most effectively address pronunciation and retention challenges, and examine how to create interventions to different gender groups to ensure equitable literacy development.

5.0 Contributions of Authors

The author indicates equal contribution to each section. Joewe G. Sales was involved in the conception and design of the study, including the development of the research framework and methodology. He played a pivotal role in data collection and analysis, ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the findings. Additionally, Joewe G. Sales was responsible for drafting the manuscript, integrating the various components of the research, and ensuring coherence and clarity in the presentation of results. He actively participated in revising the manuscript, incorporating feedback from peer reviews and refining the document to enhance its quality and impact. Ultimately, Joewe G. Sales reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript, ensuring it met the highest standards of academic rigor and integrity.

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7.0 Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflicts of interest about the publication of this paper.

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