

Compliance, Competence, and Commitment of Teachers in Beginning Reading: Basis for a Capacity Building Plan

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Abstract:

Effective early reading instruction hinges not only on what teachers know and do, but also on how committed they are to every child's literacy journey. This study aimed to determine the extent of compliance, level of competence, and level of commitment of Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading instruction in a small-sized division in Central Philippines during the school year 2022-2023. Using a descriptive research design, data were collected from 119 primary grade teachers selected through purposive sampling. A valid and reliable researcher-made questionnaire assessed teachers' compliance, competence, and commitment in various aspects of beginning reading. The findings revealed that teachers exhibited high compliance in beginning reading instruction, particularly in oral language development, book handling, and phonics skills. Teachers also demonstrated very high competence in content knowledge and instructional delivery, though there was variability based on age, plantilla position, and experience. Commitment levels were consistently high across all aspects, with some variation in program planning and implementation. Significant relationships were found between compliance and competence, but not between compliance and commitment or between competence and commitment, suggesting these elements operate independently. The study concludes that teachers' experience and professional status contribute positively to compliance and competence in reading instruction, while commitment remains a consistent attribute. The study calls for a capacity building of teachers to enhancing compliance strategies to further support teachers' competence in beginning reading, especially through targeted professional development and resource allocation.

Keywords: Compliance and Competence, Instructional Delivery, Teachers

Introduction:

Early reading instruction is fundamental for lifelong learning, with teacher effectiveness being crucial for student success (García and Weiss, 2019). Key factors such as teachers' compliance, competence, and commitment in implementing reading programs significantly impact the effectiveness of beginning reading instruction. Despite advancements, challenges remain in ensuring all students develop foundational reading skills, highlighting the need to understand the factors influencing effective reading instruction (Lonigan & Shanahan, 2020).

This study explores several key areas to assess the effectiveness of Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading instruction. The extent of teacher compliance is examined in relation to four critical areas: oral language, which involves the development of students' spoken language skills; book and print knowledge, which focuses on teaching students about the structure and use of printed materials; alphabet knowledge, which covers the recognition of letters and their corresponding sounds; and phonics and word recognition, which is essential for decoding and understanding words (Snow, 2018). Additionally, the study assesses the level of competence of Grade 1 learners in reading, with a focus on content knowledge, instructional delivery, and assessment of learning (Hattie and Yates, 2014). Finally, the commitment of teachers is evaluated in the context of program planning, implementation, and evaluation, which are all vital for the success of reading programs (Meyer & Allen, 2020).

Despite the recognized importance of these factors, there remains a gap like difficulty of the teachers to continue the lessons due to lack of reading ability of the students, guides in simplifying the techniques of teaching reading, materials use in school, in understanding how they interact and influence the overall effectiveness of beginning reading instruction. While previous research has highlighted the need for competent and committed teachers, less attention has been given to how these attributes specifically impact compliance with reading instruction protocols

and, in turn, student outcomes. As a dedicated teacher in the early grades, the researcher is deeply motivated to conduct this study to contribute to the improvement of reading instruction. Witnessing the challenges like teachers' experience both in teaching and in trainings and workshops, that both teachers and students face in developing foundational reading skills has driven the researcher to explore the factors that can enhance instructional practices and student outcomes. This study is not only a professional pursuit but also a personal commitment to ensuring that all students have the opportunity to become proficient readers and succeed academically.

Current State of Knowledge

Overstreet (2023) emphasizes the direct connection between compliance in beginning reading and a teacher's mastery of literacy fundamentals. According to her, teachers who possess a strong understanding of phonemic awareness, phonics, and vocabulary instruction are more inclined to adhere to standardized reading programs. Overstreet supports this notion and argues that professional development is crucial in keeping teachers informed about current literacy practices, ultimately improving compliance. She suggests that when teachers truly grasp the underlying principles of these programs, their adherence is not merely a formality but rather a genuine commitment to effective teaching.

In his work, Pondiscio (2021) examines the impact of teacher attitudes on their compliance with reading mandates. According to iscio (2021) teachers who understand the advantages of these mandates for student learning are more likely to implement them effectively. Conversely, those who view them as burdensome may only follow them superficially. The author further explores the importance of a supportive school environment, which includes strong leadership and peer collaboration, in fostering a positive attitude towards these mandates and ultimately improving compliance.

Henry (2023) discusses the connection between teacher self-efficacy and compliance with beginning reading. The research indicates that teachers with a strong belief in their capabilities in reading instruction are more likely to adhere to curriculum guidelines. Henry suggests that professional success in prior teaching experiences reinforces self-efficacy, creating a feedback loop in which confidence promotes higher compliance. The author also highlights the role of mentoring and peer support in building this self-efficacy among teachers.

Pandolpho (2023) focuses on the role of administrative support in ensuring teacher compliance with reading requirements. The author argues that when school leaders provide resources, constructive feedback, and opportunities for professional development, teachers are more likely to adhere to instructional guidelines. Pandolpho also stresses the importance of clear communication of expectations from administrators to teachers, fostering an environment conducive to compliance.

The Listen First Project (2024) explores the challenges teachers encounter in complying with beginning reading, particularly in classrooms with students of diverse abilities. The author suggests that strictly adhering to standardized reading programs may be counterproductive in these settings. This work highlights the importance of flexibility within the curriculum to support diverse learners without compromising adherence to instructional guidelines.

In *Effective Teacher Professional Development*, Darling-Hammond et al. (2019) highlight the critical role of ongoing professional development in maintaining teacher compliance with beginning reading. They assert that regular, targeted professional development enables teachers to stay informed about the latest instructional strategies, thereby supporting compliance. The authors emphasize that this development should be continuous and tailored to address the specific challenges teachers face in their practice.

Valinda (2020) discusses the role of teacher compliance in student outcomes in their book "Reading Instruction and Student Success." The author argues that strict adherence to reading instruction guidelines is correlated with better student performance in literacy assessments. However, they caution against allowing compliance to stifle creativity in teaching. Instead, the authors advocate for a balanced approach in which teachers follow guidelines while also innovating within the framework to effectively engage students.

Teacher compliance with curriculum guidelines and instructional programs in early reading is essential for ensuring consistent student outcomes, particularly in Grade 1, where foundational literacy skills are established. According to research, instructional fidelity—or the degree to which teachers adhere to prescribed teaching methods and materials—is closely linked to their professional training, belief in the program's effectiveness, and external support from administration (Schwartz, 2024). When teachers follow structured reading programs with fidelity, students generally demonstrate improved reading proficiency and engagement. Studies indicate that fostering compliance through ongoing professional development, mentorship can help teachers balance adherence with flexibility, allowing them to meet diverse student needs while still aligning with program goals.

In *30 Examples of Digital Literacy in 2023*, the Lcom Team (2023) argues that technology can enhance teacher compliance by offering resources, real-time feedback, and opportunities for personalized instruction. However, they caution that without proper training, the effectiveness of these tools may be limited. The authors emphasize the importance of comprehensive professional development to ensure that teachers can effectively integrate technology into their reading instruction.

Williams (2024), in *Collaboration in Education: Strategies for Success*, investigates the role of teacher collaboration in enhancing compliance with reading guidelines. Williams suggests that when teachers collaborate, they are more likely to adhere to instructional guidelines due to the shared responsibility and accountability that collaboration fosters. The book highlights that collaborative planning and problem-solving can lead to more consistent and effective reading instruction, thereby improving compliance.

Competence of Grade 1 Teachers in Beginning Reading. Snow (2015) in *Early Literacy Development: A Theoretical Framework* discusses the critical stages of reading development for early graders emphasizing that the acquisition of phonemic awareness is a foundational skill. Snow suggests that competence in beginning reading is largely dependent on how well learners can distinguish sounds, which directly influences their ability to decode words. This book underlines the importance of systematic phonics instruction, which is argued to be essential in building early reading competence among young learners.

Additionally, Adams (2016) explores the cognitive processes involved in early reading development, asserting that Grade 1 learners must develop automaticity in word recognition to achieve reading fluency. Adams highlights that this automaticity stems from repeated exposure to high-frequency words and practice in decoding skills.

Also, Gibson and Pearson (2017) emphasize that early reading competence is a product of both home and school environments. They argue that parental involvement in reading activities at home significantly enhances a child's reading competence by providing additional opportunities for practice. The authors also discuss the role of teacher-directed instruction in developing phonics and comprehension skills, suggesting that these are crucial for the successful reading development of Grade 1 learners.

Miller (2018) in *Developing Literacy in Early Childhood* discusses the importance of vocabulary acquisition as a cornerstone of reading competence. Miller asserts that a rich vocabulary helps Grade 1 learners to better understand and engage with texts, which in turn supports their overall reading development. The book emphasizes that direct vocabulary instruction, coupled with opportunities for reading diverse texts, can significantly boost a learner's reading competence at an early age.

Louis (2020) explores how cognitive development theories can inform reading for young learners. Smith discusses that as Grade 1 learners develop, their cognitive abilities, such as memory and attention, play a significant role in their ability to acquire reading skills. The author suggests that reading competence can be nurtured through targeted instructional strategies that align with the cognitive development stages of young learners.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded on the Theory of Compliance by Berger and Kellermann (1996), Competency-Based Theory by Boyatzis (1982), and Organizational Commitment Theory by Meyer and Allen (1991). These theories provide a comprehensive understanding of teachers' extent of compliance, competence and commitment in beginning reading, making them particularly relevant for this research.

The Theory of Compliance, proposed by Charles Berger and William Kellermann, focuses on how communication strategies and persuasive techniques can influence individuals to comply with requests or demands (Berger and Kellermann, 1996). This theory outlines various approaches, such as the Foot-in-the-Door Technique, which increases the likelihood of compliance by securing agreement to small initial requests, and the Door-in-the-Face Technique, where a large request is followed by a smaller, more reasonable one. These tactics are particularly useful in understanding how teachers might be influenced to adhere to specific instructional practices or participate in training programs designed to improve their teaching methods.

Competency-Based Theory, introduced by Richard Boyatzis, emphasizes the importance of identifying and developing specific competencies—knowledge, skills, and behaviors—required for effective performance in a given role (Boyatzis, 1982). This theory is integral to evaluating the competence of Grade 1 learners in beginning reading, as it provides a framework for assessing the extent to which students possess the necessary competencies for successful reading outcomes. Moreover, it also applies to teachers, guiding the identification of areas where they need further development to enhance their instructional practices and support student learning effectively.

Organizational Commitment Theory, developed by John Meyer and Natalie Allen, categorizes commitment into three types: affective commitment (emotional attachment to and identification with the organization), continuance commitment (perceived costs of leaving the organization), and normative commitment (a sense of obligation to remain) (Meyer and Allen, 1991). This theory offers a nuanced understanding of the different dimensions of commitment that can influence teachers' dedication to beginning reading instruction. It helps explore how these various forms of commitment might affect teachers' willingness to invest in the program and persist in their efforts to achieve its objectives.

These theories are particularly appropriate for this study because they collectively address the critical elements of teachers' compliance, competence, and commitment in beginning reading. The Theory of Compliance provides insights into adherence to effective instructional practices, while Competency-Based Theory focuses on the development and assessment of the necessary skills and knowledge for both teachers and students. Finally, Organizational Commitment Theory offers a framework for understanding the motivational aspects that drive teachers' dedication to their roles and responsibilities. Together, these theories provide a robust foundation for examining the multifaceted influences on teachers' compliance, competence, and commitment in beginning reading.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to determine the extent of compliance, level of competence, and level of commitment of the Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading of 5 clusters in a small-sized division in Central Philippines during the school year 2022-2023.

Methodology:

This section presents the discussion of the research methodology that was utilized, the subjects and respondents of the study, the research instruments that will be used, the validity and reliability of the instruments, the procedure for data gathering, the statistical tools and procedure for data analysis as well as the ethical consideration.

Research Design

In this study, descriptive research design was used to determine the extent of compliance, level of competence, and level of commitment of the grade 1 teachers in beginning reading instruction of a cluster in a small-sized division in Central Philippines during the school year 2022-2023

Descriptive method is a research design that involves gathering of data that describe recent events and phenomena (McCombes, 2022). Such current issues and problems are to be treated through a process of data collection that would enable the researcher to describe the situation completely.

Descriptive research design is particularly suitable for this study, which seeks to assess the extent of compliance, level of competence, and level of commitment of Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading instruction within 5 clusters in a small-sized division in Central Philippines. This design is effective for capturing a detailed and accurate snapshot of current practices and attitudes, providing a comprehensive understanding without altering variables or intervening. It systematically details the characteristics of the phenomenon enabling the collection of specific information about how well teachers adhere to instructional standards, their proficiency in applying reading strategies, and their commitment levels. By establishing a solid baseline, descriptive research facilitates informed future interventions and program improvements, while ensuring that findings are contextually relevant to the unique needs of the educational environment studied.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were 119 Grade 1 teachers in 5 clusters. Since the number of respondents is manageable, then purposive sampling was utilized. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling that is chosen depending on demographic characteristics and the objectives of the study (Crossman, 2020). Table 1 shows the distribution of the respondents.

Table 1

Distribution of Respondents

Cluster	Population (N)	Percentage
A	16	13.45
B	9	7.56
C	39	32.77
D	33	27.73
E	22	18.49
Total	119	100.00

Data Gathering Instrument

A researcher-made questionnaire was utilized to assess the extent of compliance, level of competence and level of commitment of Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading. The questionnaire is divided into four parts. Part I gathers information on the respondents' profiles, including their age, plantilla position, and teaching experience in early grades.

Part II evaluated the extent of teachers' compliance in beginning reading instruction, focusing on four key areas: oral language, book and print knowledge, and alphabet language.

Part III evaluated the level of competence of teachers in beginning reading instruction, focusing on several key areas such as content knowledge, instructional delivery and assessment of learning.

Part IV evaluated the level of commitment of teachers in beginning reading instruction by examining three critical aspects: program planning, program implementation, and program evaluation.

Each area had 7 items which were rated using a modified Likert's Scale namely: (5) Always, (4) Often, (3) Sometimes, (2) Rarely, and (1) Almost Never.

Validity

Validity refers to how accurately a method measures what it is intended to measure. If research has high validity that means it produces results that correspond to real properties, characteristics, and variations in the physical or social world (David, 2022). The validity of the instrument is defined in this study as the extent to which it covers the objectives.

To be able to establish validity of the research instrument, it will be subjected to face and content validation by five (5) experts. The first validator is a doctoral degree holder, a Division LRMDs coordinator who is expert in ensuring quality of learning resources. The second validator graduated with the degree of Doctor in Developmental Education who is a Division English Supervisor who is expert in providing technical assistance in improving English learning materials including that of reading. The third validator finished Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Management, holding Master Teacher 1 position who is expert in teaching reading being a primary school teacher handling reading classes. The fourth validator is a graduate of Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Management, a Master Teacher I designated as District Reading Specialist who has expertise in the implementation of reading programs. The last validator is a graduate of Doctor of Education, currently appointed as schools' division superintendent (OIC), who has expertise in checking research instruments having been a thesis/dissertation adviser for more than ten (10) years.

As to the appropriateness of the items in the questionnaire, each validator was requested to rate the instrument using the criteria set forth by Carter V. Good and Douglas E. Scates. The interpretation is as follows: Excellent (4.04 – 5.00); Very Good (3.28 – 4.03); Good (2.52 – 3.27); Fair (1.76 – 2.51); Poor (1.00 – 1.75).

The validity result was 4.44, interpreted as excellent.

Reliability

Reliability is the degree to which a measurement instrument gives the same results each time that it is used, assuming that the underlying thing being measured does not change (Noble, 2017). To establish the reliability of the research instrument, the Cronbach Alpha was used. Cronbach Alpha is a tool for measuring the consistency and reliability of a group of scale or test items (Sürücü & Maslakci, 2020). A "high" alpha number does not imply that a measure is one-dimensional. The ranges of Cronbach alpha should be $\alpha \geq 0.9$ (Excellent), $0.9 > \alpha \geq 0.8$ (Good), $0.8 > \alpha \geq 0.7$ (Acceptable), $0.7 > \alpha \geq 0.6$ (Questionable), $0.6 > \alpha \geq 0.5$ (Poor), $0.5 > \alpha$ (Unacceptable).

The conduct of the dry run of the research instrument was done to 30 Grade 1 teachers from another cluster.

The reliability result for extent of compliance was .873 interpreted as good, for level of competence the reliability result was .709 interpreted as acceptable, and for the level of commitment the reliability result was .782 interpreted as acceptable.

Data Gathering Procedure

Research Ethics Protocol

The ethical responsibilities of the researcher and respondents acknowledge the ethical standards that guide the conduct of this study. The researcher ensured the protection of the respondents and gave importance on the respondents' voluntary participation, informed consent, risk of harm, confidentiality, and anonymity. For voluntary participation, the researcher asked the respondents to sign or agree to a consent form. However, they are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason. For informed consent, the researcher ensured that the respondents are fully informed about the procedures and risks involved in research. For risk of harm, the researcher did not put the participants in a situation where they might be at risk of harm because of their participation. If should this happen, the participants were given the freedom to decline to answer all the questions and may withdraw their participation at any time. For confidentiality, the researcher guaranteed that the respondents' identifying information was made available to anyone who is not directly involved in the study. Further, for anonymity of the respondents, their names may be optionally reflected in the questionnaire.

Analytical Schemes

The following analytical schemes were employed in this study:

Objective No. 1 used the descriptive analytical scheme to describe the profile of the respondents in terms of sex, age, plantilla position and teaching experience in the early grade.

Objective No. 2 also used the descriptive analytical scheme to determine the extent of compliance of Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading in the areas of oral language, book and print knowledge, alphabet language, and phonics and word recognition.

Objective No. 3 likewise used descriptive analytical scheme to determine the level of competence of Grade 1 learners in beginning reading in terms of content knowledge, instructional delivery, and assessment of learning.

Objective No. 4 also used the descriptive analytical scheme to determine the level of commitment of Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading in terms of program planning, program implementation, and program evaluation.

Objective No. 5 also used the descriptive analytical scheme to determine the extent of compliance of Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading when grouped according to the aforementioned variables.

Objective No. 6 likewise used the descriptive analytical scheme to determine the level of competence of Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading when grouped according to the aforementioned variables.

Objective No. 7 used descriptive analytical scheme to determine the level of commitment of the Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading when grouped according to the aforementioned variables.

Objective No. 8 used comparative analytical scheme to unfold if there is a significant difference in the extent of compliance of Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables.

Objective No. 9 also used comparative analytical scheme to find out if there is a significant difference in the level of competence of Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables.

Objective No. 10 likewise used comparative analytical scheme to discover if there is a significant difference in the level of commitment of Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables.

Results and Discussion:

This section presents the data collected, offering a detailed analysis and interpretation. It examines the respondents' profiles and their responses to the research questions. Through this comprehensive presentation of the gathered data, the chapter aims to provide insights that align with the study's objectives.

Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Variables Age, Plantilla Position, Teaching Experience in the Early Grade

This section presents the demographic information of the study participants. It includes details about the respondents age, plantilla position, and teaching experience in the early grades.

Table 2

Profile of the Respondents

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Younger (below 36 years old)	57	47.90
	Older (36 years old and above)	62	52.10
Plantilla Position	Lower (T1)	38	31.90
	Higher (T2 and above)	81	68.10
Teaching Experience in the Early Grade	Shorter (less than 11 years)	55	46.20
	Higher (11 years and above)	64	53.80
Total		119	100.00

Table 2 presents the profile of the respondents, highlighting their age, plantilla position, and teaching experience in early grades. The data shows that the respondents are almost evenly distributed between those younger than 36 years old, with a frequency of 57 representing 47.90%, and the older whose age are 36 years old and above which is comprised of 32 making up 52.10 %. Regarding plantilla positions, 31.90 % of the respondents hold lower positions (T1), whereas a majority of 68.1 % are in higher positions (T2 and above). In terms of teaching

experience in early grades, 46.2 % of the respondents have less than 11 years of experience, while 54.80 % have 11 years or more.

The data indicates that the majority of teachers are older, hold higher plantilla positions, and have longer teaching experience in early grades. This distribution suggests that the respondents are experienced teachers who have progressed in their careers. Given that 52.10 % of the participants are 36 years old or older and that 68.10 % hold higher plantilla positions, it implies that they have been teaching long enough to gain valuable experience, particularly in early grade teaching, which is crucial for the study on teachers' compliance in beginning reading according to various literacy components.

These findings imply that the respondents, being more mature and seasoned, are likely to have a well-established understanding of oral language, book and print knowledge, alphabet language, phonics, and word recognition. The larger representation of teachers with over a decade of teaching experience in early grades further emphasizes this point. Consequently, the results of the study can be considered robust and reliable, reflecting the perspectives of experienced teachers who are more likely to have developed effective strategies and insights in teaching beginning reading skills. This experienced demographic could influence the outcomes of the study, providing a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and successes in implementing compliance in reading instruction.

A related study by Flores and Dayagbil (2018) supports the findings that more experienced teachers are likely to possess well-established teaching practices and a deeper understanding of literacy components such as phonics and word recognition. Their research on elementary teachers' effectiveness in reading instruction found that teachers with more years of experience were significantly more adept at implementing literacy instruction and were more compliant with curriculum standards. Similarly, older teachers and those with higher plantilla positions displayed greater confidence and competence in handling complex teaching tasks. This corroborates the present findings, as it suggests that teachers with longer teaching experience and higher career positions are better equipped to meet the demands of beginning reading instruction, enhancing the overall reliability and depth of the study's outcomes.

Extent of Compliance of Grade 1 Teachers in Beginning Reading According to Oral Language, Book and Print Knowledge, Alphabet Language, Phonics and Word Recognition

This section presents the extent of compliance of teachers in promoting oral language skills among learners.

Table 3

Extent of Compliance of Grade 1 Teachers in Beginning Reading According to Oral Language

Item	Mean	Interpretation
As a reading teacher, I comply the promotion of oral language by ...		
giving learners the opportunities to talk	4.28	Great Extent
ensuring that speaking and listening are done throughout the day.	4.34	Great Extent
practicing reading aloud.	4.31	Great Extent
varying the topics for reading	4.06	Great Extent
providing activities that help learners understand the world outside the classroom	4.13	Great Extent
strengthening vocabulary-building activities	4.44	Great Extent
engaging learners in games, songs, chants and poems that involve following directions	4.45	Great Extent
Overall Mean	4.29	Great Extent

Table 3 presents the extent of compliance of Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading according to oral language. As shown in Table 3, the overall mean rating is 4.29, interpreted as a Great Extent.

Among the items, engaging learners in games, songs, chants and poems that involve following directions scored the highest mean of 4.45, indicating that teachers are actively using interactive and engaging methods to enhance oral language development.

On the other hand, the item varying topics for reading received the lowest mean of 4.06 though still interpreted as a Great Extent. This suggests that while teachers generally comply with promoting oral language, there is relatively less in providing activities that help learners understand the world outside the classroom. This limited variety could be attributed to a lack of available resources and activities as a guide in which may constrain teachers to a narrower selection of materials or activities. Therefore, while the compliance level remains high, enhancing the variety of reading topics, can rely on familiar subjects and resources could further enrich teachers to provide students learning experiences and outcomes. This finding support the study of Pyle and Danniels (2017), emphasizing that exposure to a variety of topics and genres is crucial for developing comprehensive oral language skills in students. The study highlights the need for educators to incorporate diverse and rich content in their teaching practices to foster a more engaging and inclusive learning environment by relying on activities that involves the environment outside the classroom.

Table 4

Extent of Compliance of Grade 1 Teachers in Beginning Reading According to Book and Print Knowledge

Item	Mean	Interpretation	
As a reading teacher, I comply the provision of activities ...			
that help learners understand the relationship between spoken and written language	4.71	Very Extent	Great
that highlight the meanings, uses, and production of print found in classroom signs, labels, notes, posters, calendars, and directions.	4.56	Very Extent	Great
that teach print conventions such as directionality.	4.70	Very Extent	Great
in which children practice how to handle a book - how to turn pages, how to find the tops and bottoms of pages, and how to tell the front and back covers.	4.68	Very Extent	Great
in word awareness that help children become conscious of individual words (e.g., their boundaries, their appearance, and their length).	4.80	Very Extent	Great
in which children practice with predictable and patterned language stories.	4.74	Very Extent	Great
Provide many opportunities for children to hear good books and to participate in read-aloud activities	4.57	Very Extent	Great
Overall Mean	4.70	Very Extent	Great

Table 4 shows the extent of compliance of Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading according to book and print knowledge. The table indicated an overall mean rating of 4.70, which translates to a Very Great Extent of compliance. The item no. 5 with the highest mean score is in word awareness that help children become conscious of individual words (e.g., their boundaries, their appearance, and their length), with a mean of 4.80, reflecting a strong emphasis on teaching basic book-handling skills.

Conversely, the item no. 2 on the provision of activities that highlight the meanings, uses, and production of print found in classroom signs, labels, notes, posters, calendars, and directions has the lowest mean of 4.56, though still interpreted as Great extent. The relatively lower focus

on this aspect might stem from time constraints, where teachers prioritize core reading skills over integrating environmental print into daily lessons.

This lends credence to the study of Neumann and Neumann (2019) found out that integrating environmental print into classroom activities enhances children understanding of the functional uses of print, thereby supporting literacy skills acquisition.

Table 5

Extent of Compliance of Grade 1 Teachers in Beginning Reading According to Alphabet Language

Item	Mean	Interpretation	
As a reading teacher, I comply the teaching... of letter names before letter sounds.	4.91	Very Extent	Great
of uppercase then lowercase letters.	4.94	Very Extent	Great
of transition from simple sounds to complex	4.96	Very Extent	Great
alphabets using memory devices such as pictures, keywords, rhymes, actions	4.98	Very Extent	Great
of alphabets using hands-on and multi-sensory activities	4.62	Very Extent	Great
writing activities that encourage children to practice writing the letters they are learning.	4.32	Very Extent	Great
of the sensible sequence of letter introduction that can be adjusted to the needs of the children.	4.97	Very Extent	Great
Overall Mean	4.90	Very Extent	Great

Table 5 presents the extent of compliance of Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading according to alphabet language. As depicted in the table, the overall mean rating of 4.90 indicates a Very Great Extent among teachers in implementing beginning reading strategies. This suggests that the majority of teachers consistently adhere to recommended practices in this area. The highest-rated item no. 4, alphabets using hands- on and multi- sensory activities achieved a mean of 4.98, interpreted as a Very Great Extent. This finding demonstrates that teachers across all levels are providing students with the foundational skills necessary for alphabet language, crucial for early literacy.

On the other hand, the item no. 1 on the teaching of letter names before letter sounds received the lowest mean rating of 4.91, although it still falls within the Very high compliance range. This result may indicate some challenges in consistently prioritizing the instruction of letter names over writing the letters. This reflects teachers' diverse personal preferences in teaching letter recognition where some may prioritize phonics and sounds first, believing it to be more effective for early reading development.

This finding supports that of Ehri and Linnea (2020) which revealed that teaching letter names and letter sounds together positively influences early reading skills, suggesting that integrating both aspects supports phonemic awareness and alphabetic knowledge.

Table 6

Extent of Compliance of Grade 1 Teachers in Beginning Reading According to Phonics and Word Recognition

Item	Mean	Interpretation	
As a reading teacher, I comply the... sequence of instruction that progresses from easier to more difficult tasks and from larger to smaller units.	4.65	Very Extent	Great
auditory (e.g., clapping), visual (e.g., tiles, chips), or both cues to help children identify separate sounds in words.	4.56	Very Extent	Great

relationship of letters to sounds in more advanced tasks (segmenting and blending phonemes).	4.72	Very Extent	Great
continuity of sounds (like, m, s, i, f) that are easier to hear and blend.	4.76	Very Extent	Great
stretching out and connection of the sounds (e.g., "ssssaaaamm," rather than separating them, for example, "S ... a ... m").	4.98	Very Extent	Great
identification of beginning, medial, and ending sounds in spoken words.	4.97	Very Extent	Great
segmenting and blending of individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words.	4.97	Very Extent	Great
Overall Mean	4.84	Very Extent	Great

Table 6 presents the extent of compliance of Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading according to phonics and word recognition. The table indicates an overall mean rating of 4.84, signifying a Very Great Extent of compliance. The item no. 5 on teacher's compliance on the stretching out and connection of the sounds (e.g., sssssaaaamm, rather than separating them, for example, S ... a ... m) has the highest mean score of 4.98 interpreted as Very Great Extent. This indicates strong teacher compliance with teaching the blending of sounds.

The item no 2 with the lowest mean which is about auditory (e.g., clapping), visual (e.g., tiles, chips), or both cues to help children identify separate sounds in words, scored a 4.55 interpreted as Very Great Extent. This suggests that while beginning reading typically starts with broad skills like phonemic awareness and letter recognition, a teacher might choose to start with more complex tasks depending on the needs or interests of the students. Hence, the teacher may adjust the sequence to prioritize what the learners need.

This aligns with the study by Langille and Green (2021) that the methods incorporating visual, auditory, and kinesthetic cues are particularly effective in enhancing children's phonemic awareness and word recognition skills. This study highlights those multi-sensory techniques, such as clapping for sounds or using visual aids like tiles, provide children with more concrete ways to segment and manipulate sounds in words.

Level of Competence of Grade 1 Teachers in Beginning Reading According to Content Knowledge, Instructional Delivery, and Assessment of Learning

This section presents the level of competence of Grade 1 learners in beginning reading with respect to content knowledge, instructional delivery, and assessment of learning.

Table 7

Level of Competence of Grade 1 Teachers in Beginning Reading According to Content Knowledge

Item	Mean	Interpretation
As a reading teacher, I ...		
develop materials for different reading activities.	4.99	Very High Level
use computer-aided reading instructions.	4.88	Very High Level
contextualize and localize reading materials.	4.69	Very High Level
design appropriate reading lessons that meet students' needs.	4.69	Very High Level
simplify reading texts appropriate to the learners' level of understanding.	4.98	Very High Level
develop more supplementary reading materials, either print or non-print to be used during the school reading program.	4.98	Very High Level
update content of reading materials to suit to current situation	4.61	Very High Level
Overall Mean	4.85	Very High Level

Table 7 presents the level of competence of Grade 1 learners in beginning reading according to content knowledge. The overall mean rating of 4.85 indicates a Very High Level. Item no. 1 on developing materials for different reading activities received the highest mean of 4.99 or very high level, reflecting teachers' strong emphasis on creating diverse materials to enhance reading activities for students.

In contrast, the item no 7 on updating content of reading materials to suit the current situation received the lowest mean score of 4.61, which is still interpreted as very high level. This may be because of limited access to updated resources which restricts teachers' ability to incorporate the latest information into their instruction. This limitation may reduce learners' exposure to relevant and timely information which affect their ability to connect their reading experiences with real-world events.

A related study by Guthrie and Klauda (2021) corroborates with these findings as they found that access to up-to-date resources and adequate time for material modification are significant challenges for educators.

Table 8

Level of Competence of Grade 1 Teachers in Beginning Reading According to Instructional Delivery

Item	Mean	Interpretation
As a reading teacher, I ...		
activate prior knowledge and vocabulary to understand the text the students are about to read.	4.95	Very High Level
ask questions to guide in finding answers in the text.	4.86	Very High Level
give clues in the text itself.	4.89	Very High Level
provide varied opportunities to practice word recognition	4.71	Very High Level
guide learners to decode words to understand their meanings.	4.62	Very High Level
Provide set of sight words (some of which are regularly spelled) in the beginning stages of reading instruction.	4.63	Very High Level
employ relevant strategies for identifying words with more than one syllable.	4.63	Very High Level
Overall Mean	4.76	Very High Level

Table 8 outlines the competence levels of Grade 1 learners in beginning reading through instructional delivery. The overall mean rating is 4.76, categorized as Very High Level. The highest-scoring item no. 1, with a mean of 4.95 interpreted as very high level is on activating prior knowledge and vocabulary to understand the text the students are about to read. This indicates a strong emphasis on using prior knowledge and vocabulary as a foundation for understanding new texts.

Conversely, the item no. 5 on guiding learners to decode words to understand their meaning received the lowest mean score of 4.62, which is still interpreted as a Very high level. This suggests that although teachers are generally proficient in delivering instruction, they are less capable in providing learners with subtle hints and context clues that help them decode words and make sense of the material. The absence of these resources can make it challenging for teachers to diversify their instructional methods and cater to students who struggle with more complex vocabulary.

This finding is similar to that of Green and Parker (2021) which revealed that scarcity of resources focused on multi-syllable instruction constraints teachers' ability to diversify their methods of teaching reading.

Table 9

Level of Competence of Grade 1 Teachers in Beginning Reading According to Assessment of Learning

Item	Mean	Interpretation
As a reading teacher, I ...		
assess students' reading fluency and phonological awareness.	4.76	Very High Level
track students' vocabulary development and word recognition.	4.73	Very High Level
evaluate students reading speed and comprehension.	4.71	Very High Level
determine students' reading habits and reading behavior.	4.42	Very High Level
discuss with students their reading progress from time to time.	4.63	Very High Level
identify the reading difficulties of students.	4.96	Very High Level
provide immediate actions to students left behind.	5.00	Very High Level
Overall Mean	4.79	Very High Level

Table 9 presents the competence level of Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading with respect to the assessment of learning. The overall mean rating was 4.79, which is classified as a very high level. The highest mean score of 5.00 was achieved in item no. 7 on providing immediate actions to students left behind. This reflects teachers' strong focus on monitoring students' progress in these key areas of reading development.

Item no. 4 got the lowest mean of 4.42 or high level on determining students' reading habits and reading behavior. This implies that while teachers are generally effective in their instructional roles, they may be less compliant in thoroughly assessing and understanding the reading habits and behaviors of their students. Such limitation in reading habits may lead to less effective, one-size-fits-all approaches in reading instruction.

This contradicts to the result of The Listen First Project (2024) which revealed that the challenges teachers encounter in complying with beginning reading, particularly in classrooms with students of diverse abilities is high even if strict adherence to standardized reading programs is observed

Level of Commitment of Grade 1 Teachers in Beginning Reading According to Program Planning, Program Implementation, and Program Evaluation

Table 10

Level of Commitment of Grade 1 Teachers in Beginning Reading According to Program Planning

Item	Mean	Interpretation
As a reading teacher, I am committed to...		
conduct profiling of non-readers and poor readers using appropriate tools	4.45	High Level
conduct orientation to teacher-implementers on the administration of the tools, strategies, and techniques to be used for the program.	4.50	Very High Level
conduct orientation to the parents of their roles and responsibilities for the school reading program.	4.50	Very High Level
Join in the capacity-building for all reading implementers before the start of the school reading program.	4.50	Very High Level
engage in a strong partnership with the stakeholders to effectively implement the program.	4.33	High Level

conduct profiling of non-readers and poor readers using appropriate tools	4.58	Very High Level
conduct orientation to teacher-implementers on the administration of the tools, strategies, and techniques to be used for the program.	4.59	Very High Level
Overall Mean	4.51	Very High Level

Table 10 presents the level of commitment of Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading according to program planning. The overall mean rating is 4.51, interpreted as very high level, indicating a strong commitment to program planning activities. The item no. 7 obtaining the highest mean 4.59 or Very High Level is the commitment to conduct orientation to teacher-implementers on the administration of the tools, strategies, and techniques to be used for the program. It highlights the importance placed on involving parents in the reading program.

The item no. 5 with the lowest mean of 4.33 is on the commitment to the engage in a strong partnership with the stakeholders to effectively implement the program, is still interpreted as high-level. This score suggests that there may be a slight gap in building and maintaining effective partnerships with stakeholders, such as parents, community members, and other educational entities. What bring about this gap are the differing priorities between teachers and administrators, limited opportunities for regular collaboration, or a lack of clear communication channels. These challenges could stem from time constraints, logistical issues, or even varying levels of stakeholder interest and involvement.

However, in the study of Kilpatrick et al. (2020) it was found that when schools actively engaged stakeholders, program outcomes improved due to increased support and resource sharing. Additionally, they also noted that time constraints and logistical difficulties often prevent consistent collaboration.

Conclusion:

The following conclusions were drawn from the findings of this study.

Based on the findings of the study, older teachers with higher plantilla positions and with longer service years bring valuable experience that enhances reading instruction quality across grades through mentorship of younger teachers. The findings confirm that teachers demonstrate a very great extent of compliance in beginning reading skills, such as book and print knowledge, and alphabet knowledge, and Phonics and Word Recognition highlighting their strong adherence to structured reading programs that support early literacy.

Grade 1 teachers' very high level of competence in content knowledge, instructional delivery, and assessment of learning underscores their capability to implement effective reading strategies and accurately track student progress.

Teachers' very high level of commitment in program planning, program implementation, and program evaluation reading programs provides a robust foundation for the sustainability and continuous improvement of beginning reading initiatives within Philippine classrooms. Teachers exhibit high level of compliance across oral language, and Phonics with younger teachers excelling in foundational practices and more experienced teachers demonstrating very great extent of compliance in advanced strategies like book and print knowledge and alphabet language indicating that both foundational and advanced skills are actively practiced.

The very high level of competence of teachers in beginning reading content knowledge, instructional delivery, and assessment highlights the strength of their instructional methods and adaptability to student needs. The consistently high to very high commitment of Grade 1 teachers in beginning reading across program planning, implementation, and evaluation reveals a stable, dedicated approach to the continuity of reading programs, regardless of teacher experience. The comparative analysis reveals no significant compliance differences in most reading areas by age, position, or experience, except in alphabet language, where compliance increases with position and experience, underscoring the influence of professional status on specific instructional skills.

Significant differences in competence levels for content knowledge and instructional delivery across age, plantilla position, and experience indicate that experienced teachers bring added instructional depth, though assessment skills are strong across all groups.

The consistent level of commitment in program planning, implementation, and evaluation across age, position, and experience shows that commitment is a shared attribute among Grade 1 teachers, enabling a reliably dedicated teaching workforce.

Hence, the positive correlation between compliance and competence in beginning reading, with independence from commitment, illustrates that while compliance and competence are interconnected, commitment operates as an independent aspect of teaching practices.

Furthermore, compliance with instructional practices and commitment to teaching are independent factors. Teachers may strictly adhere to guidelines and protocols without necessarily feeling a strong personal commitment, or they might show high levels of dedication to their roles without strictly following every instructional guideline.

Finally, teacher's ability to effectively perform their duties (competence) does not necessarily correlate with their level of dedication or enthusiasm for the job (commitment). Each factor plays a unique role in influencing teaching quality and outcomes, highlighting the need for professional development programs that address these areas independently.

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