

Teachers' Difficulties in Teaching Reading

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Abstract:

This study employed a descriptive research design to identify and analyze the difficulties encountered by reading teachers in instructing reading. There were 174 reading teachers included in this study, selected through stratified random sampling from seven elementary schools in a medium-sized, highly urbanized city district during the Academic Year 2024–2025. The variables included were age, length of service, and number of training sessions attended in reading instruction, with demographic variables such as age and experience considered for significant differences. A researcher-made survey questionnaire was utilized to gather data. The study's findings indicated that teachers encountered "high levels" of difficulty across multiple domains. These phases of concern included managing student diversity, delivering differentiated instruction, and addressing the needs of learners with disabilities in large class sizes. Professional development, though attended, did not fully address practical classroom challenges. Limited access to instructional resources and low parental involvement were cited as persistent barriers. Statistical analysis further revealed that younger and less experienced teachers faced significantly greater challenges in resource utilization and managing learner diversity.

Keywords: Differentiated instruction, reading instruction, student diversity, teacher difficulties

Introduction:

Nature of the Problem

Reading is crucial for learning and academic success, but many teachers face serious problems when providing effective instruction. One significant obstacle is the diversity of students, which presents a considerable challenge for teachers. Linguistic and cultural diversity can be challenging for teachers who lack sufficient training in differentiated instruction. The growing number of students from various language backgrounds has made teachers need to use specific strategies to accommodate them. However, many teachers admit they lack the necessary training and skills to do this effectively.

Another issue is the lack of access to instructional materials, such as books, reading aids, and technology, which negatively affects the quality of reading instruction. Many public elementary schools in the Philippines have minimal budgets, limiting teachers' ability to provide engaging reading resources. Teachers often report low parental engagement due to work commitments, limited literacy skills, and a lack of awareness about the importance of reading support at home.

Many educators also lack the necessary training and might not have continuous professional development. Some teacher education programs do not adequately prepare teachers with evidence-based instructional practices, which means teachers have not been sufficiently prepared to teach reading. The rapid evolution of reading pedagogy and the increasing use of technology in instruction require ongoing professional development, often unavailable to many teachers. As a result, teachers may lack the knowledge of differentiated instruction and reading assessment methods needed to identify and solve students' reading problems effectively.

As a public elementary school teacher for 17 years, the researcher has observed that some learners still struggle with reading, even simple word recognition. This is supported by the results of assessments like the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA), Oral Reading Verification (ORV), and Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI), which are conducted twice a year. These observations and the personal experiences shared by reading teachers during school conferences have prompted this investigation into teachers' difficulties in teaching reading in key stages 1 and 2. The study's findings may lead to plans and actions that will help teachers teach reading more effectively.

Objectives

This study aimed to determine the level of difficulties of teachers in teaching reading in a district, particularly in a

medium-sized school division in a highly urbanized city in Negros Occidental during the School Year 2024-2025. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions: 1) the level of difficulties of teachers in teaching reading according to student diversity, limited resources, lack of parental involvement, and limited knowledge of reading instructions; 2) the level of difficulties of teachers in teaching reading when grouped according to the age, length of service, and number of training sessions attended in reading; and 3) the significant difference in the level of difficulties teachers have in teaching reading when grouped and compared based on the aforementioned variables.

Current State of Knowledge

The landscape of reading instruction continually evolves, presenting persistent challenges and innovative solutions for educators. A core issue, highlighted by Khasawneh (2021), identifies reading difficulties as encompassing inadequate phonemic awareness, insufficient decoding skills, restricted vocabulary, and challenges with reading comprehension. These foundational problems often surface early in a child's educational journey, potentially leading to long-term academic and cognitive impacts if not addressed effectively (Ramadhianti & Somba, 2023).

Globally, the importance of phonemic awareness, as the capacity to recognize and manipulate sounds in spoken language, is a fundamental skill for reading proficiency. Phonemic awareness-focused teaching strategies, including phoneme segmentation and blending activities, have enhanced reading outcomes in early learners (Kamal & Illiyan, 2021), whilst explicit phonics instruction, establishing letter-sound correspondence, is a crucial element for enhancing decoding skills and fluency (Febtiningsih & Wibowo, 2021; Asri et al., 2021). Beyond foundational skills, vocabulary development is also paramount for reading comprehension (Al Otaiba et al., 2023). Reading fluency, defined as the ability to read with speed, accuracy, and appropriate expression, is also vital, with Bisriyah (2022) recommending repeated reading and directed oral reading as practical techniques.

In the local context, despite the Philippines boasting a high literacy rate (Fuerte, 2019), public elementary school teachers encounter significant difficulties. Tomas et al. (2021) highlight student diversity, lack of resources, low parental involvement, and limited knowledge of reading instruction as exacerbating factors. Caraig and Quimbo (2022) and Idulog et al. (2023) further elaborate on the challenges posed by diverse linguistic, cultural, and learning needs, especially for English Language Learners (ELLs) and minority students. The scarcity of instructional materials, technology, and professional development opportunities further restricts teachers' capacity to deliver effective reading instruction (Ugalingan et al., 2021; Bautista Jr., 2021).

Parental involvement plays an important role in developing children's reading skills; however, several public elementary school teachers still face problems getting parents interested and involved. Escalante and Rubio (2024) have found that teachers trained especially for reading instruction and parental engagement are more enthusiastic to implement strategies such as home reading programs, communication journals, and parent workshops that may be the solution to the negative impact caused by limited parental involvement. While crucial for reading skill development, socio-economic factors and language often hamper it.

Therefore, continuous professional development and robust institutional support are critical to empower teachers and improve student reading outcomes (Espino et al., 2021; Labicane, 2021).

Theoretical Underpinnings

This study is anchored on David Perkins' Theory of Learnable Intelligence, which posits that intelligence is not fixed but dynamic, cultivated through strategic thinking, metacognition, and content knowledge (Perkins, 2024). This perspective is crucial for reading instruction, highlighting teachers' pivotal role in developing students' reading abilities by adapting methods and continuously improving their skills to meet evolving demands. Perkins emphasizes that effective reading pedagogy extends beyond basic word identification to deeper comprehension.

However, applying this theory faces hurdles. Teachers often encounter difficulties like limited training in differentiated instruction, insufficient resources, or challenges with diverse learners, impeding their ability to foster learnable intelligence. These barriers hinder supportive learning environments vital for reading development. Thus, Perkins' theory underscores the importance of empowering educators with the necessary knowledge, tools, and support systems to overcome instructional obstacles and enhance reading outcomes. The study integrates this theory to understand teachers' reading instruction challenges and proposes targeted capacity-building strategies, focusing on the interplay of Neural, Experiential, and Reflective Intelligences.

Methodology

This section presents the discussion of the research design used in this study, the respondents invited to participate in the survey, the instrument utilized in gathering data, the measures that ensured validity and reliability, the procedure in collecting data, the analytical schemes applied, and the statistical tools used for data analysis.

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive research design, an investigative process to determine the level of difficulties teachers encounter in teaching reading. Descriptive research helps answer "who, what, when, where, and how" associated with a problem, but not "why" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). It effectively reports summary data like means, standard deviations, and correlations, providing a detailed account of teacher reading instruction difficulties. This allows for identifying specific instructional challenges and their prevalence across various teacher demographics and training backgrounds. The study's objectives justify the descriptive design, facilitating systematic numerical data collection and analysis to identify patterns that can inform instructional improvements and comprehensively examine individual and group-level experiences in reading instruction.

Study Respondents

The respondents of this study were 174 elementary school teachers, directly involved in teaching reading from Grades 1 to 6, drawn from seven public schools in one district of a medium-sized school division in a highly urbanized city in Negros Occidental. Using the lottery method, stratified sampling was employed to ensure fair and accurate representation from each participating school.

Instruments

The data-gathering instrument for this study comprised a self-made survey questionnaire designed to collect both personal and professional information from the respondents and to assess the specific difficulties public elementary school teachers encounter in teaching reading. The instrument was divided into three parts: a letter of consent, which outlined the study's voluntary nature and confidentiality; a section for the respondents' profiles, gathering data on age, length of service, and the number of training sessions attended in reading instruction; and an assessment of teachers' difficulties in teaching reading. This latter part consisted of 40 items organized into four key areas: challenges posed by student diversity, the availability and quality of limited resources, the influence of a lack of parental involvement, and the impact of limited knowledge of reading instruction. Each item was rated by respondents using a five-point Likert scale with the following descriptions: 5 as Always, 4 as Often, 3 as Sometimes, 2 as Rarely, and 1 as Almost Never. This comprehensive approach aims to capture the degree of difficulty experienced by teachers, facilitating the identification of pressing challenges and informing targeted interventions and professional development.

Data Gathering Procedure

After establishing the instrument's validity and reliability, the researcher initiated the data gathering process by formally sending a letter to the Schools Division Superintendent to secure approval for conducting the study among public elementary school teachers. Upon receiving this permission, individual letters were then dispatched to the public school district supervisor and the principals of the target schools, requesting their consent for the survey administration. Once approvals were secured from the respective school heads, a suitable time for the survey was coordinated to align with teachers' schedules. The survey was created on Google Forms for easy access and data collection, with a secure link distributed via online messaging platforms such as email and Messenger. Reminders and technical support were provided to respondents to ensure maximum participation and honesty, with assurances of confidentiality and anonymity. The collected survey data were systematically tallied and processed using crucial statistical tools. Raw data were transformed into numerical codes guided by a coding manual to facilitate accurate computer handling, statistical derivations, and tabular presentation. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software analyzed the encoded data comprehensively.

Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment

Objective No. 1 employed a descriptive analytical scheme and mean to assess the level of difficulties encountered by public elementary school teachers in teaching reading, specifically across the identified areas of student diversity, limited resources, lack of parental involvement, and limited knowledge of reading instructions.

Objective No. 2 similarly applied a descriptive analytical scheme and mean to ascertain the level of difficulties teachers experience in teaching reading when grouped according to their profile variables.

Objective No. 3 adopted a comparative analytical scheme and the Mann-Whitney U test to determine if there is a significant difference in the level of difficulties teachers face in teaching reading when grouped and compared based on the aforementioned demographic and professional characteristics.

Ethical Consideration

The protection of human subjects through the application of appropriate ethical principles is paramount in all research studies. This research strictly adhered to established ethics protocols, including the Philippine Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act 10173), to safeguard participants' rights, privacy, and confidentiality. The principle of voluntary

participation was upheld, ensuring individuals were not coerced into the study and could withdraw at any time without repercussions. Regarding informed consent, participants were fully apprised of the study's purpose, procedures, and data usage through a consent form within the survey questionnaire. Crucially, their anonymity was ensured, with no identifying information collected or reported, and all responses were treated with the highest level of confidentiality. Data was encrypted, stored securely, and combined to remove individual references, with electronic and printed versions planned for deletion post-study. These comprehensive measures ensured the research was conducted in line with ethical standards, upholding beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice, and prioritizing participant welfare.

Results and Discussion

This section deals with the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data gathered to carry out the objectives of this study. All these were made possible by following specific procedures to provide the exact data and solutions to each problem, reflecting the tabulated and statistically analyzed responses from the questionnaire.

Table 1

Level of Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Reading in terms of Student Diversity

Items	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a reading teacher, my difficulty in terms of the following is...</i>		
1. Address the varying reading levels of students in my class.	3.43	Moderate Level
2. Adjust my reading instruction to accommodate students with different learning styles.	3.44	Moderate Level
3. Teach reading to students who speak different home languages.	3.07	Moderate Level
4. Engage students with diverse cultural backgrounds in reading activities.	3.13	Moderate Level
5. Provide individualized reading support to students with learning disabilities.	4.32	High Level
6. Teach reading to students with varying cognitive abilities.	3.45	Moderate Level
7. Motivate students from different socio-economic backgrounds to engage in reading.	3.21	Moderate Level
8. Create inclusive reading activities that cater to the diversity of my students.	3.99	High Level
9. Manage large class sizes while addressing individual reading needs.	4.38	High Level
10. Implement differentiated reading instruction effectively.	3.49	High Level
Overall Mean	3.59	High Level

Table 1 highlights the varied levels of difficulty teachers encounter in addressing student diversity in reading instruction, with an overall mean of 3.59, interpreted as a high difficulty level. The item "Manage large class sizes while addressing individual reading needs" recorded the highest mean score of 4.38, underscoring teachers' significant challenge in delivering personalized instruction within overcrowded classrooms. Conversely, "Teach reading to students who speak different home languages" had the lowest mean at 3.07, indicating a moderate, though still present, difficulty. These findings reveal student diversity as a primary factor influencing instructional quality, particularly in managing large classes where personalized instruction becomes problematic. This aligns with Haile et al. (2023), who found that overcrowded classrooms diminish personalized instruction in foundational skills like reading due to time constraints. While politicians advocate for inclusive education policies, Gedik and Akyol (2022) note a considerable gap in translating these into practical classroom strategies for literacy.

Table 2

Level of Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Reading in terms of Limited Resources

Items	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a reading teacher, my difficulty in terms of the following is...</i>		
1. Provide sufficient reading materials for my students due to limited resources.	3.67	High Level
2. Teach reading without access to updated textbooks and learning materials.	3.53	High Level
3. Provide individualized reading instruction due to a shortage of supplementary materials.	3.89	High Level
4. Create engaging reading activities due to limited instructional tools.	3.52	High Level
5. Organize reading programs due to inadequate funding.	3.77	High Level
6. Integrate technology into reading instruction due to a lack of devices.	3.60	High Level
7. Develop students' reading skills due to the lack of library facilities.	3.52	High Level
8. Have access to professional development opportunities related to reading instruction.	3.43	Moderate Level
9. Enhance students' reading comprehension due to a lack of visual and auditory aids.	3.48	Moderate Level
10. Implement reading interventions due to insufficient school resources.	3.64	High Level
Overall Mean	3.61	High Level

Table 2 reveals a generally high level of difficulty among teachers in teaching reading due to limited resources, with an overall mean of 3.61, indicating a high level of challenge. The item "Provide individualized reading instruction due to a shortage of supplementary materials" obtained the highest reported difficulty with a mean of 3.89, underscoring teachers' significant struggle to address diverse student needs without sufficient tailored materials. Meanwhile, "Have access to professional development opportunities related to reading instruction" scored the lowest mean at 3.43, interpreted as moderate difficulty. These scores suggest that core teaching material shortages and structural support issues are more acutely felt than those concerning professional growth. Overall, the data points to widespread difficulty from resource limitations, severely compromising teachers' efforts to deliver differentiated and individualized reading instruction effectively.

Table 3

Level of Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Reading in terms of Lack of Parental Involvement

Items	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a reading teacher, my difficulty in terms of the following is...</i>		
1. Encourage parents to support their children's reading development at home.	3.50	High Level
2. Communicate with parents about their child's reading progress.	3.06	Moderate Level
3. Motivate parents to engage in school reading activities.	3.53	High Level
4. Involve parents in creating a home reading environment.	3.66	High Level
5. Gain parental support for reading assignments.	3.53	High Level
6. Get parents to participate in reading-focused parent-teacher meetings.	3.66	High Level
7. Let parents establish their child's reading routine to reinforce reading skills at home.	4.09	High Level
8. Collaborate with parents on improving their child's reading habits.	3.52	High Level
9. Involve parents in developing individualized reading plans for their children.	4.06	High Level
10. Build partnerships with parents to improve students' reading outcomes.	3.41	Moderate Level
Overall Mean	3.60	High Level

Table 3 reflects teachers' difficulties in teaching reading due to a lack of parental involvement, with an overall mean of 3.60, indicating high difficulty. The highest mean (4.09) was for "Persuade parents to create their child's home reading schedule," underscoring teachers' struggle to ensure consistent home reinforcement for literacy. This suggests limited home-school cooperation, potentially due to parental knowledge gaps or apathy, highlighting the need for school programs to boost parental support. Conversely, "Talk to parents about their child's reading development" had the lowest mean (3.06), implying basic communication exists but may lack depth for significant collaboration. This high difficulty impacts student literacy development.

Table 4

Level of Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Reading in terms of Limited Knowledge of Reading Instructions

Items	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a reading teacher, my difficulty in terms of the following is...</i>		
1. Apply effective reading strategies in my instruction.	3.17	Moderate Level
2. Identify the specific reading difficulties faced by my students.	3.28	Moderate Level
3. Teach phonemic awareness and phonics.	2.77	Moderate Level
4. Assess students' reading comprehension effectively.	2.90	Moderate Level
5. Implement differentiated reading strategies.	3.33	Moderate Level
6. Adapt reading instruction to meet students' individual needs.	3.30	Moderate Level
7. Select appropriate reading materials for different reading levels.	3.21	Moderate Level
8. Incorporate reading fluency exercises into my lessons.	2.91	Moderate Level
9. Apply evidence-based reading practices in my instruction.	3.22	Moderate Level
10. Monitor and evaluate students' reading progress effectively.	2.65	Moderate Level
Overall Mean	3.07	Moderate Level

Table 4 presents the level of difficulties teachers encounter in teaching reading under the domain of limited knowledge of reading instruction, revealing an overall mean of 3.07, interpreted as a moderate level of difficulty. The highest mean of 3.33 corresponds to difficulty implementing differentiated reading strategies, highlighting a key challenge in customizing instruction for diverse learners. This suggests educators may lack adequate training or resources to modify reading tasks effectively. The lowest mean, 2.65, relates to monitoring and evaluating students' reading progress, indicating teachers find ongoing assessment the least difficult, though still moderate.

Table 5

Level of Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Reading in terms of Student Diversity according to Age

Items	Younger		Older	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a reading teacher, my difficulty in terms of the following is...</i>				
1. Address the varying reading levels of students in my class.	3.54	High Level	3.33	Moderate Level
2. Adjust my reading instruction to accommodate students with different learning styles.	3.64	High Level	3.26	Moderate Level
3. Teach reading to students who speak different home languages.	3.39	Moderate Level	2.77	Moderate Level
4. Engage students with diverse cultural backgrounds in reading activities.	3.26	Moderate Level	3.01	Moderate Level
5. Provide individualized reading support to students with learning disabilities.	4.10	High Level	4.52	Very High Level
6. Teach reading to students with varying cognitive abilities.	3.61	High Level	3.31	Moderate Level
7. Motivate students from different socio-economic backgrounds to engage in reading.	3.43	Moderate Level	3.01	Moderate Level
8. Create inclusive reading activities that cater to the diversity of my students.	3.85	High Level	4.12	High Level
9. Manage large class sizes while addressing individual reading needs.	4.06	High Level	4.68	Very High Level
10. Implement differentiated reading instruction effectively.	3.69	High Level	3.31	Moderate Level
Overall Mean	3.66	High Level	3.53	High Level

Table 5 illustrates the level of difficulties teachers encounter in teaching reading, specifically concerning student diversity by age, showing overall high difficulty levels for both younger (mean = 3.66) and older (mean = 3.53) teachers. Among younger teachers, the most significant challenge is providing individualized reading support to students with learning disabilities (mean = 4.10), closely followed by managing large class sizes while addressing individual reading needs (mean = 4.06). For older teachers, the most pronounced difficulty lies in managing large class sizes while addressing individual reading needs (mean = 4.68), interpreted as a very high level of difficulty, suggesting that differentiated support becomes more complex as students age due to wider reading proficiencies. The lowest reported difficulty for both groups is teaching reading to students who speak different home languages, with means of 3.39 for younger and 2.77 for older teachers, both at a moderate level. These findings underscore that student diversity—encompassing age, cognitive ability, and socio-economic background—presents substantial instructional hurdles for reading teachers. This aligns with Abequibel et al. (2021) and Aguilar (2021), who highlight how increasing class diversity and workload strain affect instructional effectiveness.

Table 6

Level of Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Reading in terms of Limited Resources according to Age

Items	Younger		Older	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a reading teacher, my difficulty in terms of the following is...</i>				
1. Provide sufficient reading materials for my students due to limited resources.	3.83	High Level	3.51	High Level
2. Teach reading without access to updated textbooks and learning materials.	3.67	High Level	3.41	Moderate Level
3. Provide individualized reading instruction due to a shortage of supplementary materials.	4.00	High Level	3.78	High Level
4. Create engaging reading activities due to limited instructional tools.	3.74	High Level	3.32	Moderate Level
5. Organize reading programs due to inadequate funding.	4.00	High Level	3.56	High Level
6. Integrate technology into reading instruction due to a lack of devices.	3.76	High Level	3.46	Moderate Level
7. Develop students' reading skills due to the lack of library facilities.	3.77	High Level	3.29	Moderate Level

8. Have access to professional development opportunities related to reading instruction.	3.62	High Level	3.26	Moderate Level
9. Enhance students' reading comprehension due to a lack of visual and auditory aids.	3.74	High Level	3.24	Moderate Level
10. Implement reading interventions due to insufficient school resources.	3.86	High Level	3.44	Moderate Level
Overall Mean	3.80	High Level	3.43	Moderate Level

Table 6 presents teachers' difficulties in teaching reading with limited resources according to age, showing a high difficulty level for younger teachers (overall mean = 3.80) and a moderate level for older teachers (overall mean = 3.43). Younger teachers reported the highest difficulty (mean = 4.00) in providing individualized reading instruction due to a shortage of supplementary materials and organizing reading programs due to inadequate funding. Similarly, due to insufficient materials, older teachers' highest difficulty (mean = 3.78) was also in providing individualized instruction. These findings underscore the severe impact of limited resources on instructional quality, particularly for younger learners requiring more scaffolding. The lowest difficulty for younger teachers was accessing professional development (mean = 3.62), while for older teachers, it enhanced comprehension due to a lack of visual/auditory aids (mean = 3.24). These consistently moderate to high values confirm that systemic resource constraints affect all areas.

Table 7

Level of Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Reading in terms of Lack of Parental Involvement according to Age

Items	Younger		Older	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a reading teacher, my difficulty in terms of the following is...</i>				
1. Encourage parents to support their children's reading development at home.	3.77	High Level	3.24	Moderate Level
2. Communicate with parents about their child's reading progress.	3.42	Moderate Level	2.72	Moderate Level
3. Motivate parents to engage in school reading activities.	3.69	High Level	3.38	Moderate Level
4. Involve parents in creating a home reading environment.	3.81	High Level	3.52	High Level
5. Gain parental support for reading assignments.	3.73	High Level	3.34	Moderate Level
6. Get parents to participate in reading-focused parent-teacher meetings.	3.81	High Level	3.51	High Level
7. Let parents establish their child's reading routine to reinforce reading skills at home.	4.07	High Level	4.10	High Level
8. Collaborate with parents on improving their child's reading habits.	3.65	High Level	3.39	Moderate Level
9. Involve parents in developing individualized reading plans for their children.	3.99	High Level	4.12	High Level
10. Build partnerships with parents to improve students' reading outcomes.	3.57	High Level	3.26	Moderate Level
Overall Mean	3.75	High Level	3.46	Moderate Level

Table 7 presents the level of difficulties teachers encounter in teaching reading related to a lack of parental involvement, analyzed by the age of their students. Younger teachers reported a high overall mean difficulty of 3.75, while older teachers faced a moderate difficulty with an overall mean of 3.46. For both groups, the most significant challenge was getting parents to establish their child's reading routine at home (younger: mean = 4.07; older: mean = 4.10), highlighting a pervasive hurdle in sustaining consistent home reading habits. Older teachers also noted high difficulty (mean = 4.12) in involving parents in developing individualized reading plans. Conversely, communicating with parents about reading progress registered the lowest difficulty for younger teachers (mean = 3.42) and older (mean = 2.72), though it still falls within a moderate range. This data underscores that limited parental involvement creates substantial barriers to children's reading development. Consistent home routines and parental participation in individualized plans are crucial for literacy success, yet remain difficult to establish.

Table 8

Level of Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Reading in terms of Limited Knowledge of Reading Instructions according to Age

Items	Younger	Older
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<i>As a reading teacher, my difficulty in terms of the following is...</i>	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
1. Apply effective reading strategies in my instruction.	3.27	Moderate Level	3.07	Moderate Level
2. Identify the specific reading difficulties faced by my students.	3.37	Moderate Level	3.19	Moderate Level
3. Teach phonemic awareness and phonics.	2.92	Moderate Level	2.63	Moderate Level
4. Assess students' reading comprehension effectively.	3.06	Moderate Level	2.74	Moderate Level
5. Implement differentiated reading strategies.	3.44	Moderate Level	3.22	Moderate Level
6. Adapt reading instruction to meet students' individual needs.	3.38	Moderate Level	3.23	Moderate Level
7. Select appropriate reading materials for different reading levels.	3.29	Moderate Level	3.14	Moderate Level
8. Incorporate reading fluency exercises into my lessons.	3.04	Moderate Level	2.80	Moderate Level
9. Apply evidence-based reading practices in my instruction.	3.24	Moderate Level	3.20	Moderate Level
10. Monitor and evaluate students' reading progress effectively.	2.83	Moderate Level	2.48	Low Level
Overall Mean	3.18	Moderate Level	2.97	Moderate Level

Table 8 reveals the level of difficulties teachers face in teaching reading due to limited knowledge of reading instructions, showing a moderate overall mean for younger teachers (3.18) and slightly lower for older teachers (2.97). The highest difficulty for younger teachers is implementing differentiated reading strategies (mean = 3.44). For older teachers, adapting instruction to individual needs (mean = 3.23) and implementing differentiated strategies (mean = 3.22) also proved most challenging, highlighting a universal struggle to tailor instruction. Conversely, the lowest difficulty for younger teachers was monitoring and evaluating student reading progress (mean = 2.83, moderate), which was even less pronounced for older teachers (mean = 2.48, low). This pervasive moderate difficulty underscores that teacher knowledge and skills are fundamental to effective reading instruction.

Table 9

Level of Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Reading in terms of Student Diversity according to Length of Service

Items	Shorter		Longer	
<i>As a reading teacher, my difficulty in terms of the following is...</i>	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
1. Address the varying reading levels of students in my class.	3.51	High Level	3.36	Moderate Level
2. Adjust my reading instruction to accommodate students with different learning styles.	3.64	High Level	3.28	Moderate Level
3. Teach reading to students who speak different home languages.	3.44	Moderate Level	2.76	Moderate Level
4. Engage students with diverse cultural backgrounds in reading activities.	3.28	Moderate Level	3.01	Moderate Level
5. Provide individualized reading support to students with learning disabilities.	4.05	High Level	4.54	Very High Level
6. Teach reading to students with varying cognitive abilities.	3.63	High Level	3.31	Moderate Level
7. Motivate students from different socio-economic backgrounds to engage in reading.	3.44	Moderate Level	3.02	Moderate Level
8. Create inclusive reading activities that cater to the diversity of my students.	3.78	High Level	4.17	High Level
9. Manage large class sizes while addressing individual reading needs.	4.00	High Level	4.70	Very High Level
10. Implement differentiated reading instruction effectively.	3.64	High Level	3.37	Moderate Level
Overall Mean	3.64	High Level	3.55	High Level

Table 9 presents the level of difficulties teachers encounter in teaching reading related to student diversity,

categorized according to their length of service. Teachers with shorter service reported an overall mean difficulty of 3.64, interpreted as a high difficulty level. In comparison, those with longer service also reported a high level, albeit slightly lower at 3.55. For teachers with longer service, the highest difficulty was addressing student background and promoting engagement (Robosa et al., 2021). The lowest reported difficulty for teachers with longer service was teaching reading to students who speak different home languages (mean = 2.76, moderate difficulty). For teachers with shorter service, engaging students with diverse cultural backgrounds in reading activities scored the lowest difficulty (mean = 3.28), though still within the moderate range. This indicates that while linguistic diversity remains a factor, other aspects of student diversity, particularly those related to engagement and background, pose greater challenges, especially for more experienced educators. The consistent high difficulty across both groups underscores the pervasive nature of student diversity as a significant instructional hurdle in reading education, regardless of a teacher's experience level, emphasizing the continuous need for adaptive strategies and support.

Table 10

Level of Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Reading in terms of Limited Resources according to the Length of Service

Items	Shorter		Longer	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a reading teacher, my difficulty in terms of the following is...</i>				
1. Provide sufficient reading materials for my students due to limited resources.	3.80	High Level	3.55	High Level
2. Teach reading without access to updated textbooks and learning materials.	3.68	High Level	3.41	Moderate Level
3. Provide individualized reading instruction due to a shortage of supplementary materials.	4.00	High Level	3.79	High Level
4. Create engaging reading activities due to limited instructional tools.	3.73	High Level	3.35	Moderate Level
5. Organize reading programs due to inadequate funding.	3.96	High Level	3.61	High Level
6. Integrate technology into reading instruction due to a lack of devices.	3.76	High Level	3.47	Moderate Level
7. Develop students' reading skills due to the lack of library facilities.	3.81	High Level	3.28	Moderate Level
8. Have access to professional development opportunities related to reading instruction.	3.65	High Level	3.24	Moderate Level
9. Enhance students' reading comprehension due to a lack of visual and auditory aids.	3.75	High Level	3.26	Moderate Level
10. Implement reading interventions due to insufficient school resources.	3.79	High Level	3.52	High Level
Overall Mean	3.79	High Level	3.45	Moderate Level

Table 10 reveals teachers' difficulties in teaching reading due to limited resources, differentiated by their length of service. Teachers with shorter service reported a high overall mean difficulty (3.79), while those with longer service perceived challenges as moderate (3.45). For shorter-service teachers, the highest difficulty (mean = 4.00) was providing individualized reading instruction due to inadequate funding, a shortage of supplementary materials, and organizing reading programs. Longer-service teachers also found individualized instruction difficult (mean = 3.79). Accessing professional development was the lowest reported difficulty for both groups, though still moderate to high (longer service: mean = 3.24; shorter service: mean = 3.65). This disparity suggests experienced teachers may have developed coping strategies, yet the pervasive high difficulty for newer teachers highlights systemic resource allocation issues.

Table 11

Level of Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Reading in terms of Lack of Parental Involvement according to Length of Service

Items	Shorter		Longer	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a reading teacher, my difficulty in terms of the following is...</i>				
1. Encourage parents to support their children's reading development at home.	3.83	High Level	3.22	Moderate Level
2. Communicate with parents about their child's reading progress.	3.43	Moderate Level	2.74	Moderate Level

3. Motivate parents to engage in school reading activities.	3.71	High Level	3.37	Moderate Level
4. Involve parents in creating a home reading environment.	3.83	High Level	3.52	High Level
5. Gain parental support for reading assignments.	3.75	High Level	3.34	Moderate Level
6. Get parents to participate in reading-focused parent-teacher meetings.	3.79	High Level	3.54	High Level
7. Let parents establish their child's reading routine to reinforce reading skills at home.	4.04	High Level	4.13	High Level
8. Collaborate with parents on improving their child's reading habits.	3.66	High Level	3.39	Moderate Level
9. Involve parents in developing individualized reading plans for their children.	3.98	High Level	4.13	High Level
10. Build partnerships with parents to improve students' reading outcomes.	3.59	High Level	3.26	Moderate Level
Overall Mean	3.76	High Level	3.46	Moderate Level

Table 11 presents teachers' difficulties in teaching reading related to a lack of parental involvement, differentiated by length of service. Teachers with shorter service reported a high overall mean difficulty (3.76), while those with longer service reported a moderate level (3.46). For both groups, the most significant difficulty (mean = 4.13 for longer service; 4.04 for shorter service) was establishing a child's reading routine to reinforce skills at home and involving parents in individualized reading plans. This highlights a critical, consistent challenge in fostering home support regardless of experience. Conversely, communicating with parents about their child's reading progress was the lowest reported difficulty for both groups (longer service: mean = 2.74, moderate; shorter service: mean = 3.43, moderate), suggesting basic communication channels exist but may lack depth. This data underscores that parental involvement remains a significant obstacle, particularly for less experienced teachers.

Table 12

Level of Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Reading in terms of Limited Knowledge of Reading Instructions according to Length of Service

Items	Shorter		Longer	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a reading teacher, my difficulty in terms of the following is...</i>				
1. Apply effective reading strategies in my instruction.	3.24	Moderate Level	3.11	Moderate Level
2. Identify the specific reading difficulties faced by my students.	3.29	Moderate Level	3.27	Moderate Level
3. Teach phonemic awareness and phonics.	2.86	Moderate Level	2.69	Moderate Level
4. Assess students' reading comprehension effectively.	2.99	Moderate Level	2.82	Moderate Level
5. Implement differentiated reading strategies.	3.43	Moderate Level	3.24	Moderate Level
6. Adapt reading instruction to meet students' individual needs.	3.38	Moderate Level	3.24	Moderate Level
7. Select appropriate reading materials for different reading levels.	3.21	Moderate Level	3.21	Moderate Level
8. Incorporate reading fluency exercises into my lessons.	3.03	Moderate Level	2.82	Moderate Level
9. Apply evidence-based reading practices in my instruction.	3.21	Moderate Level	3.22	Moderate Level
10. Monitor and evaluate students' reading progress effectively.	2.85	Moderate Level	2.48	Low Level
Overall Mean	3.15	Moderate Level	3.01	Moderate Level

Table 12 reveals that teachers, regardless of their length of service, encounter moderate difficulty with limited knowledge of reading instruction (shorter service overall mean = 3.15; longer service overall mean = 3.01). Teachers with shorter service reported the most difficulty implementing differentiated reading strategies (mean = 3.43), indicating a challenge in tailoring instruction to diverse learners. Similarly, longer-service teachers found identifying specific reading difficulties (mean = 3.27) and implementing differentiated strategies (mean = 3.22) most challenging. Conversely, effectively monitoring and evaluating students' reading progress was the lowest difficulty

for longer-service teachers (mean = 2.48, low difficulty), suggesting developed assessment skills. However, newer teachers still reported moderate difficulty in this area (mean = 2.85). This moderate difficulty underscores gaps in applying consistent, practical strategies that persist across experience levels.

Table 13

Level of Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Reading in terms of Student Diversity according to the Number of Training Sessions Attended in Reading

Items	Few		Many	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a reading teacher, my difficulty in terms of the following is...</i>				
1. Address the varying reading levels of students in my class.	3.60	High Level	3.37	Moderate Level
2. Adjust my reading instruction to accommodate students with different learning styles.	3.70	High Level	3.35	Moderate Level
3. Teach reading to students who speak different home languages.	3.81	High Level	2.80	Moderate Level
4. Engage students with diverse cultural backgrounds in reading activities.	3.55	High Level	2.98	Moderate Level
5. Provide individualized reading support to students with learning disabilities.	3.89	High Level	4.47	High Level
6. Teach reading to students with varying cognitive abilities.	3.83	High Level	3.32	Moderate Level
7. Motivate students from different socio-economic backgrounds to engage in reading.	3.83	High Level	2.98	Moderate Level
8. Create inclusive reading activities that cater to the diversity of my students.	3.68	High Level	4.10	High Level
9. Manage large class sizes while addressing individual reading needs.	3.87	High Level	4.57	Very High Level
10. Implement differentiated reading instruction effectively.	3.70	High Level	3.42	Moderate Level
Overall Mean	3.75	High Level	3.53	High Level

Table 13 presents the level of difficulties teachers encounter in teaching reading, specifically related to student diversity, categorized by the number of training sessions attended in reading. The overall mean indicates that teachers with few training sessions face high difficulty (3.75), while those with much training also report a high difficulty level, though slightly lower (3.53). This suggests that student diversity remains a significant challenge regardless of formal training. For teachers with many training sessions, the most significant difficulty lies in managing large class sizes while addressing individual reading needs (mean = 4.57, very high), pointing to systemic issues that even well-trained teachers struggle with. For teachers with few training sessions, the highest difficulty is providing individualized reading support to students with learning disabilities (mean = 3.89). Conversely, the lowest difficulty for teachers with many trainings is teaching reading to students who speak different home languages (mean = 2.80, moderate), possibly due to better strategies.

Table 14

Level of Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Reading in terms of Limited Resources according to the Number of Training Sessions Attended in Reading

Items	Few		Many	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a reading teacher, my difficulty in terms of the following is...</i>				
1. Provide sufficient reading materials for my students due to limited resources.	4.00	High Level	3.54	High Level
2. Teach reading without access to updated textbooks and learning materials.	3.91	High Level	3.39	Moderate Level
3. Provide individualized reading instruction due to a shortage of supplementary materials.	4.02	High Level	3.83	High Level
4. Create engaging reading activities due to limited instructional tools.	3.85	High Level	3.40	Moderate Level
5. Organize reading programs due to inadequate funding.	4.00	High Level	3.69	High Level
6. Integrate technology into reading instruction due to a lack of devices.	3.89	High Level	3.50	High Level

7. Develop students' reading skills due to the lack of library facilities.	4.09	High Level	3.32	Moderate Level
8. Have access to professional development opportunities related to reading instruction.	3.87	High Level	3.27	Moderate Level
9. Enhance students' reading comprehension due to a lack of visual and auditory aids.	3.98	High Level	3.30	Moderate Level
10. Implement reading interventions due to insufficient school resources.	3.83	High Level	3.57	High Level
Overall Mean	3.94	High Level	3.48	Moderate Level

Table 14 shows the level of difficulties teachers encounter in teaching reading related to limited resources, categorized by the number of training sessions attended in reading. The overall mean indicates that teachers with few training sessions face a high difficulty level (3.94), whereas those with much training experience a moderate difficulty (3.48). This suggests that training somewhat alleviates these challenges, but difficulties remain significant across all teachers. For teachers with few training sessions, the most significant difficulty is developing students' reading skills due to the lack of library facilities (mean = 4.09, high), highlighting the critical role of accessible physical resources. For teachers with many trainings, the highest difficulty is providing individualized reading instruction due to a shortage of supplementary materials (mean = 3.83, high), underscoring that even trained teachers struggle with scarce resources. The lowest mean for teachers with much training is access to professional development opportunities (mean = 3.27, moderate), indicating ongoing challenges despite more training. The pervasive high difficulty from resource limitations severely compromises teachers' efforts to deliver effective, differentiated, and individualized reading instruction.

Table 15

Level of Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Reading in terms of Lack of Parental Involvement according to the Number of Training Sessions Attended in Reading

Items	Few		Many	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a reading teacher, my difficulty in terms of the following is...</i>				
1. Encourage parents to support their children's reading development at home.	4.09	High Level	3.28	Moderate Level
2. Communicate with parents about their child's reading progress.	3.87	High Level	2.76	Moderate Level
3. Motivate parents to engage in school reading activities.	3.83	High Level	3.42	Moderate Level
4. Involve parents in creating a home reading environment.	3.96	High Level	3.55	High Level
5. Gain parental support for reading assignments.	3.85	High Level	3.41	Moderate Level
6. Get parents to participate in reading-focused parent-teacher meetings.	3.91	High Level	3.56	High Level
7. Let parents establish their child's reading routine to reinforce reading skills at home.	4.02	High Level	4.11	High Level
8. Collaborate with parents on improving their child's reading habits.	3.77	High Level	3.43	Moderate Level
9. Involve parents in developing individualized reading plans for their children.	4.02	High Level	4.07	High Level
10. Build partnerships with parents to improve students' reading outcomes.	3.79	High Level	3.27	Moderate Level
Overall Mean	3.91	High Level	3.49	Moderate Level

Table 15 presents the level of difficulties teachers encounter in teaching reading related to lack of parental involvement, categorized by the number of training sessions attended in reading. The overall mean reveals that teachers with few training sessions experience a high difficulty level (3.91), while those with many face a moderate difficulty level (3.49). This indicates that while additional training can help, parental involvement remains a significant barrier. For teachers with few training sessions, the most challenging item is encouraging parents to support their children's reading development at home (mean = 4.09, high difficulty), reflecting a struggle to foster consistent parental engagement. For teachers with many training sessions, the highest difficulty is establishing their child's reading routine to reinforce reading skills at home (mean = 4.11, high level), suggesting even trained teachers struggle to motivate active parental participation.

Table 16

Level of Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Reading in terms of Limited Knowledge of Reading Instructions according to the Number of Training Sessions Attended in Reading

Items	Few		Many	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
<i>As a reading teacher, my difficulty in terms of the following is...</i>				
1. Apply effective reading strategies in my instruction.	3.36	Moderate Level	3.09	Moderate Level
2. Identify the specific reading difficulties faced by my students.	3.23	Moderate Level	3.29	Moderate Level
3. Teach phonemic awareness and phonics.	3.17	Moderate Level	2.62	Moderate Level
4. Assess students' reading comprehension effectively.	3.15	Moderate Level	2.80	Moderate Level
5. Implement differentiated reading strategies.	3.53	High Level	3.25	Moderate Level
6. Adapt reading instruction to meet students' individual needs.	3.38	Moderate Level	3.28	Moderate Level
7. Select appropriate reading materials for different reading levels.	3.32	Moderate Level	3.17	Moderate Level
8. Incorporate reading fluency exercises into my lessons.	3.23	Moderate Level	2.80	Moderate Level
9. Apply evidence-based reading practices in my instruction.	3.30	Moderate Level	3.19	Moderate Level
10. Monitor and evaluate students' reading progress effectively.	3.15	Moderate Level	2.46	Low Level
Overall Mean	3.28	Moderate Level	3.00	Moderate Level

Table 16 illustrates teachers' difficulties in teaching reading due to limited knowledge of reading instructions, categorized by the number of training sessions attended. The overall mean indicates a moderate difficulty for teachers with few training sessions (3.28) and those with many (3.00), suggesting challenges persist regardless of training frequency, though training slightly reduces them. Teachers with few training sessions found implementing differentiated reading strategies most difficult (mean = 3.53, high). For those with many trainings, identifying specific reading difficulties was slightly more challenging (mean = 3.29, moderate). Conversely, monitoring and evaluating students' reading progress was the least difficult for teachers with many training sessions (mean = 2.46, low), implying better assessment skills with more training.

Table 17

Comparative Analysis in the Level of Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Reading in terms of Student Diversity when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned Variables

Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	84	105.01	2309.00	0.000		Significant
	Older	90	71.16				
Length of Service	Shorter	80	104.61	2391.00	0.000	0.05	Significant
	Longer	94	72.92				
Number of Training Sessions Attended in Reading	Few	47	115.09	1688.00	0.000		Significant
	Many	127	77.29				

Table 17 illustrates the significant differences in the level of difficulties teachers encounter in teaching reading within student diversity when grouped and compared according to age, length of service, and the number of training sessions attended in reading. As can be gleaned from Table 17 in determining the significant difference in the degree of challenges encountered by teachers, results showed a computed Mann-Whitney U value of 2309.00 (age), 2391.00 (length of service), and 1688.00 (number of training sessions), all with a computed p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 significance level, interpreted as "significant." Therefore, when grouped by these variables, the

hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the level of difficulties teachers encounter in teaching reading regarding student diversity is rejected, implying that these demographic and professional characteristics significantly influence the challenges faced.

Table 18

Comparative Analysis in the Level of Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Reading in terms of Limited Resources when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned Variables

Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	84	96.23	3047.00	0.027	0.05	Significant
	Older	90	79.36				
Length of Service	Shorter	80	95.79	3096.50	0.045	0.05	Significant
	Longer	94	80.44				
Number of Training Sessions Attended in Reading	Few	47	108.39	2002.50	0.001	0.05	Significant
	Many	127	79.77				

Table 18 presents the significant differences in the level of difficulties teachers encounter in teaching reading, specifically regarding limited resources, when grouped and compared according to age, length of service, and the number of training sessions attended in reading. As can be gleaned from Table 18, in determining the significant difference in the degree of challenges encountered by teachers, results showed a computed Mann-Whitney U value of 3047.00 (age), 3096.50 (length of service), and 2002.50 (number of training sessions), with computed p-values of 0.027, 0.045, and 0.001, respectively. All these p-values are less than the 0.05 significance level, interpreted as "significant." Therefore, when grouped by these variables, the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the level of difficulties teachers encounter in teaching reading in terms of limited resources is rejected, implying that these demographic and professional characteristics significantly influence the challenges faced.

Table 19

Comparative Analysis in the Level of Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching Reading in terms of Lack of Parental Involvement when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned Variables

Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	84	98.59	2848.50	0.005	0.05	Significant
	Older	90	77.15				
Length of Service	Shorter	80	99.42	2806.50	0.004	0.05	Significant
	Longer	94	77.36				
Number of Training Sessions Attended in Reading	Few	47	111.51	1856.00	0.000	0.05	Significant
	Many	127	78.61				

Table 19 presents the statistical analysis of differences in the level of difficulties teachers encounter in teaching reading due to the lack of parental involvement when grouped and compared according to age, length of service, and number of training sessions attended in reading. As can be gleaned from Table 19, in determining the significant difference in the degree of challenges encountered by teachers, results showed a computed Mann-Whitney U value of 2848.50 (age), 2806.50 (length of service), and 1856.00 (number of training sessions), with computed p-values of 0.005, 0.004, and 0.000, respectively. All these p-values are less than the 0.05 significance level, interpreted as "significant." Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

Conclusions:

Teachers generally experience moderate difficulty teaching reading, with the greatest challenges arising from student

diversity, limited resources, and lack of parental involvement. Managing large class sizes, supporting students with learning disabilities, shortages of materials, inadequate funding, and limited parental support in home reading routines and individualized plans were the most pressing concerns, while difficulties with instructional knowledge were moderate and primarily related to differentiated strategies. Foundational skills such as phonemic awareness and progress monitoring were less problematic. Statistical analyses revealed that younger and less experienced teachers with fewer training sessions faced significantly higher challenges, particularly in diversity, resources, and parental engagement, underscoring the importance of experience and professional development. However, limited instructional knowledge was consistently challenging across all teacher profiles, suggesting systemic gaps in pedagogical preparation. To address these issues, the study recommends redesigning professional development to reflect classroom realities, reducing teacher-student ratios, strengthening systemic support, investing in instructional resources, promoting home literacy practices, and enhancing mentoring, induction, and coaching programs to equip both novice and experienced teachers to foster inclusive, effective reading instruction.

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