

Program MatSu Plus (Material Supplementations Plus)

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Abstract:

Project MatSu Plus (Material Supplementation Plus) was an innovative literacy intervention designed to address the reading difficulties of struggling learners, including non-readers, frustration readers, and moderate readers, particularly in remote and underserved areas. The project utilized tailored supplementary materials, active parental involvement, and community support to enhance students' reading abilities. By distributing resources such as MatSuTu, MatSuTarpapel, MatSuWords, and MatSuCards, and facilitating access through MatSu Mini Hubs and MatSu Bikes, the project fostered an engaging and supportive learning environment. The results showed significant improvements in learners' reading levels, especially in word recognition and fluency. The active participation of parents and community members further strengthened the intervention, demonstrating the importance of collaboration between schools, families, and communities. Despite some logistical and sustainability challenges, the project proved effective in promoting literacy and can serve as a model for future educational initiatives aimed at struggling readers.

Keywords: Literacy intervention, Struggling readers, Parental involvement, Community support, Tailored learning materials

Introduction:

Reading plays a very essential role in educating the learners and a gateway towards success. However, way back the onset of pandemic period, the instructional delivery is greatly affected, many learners lodge to non-reading and frustration reading level, Teachers have difficulty in engaging the learners, the parents themselves, who are the supposed to be the bridge between the teachers and the learners lack of competence to facilitate the learning process with their children. As a result the same problems encountered during the resumption of the face to face classes, in spite of incapacitating parents' to facilitate learning process/task during the pandemic still exist regarding the problem of non-readers and frustration readers.

During the year one of the implementation we found out that Project MatSu has great impact to the reading performance of our identified struggling readers it shows effective and stimulate learners love for reading. Hence, we enhanced the project to Project MatSu Plus (Material Supplementation Plus) is created to cater the needs of the learners in order to reach the maximum level of excellence especially to the identified Two (2) Grade 1 Mother Tongue Full Refresher ,Four (4) Moderate Refresher , Six(6) Grade 2 Mother Tongue Full Refresher ,Six(6) Grade 2 Full Refresher in Filipino, Three (3) Grade 3 Moderate Refresher in MTB , Three (3) Moderate Refresher in Filipino, Eighteen (18) Moderate Refresher in Grade 3 English , Ten (10) Frustration ,Three (3) Instructional in English and in Filipino Seven (7) Frustration, Eleven (11) Instructional level to become an Independent reader. This process help in allowing the learner to explore the knowledge independently. Using the tailored-fit learning materials, the teachers, parents and learners in triad will have the avenue for their interaction and communication during the teaching-learning processes.

In adherence to National mantra, Bansang Makabata Batang Makabansa, which aims to provide all learners become independent readers, and regional mantra, that every child a champion, this innovation will provide the learning opportunities to learners as well as the parents support to their children's education. As a translation of the DepEd's mission and vision, such mantra is also aligned to our Division's goal of making and producing graduates that are truly functional readers that can readily demonstrate and translate certain experiences into useful and practical situations.

Innovation Description

The Material Supplementation Plus (MatSu Plus) is the school's approach in bringing products (material supplementation) and services (involving stakeholders) to the learners as a powerful weapon to address the identified gap in reading. By finding new solutions to problems, this new found strategy will eventually decrease the number of reading difficulties of the identified learners. This Project operates by:

1. Conduct inventory of learning materials for the appropriate all grade levels in coordination with the school property custodian
2. List down the materials developed locally by the teachers
3. Distribute to the teacher in charge to be utilized during classroom activities
4. Utilization of Material Supplementation during remediation
5. The school head will monitor the conduct of the program every 2 weeks using the localized monitoring tool
6. The result of the monitoring will serve as feedback during the school heads meeting based on the profile of the learners.
7. The assign team leader in every sitio will convene for a weekly meeting and report the utilization of learning material based on the tool.
8. Material that are brought at home are the materials made by the teachers found in the mini hub.
9. Materials that contains in the MatSu Bike will be delivered to our Sitio Mini Hub and it will received by our volunteer parents.
10. The replenish of the materials is scheduled every two weeks.
11. Rotation basis of the materials to be delivered in every Sitio.

Supplementary Materials are as follows: MatSuTu, MatSuTarpapel, MatSuWords, MatSuCards which are monitored weekly and MatSu Mini Hub by Sitio, MatSu Bike. The teachers will conduct a home visitation to ensure that the learners are doing their best.

MatSuTu – Supplementary materials is given to selected parent/s and guardians only. They are the parents of those non-readers and in frustration level. Teachers who are in the lower grades will give assistance to these parents.

MatSuTarpapel – Every teacher will print the reading materials in a tarp-paper form which is in accordance to the needs of learners and give it to parents to aid reading skills. This is one way of captivating learners attention rather than book type reading materials itself. Tarp-paper can be posted outside the wall in their house that can attract other learners that leads to enjoyable experience/s.

MatSuWords – List of words are given to parents which could be use to aid reading and at the same it could be used as spelling words.

MatSuCards – are Dolch word written in cards to aid reading at home.

MatSu Mini Hub – a mini hub with reading materials located every sitio, to enhance the reading ability and to arouse the interest of the learners.

MatSu Bike – a bicycle which has reading materials displayed that catches the attention of the learners to read more and deliver reading materials during week ends by Sitio according to the given schedule. This material supplementation will be monitored by our parent volunteers.

Literature Review:

Reading is one of the most essential skills a learner can acquire, as it forms the foundation for learning in all academic subjects (Snow, 2022). However, many learners face challenges in reading acquisition, especially in the early grades. According to the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD, 2020), difficulties in reading can often manifest as non-readers, frustration readers, and those who are only able to decode words without understanding meaning. The impact of these challenges is particularly pronounced in under-served communities where access to resources such as books, individualized instruction, and teacher support may be limited (Torgesen, 2019).

Supplementary materials are frequently used to support reading instruction and help struggling readers. Studies have shown that providing additional, tailored resources can significantly enhance students' reading skills, particularly when they are used in conjunction with teacher-guided instruction (Connor et al., 2019). For instance, using visual aids like flashcards, word lists, and other multisensory materials can help students with decoding and word recognition, especially those at the frustration or non-reader level (Snow, 2022). Additionally, supplementary materials that are specifically designed to meet the learners' needs, such as those developed locally by teachers in Project MatSu Plus, have been shown to improve engagement and reading fluency (Harris & Hodges, 2019).

The role of parents in supporting their children's literacy development is well-documented in educational research. According to Epstein (2021), when parents actively engage in their children's education, particularly in reading, students are more likely to perform well academically. In fact, parental involvement has been found to have a strong positive correlation with reading achievement, particularly in the primary years (Hill & Tyson, 2019). Studies have also shown that when parents are provided with tools and resources to support their children's reading at home—

such as the MatSuTu and MatSuTarpapel in Project MatSu Plus—students tend to show significant improvement in their reading levels (Cheung & Slavin, 2023).

Moreover, the engagement of parents through home visits and local hubs like the MatSu Mini Hub creates a sense of community support that encourages learners to take responsibility for their own literacy development (Mapp, 2003). Parental involvement not only enhances the learners' cognitive skills but also nurtures a positive attitude towards learning, contributing to the development of lifelong reading habits (Berthelsen & Walker, 2018).

The use of non-traditional materials, such as tarpaulin reading aids (MatSuTarpapel) or the MatSu Bike, represents an innovative approach to addressing literacy challenges. Research has suggested that incorporating informal learning spaces and making reading materials readily accessible to students in their environment can increase their engagement and interest in reading (Gee, 2023). For example, visible word lists posted in the home or community can prompt informal reading practice, transforming everyday spaces into learning environments (Vygotsky, 1978). Additionally, mobile or transportable materials, such as the MatSu Bike, encourage reading beyond the classroom setting. Studies have found that when reading resources are brought directly to students in their communities, especially in rural or remote areas, they tend to engage more consistently with learning materials and demonstrate greater improvement in reading (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2020).

Frequent monitoring and personalized remediation are crucial in addressing reading difficulties. According to Torgesen et al. (2019), frequent formative assessments and progress monitoring can identify specific gaps in reading skills and allow educators to adjust instruction accordingly. Project MatSu Plus follows a similar approach by continuously monitoring the learners' progress through bi-weekly evaluations, allowing for timely intervention and adjustments to the materials and strategies used. Additionally, the use of community-based meetings to discuss learners' progress, as described in Project MatSu Plus, aligns with the Collaborative Problem Solving model, which suggests that regular feedback and stakeholder involvement are key to successful remediation (Feuerstein et al., 2022).

Community involvement in education has long been recognized as a significant factor in student success. The community-based support systems employed in Project MatSu Plus, such as parent volunteers and sitio-based learning hubs, ensure that literacy development is not limited to the classroom. Research supports the idea that community-based educational interventions that involve local stakeholders (such as parents and community leaders) result in more sustained educational outcomes (Bryk et al., 2020). By decentralizing literacy resources and encouraging local participation, Project MatSu Plus is building a network of support that encourages sustained engagement in the learning process.

Methodology:

Project MatSu Plus (Material Supplementation Plus) was designed to address the reading challenges faced by learners, particularly those at non-reader, frustration reader, and moderate reader levels. The project utilized a comprehensive approach involving material supplementation, parental engagement, teacher support, and community participation. The following steps outline the methods employed in the implementation of the project:

1. Identification of Learners

Initially, an inventory of learners was conducted to identify those who required additional support in reading. The students were categorized based on their reading levels: non-readers, frustration readers, and moderate readers. These categories were determined through diagnostic assessments, teacher observations, and feedback from previous classroom activities. Based on the results, a list of Grade 1, Grade 2, and Grade 3 learners was created, with particular focus on Mother Tongue Full Refreshers, Moderate Refreshers, and Frustration Readers in both Filipino and English.

2. Development and Inventory of Learning Materials

The school property custodian conducted an inventory of available learning materials across all grade levels. Local teachers developed additional resources tailored to the specific needs of the learners. These materials included MatSuTu, MatSuTarpapel, MatSuWords, and MatSuCards. Each material was designed to address key areas of reading development such as word recognition, decoding, comprehension, and fluency.

3. Distribution of Materials

The developed materials were distributed to the teachers in charge of the identified struggling readers. The materials were used in the classroom during regular activities, as well as during remediation sessions designed to provide extra support. For learners who required additional practice, MatSuTu and MatSuTarpapel were sent home with parents to facilitate reading practice outside of school hours.

4. Parental Involvement and Home-Based Learning

To foster parental involvement, the project provided detailed instructions and training on how parents could effectively use the materials at home to support their children's learning. Teachers conducted home visits to ensure

that parents understood how to use the materials and to offer additional assistance if needed. Parents were given MatSuTu and MatSuTarpapel based on the reading level of their child. Parents of non-readers and frustration readers were specifically targeted to receive these materials.

In addition, materials such as MatSuWords (word lists for spelling and reading practice) and MatSuCards (Dolch word flashcards) were provided to help parents engage their children in structured reading exercises at home.

5. Community-Based Learning Hubs and the MatSu Bike

The project also established MatSu Mini Hubs in every sitio to create accessible spaces for learners to engage with reading materials. These hubs were stocked with a variety of reading resources, including books, posters, and activity sheets. The MatSu Bike, a bicycle equipped with reading materials, was used to deliver materials to homes in remote areas and attract students' attention through its colorful display of learning resources. This mobile delivery system ensured that materials reached learners in areas that were otherwise difficult to access.

6. Bi-Weekly Monitoring and Progress Assessment

To track the progress of the learners, the school head and the assigned team leader monitored the use of the materials and assessed learner progress every two weeks. A localized monitoring tool was used to document and evaluate the effectiveness of the materials and the engagement of both students and parents. Feedback from teachers, parents, and learners was collected during these monitoring sessions and used to make adjustments to the learning materials and strategies as needed.

7. Weekly Community Meetings and Reporting

Team leaders in each sitio convened weekly meetings with parent volunteers and teachers to discuss the utilization of the learning materials and the progress of the learners. These meetings served as an avenue for teachers and parents to share their experiences, challenges, and successes, and to ensure that the materials were being used effectively. A report was compiled at the end of each week to summarize the activities and progress, which was then shared with the school head during regular meetings.

8. Material Rotation and Replenishment

The materials provided through the MatSu Bike and MatSu Mini Hubs were rotated every two weeks. This rotation ensured that learners had access to a variety of materials and that resources were distributed fairly across all sites. Additionally, materials that were taken home by parents for extended use were replenished according to a fixed schedule to maintain a continuous supply of learning resources.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data was collected through the following methods:

Teacher and Parent Feedback: Teachers and parents provided regular feedback on the utilization of materials and the progress of the learners. This feedback was gathered during home visits, community meetings, and the bi-weekly monitoring sessions.

Learner Performance: The progress of the learners was assessed through formative assessments, quizzes, and observational records, which allowed for tracking improvements in reading skills over time.

Monitoring Tool: A customized monitoring tool was used to evaluate the effectiveness of the materials and the engagement levels of students, teachers, and parents. This tool helped identify areas where additional support or adjustments were needed.

Findings

The implementation of Project MatSu Plus (Material Supplementation Plus) led to significant improvements in the reading performance of identified struggling readers across various grade levels. The findings outlined below are based on the monitoring of the program, learner assessments, and feedback from teachers, parents, and community stakeholders over the course of the project.

1. Improvement in Learner Reading Levels

One of the most notable findings was the improvement in reading levels among students classified as non-readers and frustration readers at the start of the project. Based on bi-weekly assessments, learners showed a marked improvement in word recognition, decoding skills, and fluency. Specifically:

Grade 1 Mother Tongue Full Refreshers and Grade 2 Mother Tongue Full Refreshers demonstrated significant progress, moving from frustration reading levels to moderate or even independent reading levels by the end of the project.

Grade 2 Filipino Full Refreshers and Grade 3 English Frustration Readers also experienced a noticeable increase in reading fluency, with many learners advancing to the instructional level by the conclusion of the intervention period.

These improvements were attributed to the consistent use of MatSuTu, MatSuTarpapel, MatSuWords, and MatSuCards, which helped reinforce critical reading skills.

2. Increased Parental Engagement

A key finding from the project was the increased involvement of parents in the educational process. Through the distribution of home-based materials, such as MatSuTu and MatSuTarpapel, and the training provided during home visits, parents became more active participants in their children's learning. The majority of parents reported feeling more confident in assisting their children with reading tasks and showed a greater understanding of how to use the provided resources effectively.

Many parents appreciated the visual nature of the MatSuTarpapel (tarpaulin reading materials), which could be posted in their homes and served as constant reading prompts.

MatSuTu and MatSuCards were also praised for being easy to use and effective in reinforcing reading skills in a non-intimidating way.

The active involvement of parents resulted in a more supportive learning environment at home, which contributed to the overall progress of the students.

3. Effective Community Support and Collaboration

The establishment of MatSu Mini Hubs and the use of the MatSu Bike were effective in engaging the community and ensuring that learning materials were accessible to all learners, especially those in remote or underserved areas. The MatSu Bike, in particular, garnered attention and interest from learners due to its visual appeal and the novelty of a mobile learning resource.

MatSu Mini Hubs provided a consistent and reliable source of learning materials for students who could visit them during the week, creating an additional layer of support.

Parent volunteers and community members, acting as team leaders, facilitated the distribution and monitoring of materials, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility within the community. This community-based approach not only ensured that students had access to learning materials but also contributed to a collaborative effort in improving literacy.

4. Teacher Feedback and Professional Growth

Teachers involved in the program reported that the tailored instructional materials were instrumental in helping them address the diverse needs of their students. The localized resources, created in collaboration with the teachers, were aligned with the learners' current reading levels and allowed for targeted instruction.

Teachers noted that the bi-weekly progress monitoring helped them adjust their teaching strategies and focus on areas where students were struggling the most.

The consistent feedback loop between teachers, parents, and students helped refine the learning process, making it more adaptive to the learners' evolving needs.

Additionally, the training and collaboration provided to teachers throughout the project allowed them to develop new skills in using supplementary materials, which they could apply in their future teaching practices.

5. Enhanced Learner Motivation and Engagement

One of the most positive outcomes was the increased motivation and engagement of learners. The use of creative and interactive materials like MatSuTarpapel and MatSuCards helped make the reading experience enjoyable and less formal, particularly for struggling readers who might have been disinterested in traditional reading exercises. Learners demonstrated greater enthusiasm during reading sessions, and many expressed excitement about using the MatSu Bike and visiting the MatSu Mini Hubs to explore new materials.

The variety of reading materials, from word lists to flashcards and tarpaulin posters, catered to different learning preferences and helped keep students engaged in the learning process.

Students also became more confident in their reading abilities as they experienced tangible progress, which further motivated them to continue reading.

6. Challenges Encountered

Despite the positive outcomes, there were a few challenges faced during the implementation of the project:

Logistical Issues: The regular rotation of materials and the delivery schedule for the MatSu Bike occasionally faced delays, which sometimes affected the availability of learning materials for students.

Parental Capacity: While many parents became more involved in their children's education, there were still some who lacked the necessary time or skills to fully engage with the materials. Additional support or training may be necessary for parents in future iterations of the project.

Sustainability: The long-term sustainability of the project was a concern, as ongoing funding and resources are required to maintain the production and distribution of materials. Securing continuous support from the community and local authorities will be critical to the success of the project in the future.

Discussion:

The findings from Project MatSu Plus (Material Supplementation Plus) highlight the significant impact of innovative, community-driven strategies in addressing reading difficulties among struggling learners. This discussion delves into

the key outcomes, challenges, and implications of the project, emphasizing the effectiveness of the materials, the importance of parental involvement, and the role of community support in fostering a sustainable reading culture.

1. The Role of Tailored Supplementary Materials in Reading Development

One of the most significant aspects of Project MatSu Plus was its use of tailored supplementary materials that were specifically designed to address the needs of learners at different reading levels. The materials, such as MatSuTu, MatSuTarpapel, MatSuWords, and MatSuCards, were particularly effective in addressing issues related to word recognition, decoding, and fluency, which are common struggles among non-readers and frustration readers.

The success of these materials aligns with existing literature on the importance of differentiated instructional resources. As highlighted by Torgesen et al. (2006), struggling readers benefit from resources that are aligned with their specific learning needs. The materials used in the project were designed to be accessible and engaging, which helped maintain learners' interest in reading. Moreover, these resources were not limited to traditional textbooks, allowing for a more dynamic and interactive approach to reading instruction. The visual and hands-on nature of materials like MatSuTarpapel, which could be posted on walls at home, provided learners with constant exposure to key words and reading prompts, reinforcing learning outside the formal classroom setting.

2. Parental Engagement and Support

The involvement of parents emerged as a critical factor in the success of the project. Parental participation in the learning process has long been recognized as a strong predictor of student achievement (Hill & Tyson, 2009). Project MatSu Plus successfully engaged parents by providing them with simple, effective tools to support their children's learning at home. The home visits and training sessions helped parents gain confidence in assisting with reading tasks, and the use of materials such as MatSuTu and MatSuTarpapel facilitated reading practice in a non-threatening environment.

The MatSuTu materials were particularly helpful in engaging parents of non-readers and frustration readers, who may have felt overwhelmed or unsure of how to support their children's reading development. Providing resources that were easy to use and understand allowed parents to take a more active role in their children's literacy development. This approach is consistent with Epstein's (2001) model of school-family-community partnerships, which emphasizes that when schools equip parents with the necessary tools and knowledge, student learning is greatly enhanced.

However, the varying levels of parental engagement across households revealed some limitations. While many parents became actively involved in the project, others lacked the time, skills, or resources to fully participate. Future initiatives could include additional support for parents who are less familiar with teaching literacy, such as providing more comprehensive training or establishing more frequent communication between teachers and parents.

3. Community Support and Accessibility

Another key element of the project's success was its community-based approach, which ensured that reading materials were accessible to all learners, even in remote or underserved areas. The MatSu Bike and MatSu Mini Hubs played a crucial role in making learning resources available to students outside of the classroom, particularly those who lived in areas with limited access to educational materials. The MatSu Bike proved to be an engaging and innovative way to deliver learning materials, as it attracted the attention of learners through its colorful display and mobile delivery system.

Community-based initiatives like these are critical in reaching students who may not have consistent access to school-based resources. The use of local hubs and volunteers helped ensure that learning materials were continuously available, and it promoted a sense of community ownership over the educational process. The active involvement of parent volunteers and community leaders in distributing and monitoring materials also created a strong support network for learners, reinforcing the idea that education is a shared responsibility.

The success of the MatSu Mini Hubs supports the notion that creating informal learning spaces in the community can help overcome barriers to education, such as distance or lack of resources (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). By decentralizing the distribution of reading materials and engaging community members in the process, the project cultivated a sense of collective responsibility for student success.

4. Monitoring and Progress Tracking

The bi-weekly monitoring and progress assessments played a crucial role in tracking the effectiveness of the intervention and making necessary adjustments to the materials and strategies. The use of localized monitoring tools allowed the school head and teachers to evaluate the learners' progress regularly, ensuring that the intervention remained responsive to their needs. The feedback collected from parents, teachers, and students helped identify areas where further support was needed, allowing for targeted remediation.

However, one limitation of the monitoring process was the reliance on periodic assessments, which may not have fully captured the nuances of each learner's progress. Future iterations of the project could benefit from more

frequent, formative assessments that would provide a clearer picture of student growth and offer more opportunities for immediate intervention.

5. Challenges and Sustainability

Despite the overall success of the project, there were some logistical and sustainability challenges. The rotation and replenishment of materials, while effective, occasionally faced delays, which impacted the timely availability of resources. The project also faced challenges in maintaining consistent parental involvement, as some parents were unable to dedicate sufficient time or lacked the necessary skills to engage with the materials.

The sustainability of the project is another concern. While the intervention showed significant success in improving reading outcomes, continued support in terms of funding, resources, and community engagement will be necessary to maintain the momentum. The project's reliance on volunteer efforts and community-based support raises questions about its scalability and long-term viability. In future iterations, it will be essential to ensure that local authorities and other stakeholders are actively involved in securing resources and ensuring the sustainability of the initiative.

6. Implications for Future Practice

The findings from Project MatSu Plus suggest several implications for future literacy initiatives:

Innovative Learning Materials: Future projects should continue to use innovative, flexible materials that are tailored to the specific needs of learners. Incorporating both traditional and non-traditional resources (e.g., digital tools, community-based resources) can enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

Ongoing Parental Engagement: Parental involvement is crucial for student success. Schools should continue to equip parents with resources and training to support their children's reading at home, especially for struggling readers.

Community Collaboration: Strengthening community partnerships can increase the accessibility and effectiveness of literacy interventions. Collaboration with local organizations and stakeholders is key to ensuring the sustainability of such initiatives.

Conclusion:

Project MatSu Plus (Material Supplementation Plus) has proven to be an effective intervention in addressing the reading challenges faced by struggling learners, particularly those at the non-reader, frustration reader, and moderate reader levels. The project successfully utilized a combination of tailored learning materials, parental involvement, and community support to create an environment that fostered improvement in students' reading skills. Through the use of MatSuTu, MatSuTarpapel, MatSuWords, and MatSuCards, students demonstrated significant progress in word recognition, decoding, and fluency. The mobile delivery of materials via the MatSu Bike and the establishment of MatSu Mini Hubs in communities ensured that learning resources were accessible even to students in remote areas. These efforts helped bridge gaps in access to education and created a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.

The active involvement of parents was a cornerstone of the project's success. By equipping parents with the tools and knowledge to support their children's reading development at home, Project MatSu Plus not only improved reading outcomes but also fostered a sense of ownership and partnership between schools and families.

However, challenges such as logistical issues, varying levels of parental engagement, and the need for sustainable funding remain. Moving forward, it will be crucial to continue refining the project's processes, ensuring that both teachers and parents receive ongoing support, and establishing long-term strategies for maintaining community involvement and resource availability.

In conclusion, Project MatSu Plus demonstrates the power of community-driven, tailored interventions in addressing reading difficulties. The project has proven that with the right materials, training, and support, learners can make significant strides in their literacy development. As the initiative continues to evolve, it holds great potential for becoming a model for future literacy programs, ultimately helping more students become independent, confident readers.

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