READING INSTRUCTION PRACTICES OF INTERMEDIATE TEACHERS AND COMPREHENSION LEVELS OF LEARNERS: BASIS FOR AN ENHANCED READING INSTRUCTION PROGRAM

Isagani Costales Canonizado, PhD
Sto. Niño Elementary School, San Felipe, Zambales, Philippines

ABSTRACT

This study explored the reading instruction practices of intermediate teachers and the comprehension levels of their learners in the San Felipe District, Schools Division of Zambales, during the School Year 2024–2025. It aimed to determine how these practices contributed to learners' comprehension levels and to develop an enhanced reading instruction program based on the findings. Using a descriptive-correlational design, data were gathered from 48 intermediate teachers selected through simple random sampling. A validated researcher-designed questionnaire with high reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = .996 for reading instruction practices; .990 for comprehension levels) was employed. Respondents were predominantly female, aged 40–49, teaching Grade 5, holding Teacher I positions, with 10–19 years of service, and mostly master's degree holders. The findings revealed that reading instruction practices—including reading plans, resources, strategies, and assessment—were moderately practiced. Learners exhibited proficient comprehension levels across literal, inferential, critical, and creative domains. While significant differences in reading instruction practices were noted based on teaching position and highest educational attainment, no significant differences were observed concerning age, gender, teaching assignment, or length of service. A very high positive significant correlation was found between teachers' reading instruction practices and learners' comprehension levels. The study concluded that improved reading instruction practices strongly align with enhanced learner comprehension. An enhanced reading instruction program was designed to address the identified gaps and further elevate both teaching practices and learners' proficiency. This program offers valuable insights for teachers and stakeholders in strengthening reading instruction to achieve better learning outcomes.

Keywords: Reading Instruction Practices, Intermediate Teachers, Comprehension Levels, Intermediate Learners, Enhanced Reading Instruction Program.

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's educational landscape, the effectiveness of reading instruction is pivotal to learners' academic success and future opportunities. Despite significant advancements in teaching methods and resources, many intermediate learners continue to struggle with reading comprehension, adversely impacting their overall academic performance and future prospects (Brazee, 2024). This challenge is particularly pronounced in the Philippines, where intermediate learners often face difficulties in understanding and interpreting texts. These difficulties lead to inconsistent academic outcomes and hinder their ability to excel across various subjects (Sari, 2024).

Research highlighted the global concern of poor reading comprehension and its broader implications on learners' educational trajectories and lifelong learning (Yapp, De Graaff, & Van Den Bergh, 2021). In the San Felipe District of the Schools Division of Zambales, varying

instructional practices among teachers exacerbated the problem, resulting in uneven learning experiences and outcomes (Kehoe & McGinty, 2023). Effective reading instruction in this context was crucial as it directly influenced learners' engagement and academic success.

Studies on instructional practices revealed a range of strategies and their impacts on reading comprehension. For instance, Sari (2024) demonstrated that the Numbered Head Together technique significantly improved reading comprehension among seventh-grade learners, as indicated by enhanced pre-test and post-test scores and positive feedback. Similarly, Kehoe and McGinty (2023) emphasized the importance of teachers' knowledge and self-efficacy in reading instruction. Their research found that despite strong self-efficacy beliefs, there was a discrepancy between teachers' theoretical knowledge and their actual instructional practices, leading to varied reading comprehension outcomes. This underscored the necessity for professional development to align theoretical knowledge with practical application.

Tegmark, Vinterek, Alatalo, and Winberg (2024) investigated instructional practices in Swedish classrooms and found that effective reading instruction was linked to fulfilling learners' needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy. Their findings highlighted the variability in instructional practices and its impact on reading engagement. Yapp et al. (2021) explored explicit L2 reading strategy instruction for higher education learners, demonstrating that targeted interventions significantly improved reading comprehension, particularly for learners from vocational backgrounds. This supported the need for specific strategies to enhance reading skills.

Furthermore, Brazee (2024) found that professional development tailored to the needs of English Learners (ELs) could have enhanced reading instruction and assessment practices. These studies collectively underscored the importance of targeted instructional strategies and professional development in improving reading comprehension across various educational contexts.

This study aimed to address the inconsistencies in reading instruction and enhanced teaching practices that supported learners' comprehension levels within the San Felipe District. By examining current instructional methods and their effectiveness, this research sought to identify gaps and proposed a tailored reading instruction program to better meet the needs of intermediate learners in this local educational context. The focus on the San Felipe District bridged the gap between current practices and effective reading instruction, contributing to improved reading comprehension and overall academic performance (Sari, 2024; Kehoe & McGinty, 2023; Tegmark et al., 2024; Yapp et al., 2021; Brazee, 2024).

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study aimed to determine the reading instruction practices of intermediate teachers and the comprehension levels of their learners in San Felipe District, Schools Division of Zambales, during the School Year 2024-2025.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. How may the profile of the respondents be described in terms of:

    1.1. age;

    1.2. gender;

    1.3. teaching assignment;

    1.4. teaching position;

    1.5. length of service; and

    1.6. highest educational attainment?

2. How may the reading instruction practices of the respondents be described in terms of:

2.1. reading plans;

2.2. reading resources;

2.3. reading strategies; and

2.4. reading assessment?

3. As perceived by the respondents, how may the comprehension levels of intermediate learners be described in terms of:

3.1. literal comprehension;

3.2. inferential comprehension;

3.3. critical comprehension; and

3.4. creative comprehension?

4. Is there a significant difference between the reading instruction practices of the respondents when grouped accordingly to their profile?

5. Is there a significant difference between the reading instruction practices of the respondents and their perceptions of their learners' comprehension levels?

6. What enhanced reading instruction program can be proposed to improve the reading instruction practices of intermediate teachers and comprehension levels of their learners?

3. METHODS AND MATERIALS

This study aimed to determine the reading instruction practices of intermediate teachers and the comprehension levels of their learners in San Felipe District, Schools Division of Zambales, during the School Year 2024-2025. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed, with data collected, classified, summarized, and analyzed using percentages and means. The study involved 48 intermediate teachers, selected through simple random sampling to ensure equal representation of the population. A researcher-designed questionnaire served as the primary data collection tool, targeting dimensions of reading instruction practices and comprehension levels. The instrument demonstrated excellent reliability, as confirmed by Cronbach's Alpha values for reading instruction practices ($\alpha = 0.996$) and learners' comprehension levels ($\alpha = 0.990$). Statistical analyses, including the Spearman Rho Correlation Coefficient were used to test the study's hypotheses.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS
4.1. Profile of the Respondents
4.1.1. Age

Table 1 presented the profile of the respondents in terms of their age. The table showed that the majority of the respondents were aged 40–49 years old, comprising 20 individuals or 41.67% of the sample, followed by those aged 30–39 years old with 12 respondents or 25.00%. Meanwhile, respondents aged 50–59 years old accounted for 18.75% (9 individuals), and the least represented group was 20–29 years old, with 7 respondents or 14.58%; this indicated a workforce predominantly composed of middle-aged individuals.

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents in terms of Age

Age	f	%
20-29 years old	7	14.58
30-39 years old	12	25.00
40-49 years old	20	41.67
50-59 years old	9	18.75
Total	**48**	**100.00**

These findings implied that the study involved respondents who likely had substantial professional experience, given that a significant proportion belonged to age groups commonly associated with career maturity. This could have influenced their responses, particularly in relation to age-related perspectives or expertise. Jeong (2024) similarly emphasized the significant role of middle-aged individuals in shaping the outcomes of educational research, aligning with the present study's findings on the dominance of this age group.

4.1.2. Gender

Table 2 presented the profile of the respondents in terms of their gender. The table showed that the majority of the respondents were female, comprising 34 individuals or 70.83% of the sample, while males accounted for 10 respondents or 20.83%. Respondents identifying as LGBTQIA+ made up the smallest group, with 4 individuals or 8.33%, indicating that the respondents were predominantly female.

Table 2. Profile of the Respondents in terms of Gender

Gender	f	%
Male	10	20.83
Female	34	70.83
LGBTQIA+	4	8.33
Total	**48**	**100.00**

These findings implied that the study had a strong representation of female participants, which might have influenced the overall trends or perspectives presented in the data. The inclusion of LGBTQIA+ respondents highlighted the study's inclusivity and recognition of diverse gender identities. Mujtaba (2023) similarly underscored the significant participation of females in educational research, aligning with the present study's findings of a predominantly female respondent profile.

4.1.3. Teaching Assignment

Table 3 presented the profile of the respondents in terms of their teaching assignment. The table showed that most respondents were teaching Grade 5, accounting for 19 individuals or 39.58% of the sample. Respondents teaching Grade 4 followed with 15 individuals or 31.25%, and those teaching Grade 6 comprised 14 individuals or 29.17%. This distribution indicated a balanced representation across the different grade levels, suggesting a varied and well-distributed teaching experience among the respondents.

Table 3. Profile of the Respondents in terms of Teaching Assignment

Teaching Assignment	f	%
Grade 4	15	31.25
Grade 5	19	39.58
Grade 6	14	29.17
Total	**48**	**100.00**

These findings implied that the study captured a range of teaching experiences across different grade levels, which could provide insights into the diverse challenges and strategies employed at each stage of education. This diversity in teaching assignments might also contribute to a broader understanding of educational practices within the context of primary education. Diaz-Lozano (2023) similarly highlighted the importance of understanding varied teaching contexts, aligning with the present study's findings of a well-rounded sample across different grade levels.

4.1.4. Teaching Position

Table 4 presented the profile of the respondents in terms of their teaching position. The table showed that the largest group of respondents were Teacher I, comprising 17 individuals or 35.42% of the sample. Teacher III followed with 13 respondents or 27.08%, and Teacher II made up 12 respondents or 25.00%. Master Teacher I and Master Teacher II were the smallest groups, each with 3 individuals or 6.25%, reflecting a distribution that indicates a wide range of teaching experience among the respondents.

Table 4. Profile of the Respondents in terms of Teaching Position

Teaching Position	f	%
Teacher I	17	35.42
Teacher II	12	25.00
Teacher III	13	27.08
Master Teacher I	3	6.25
Master Teacher II	3	6.25
Total	**48**	**100.00**

These findings implied that the study included a representative mix of teaching positions, from entry-level to higher leadership roles. This diversity could offer insights into various levels of responsibilities and challenges faced by teachers within the primary education system. Wang (2024) similarly recognized the importance of understanding different teaching roles and their impact on educational outcomes, which aligns with the present study's findings on a range of teaching positions.

4.1.5. Length of Service

Table 5 presented the profile of the respondents in terms of their length of service. The table showed that the majority of the respondents had 10-19 years of service, comprising 18 individuals or 37.50% of the sample. Respondents with 0-9 years of experience followed with 14 individuals or 29.17%, while those with 20-29 years of experience made up 5 individuals or 31.25%. The group with 30 years and above was the smallest, with only 1 respondent or 2.08%,

indicating a distribution that reflects varying levels of professional experience among the respondents.

Table 5. Profile of the Respondents in terms of Length of Service

Length of Service	f	%
0-9 years	14	29.17
10-19 years	18	37.50
20-29 years	5	31.25
30 years and above	1	2.08
Total	**48**	**100.00**

These findings implied that the study captured a range of teaching tenures, which could provide insights into the impact of experience on teaching practices and professional development. The inclusion of both early-career and more seasoned teachers offered a comprehensive view of the factors influencing educational practices. Maryani, Arafat, and Setiawan (2022) similarly addressed the significance of tenure in shaping educational perspectives, aligning with the present study's findings on the diverse lengths of service among respondents.

4.1.6. Highest Educational Attainment

Table 6 presented the profile of the respondents in terms of their highest educational attainment. The table showed that the largest group of respondents were Master's Graduates, comprising 19 individuals or 39.58% of the sample. Respondents with Master's units followed with 15 individuals or 31.25%, while those who were Education Graduates made up 7 individuals or 14.58%. The group with Doctorate units was smaller, with 3 respondents or 6.25%, and Doctorate Graduates were the smallest, comprising 4 individuals or 8.31%, reflecting a varied level of academic achievement among the respondents.

Table 6. Profile of the Respondents in terms of Highest Educational Attainment

Highest Educational Attainment	f	%
Education Graduate	7	14.58
With Master's units	15	31.25
Master's Graduate	19	39.58
with Doctorate units	3	6.25
Doctorate Graduate	4	8.31
Total	**48**	**100.00**

These findings implied that the study had a broad spectrum of educational qualifications among its respondents, which could influence the perspectives and depth of knowledge reflected in the data. The inclusion of respondents with varying levels of educational attainment allowed for a more nuanced analysis of the relationship between educational background and professional practices. Stoffberg, Ferreira, and Twum-Darko (2023) similarly explored the correlation between educational qualifications and professional expertise, aligning with the present study's findings on the diverse educational backgrounds of respondents.

4.2. Reading Instruction Practices

4.2.1. Reading Plans

Table 7 presents the mean and standard deviations of the reading instruction practices of the respondents in terms of reading plans. The ranges of the mean (M) showed that the practices were moderately practiced, with values ranging from 2.79 to 3.02. The standard deviation (SD) ranged from .772 to .956, indicating variability in how these practices were implemented. The general mean was 2.92, which is interpreted as moderately practiced, suggesting a consistent application of reading plans across the respondents. The general standard deviation of .793 reflects a moderate level of agreement among respondents regarding their reading instruction practices.

Table 7. Mean and Interpretations of the Reading Instruction Practices of the Respondents in terms of Reading Plans

Indicator	M	Interpretation	SD
1. I identify the specific reading objectives that align with my learners' comprehension levels.	3.02	Moderately Practiced	.838
2. I select diverse reading materials that match the reading interests and abilities of my learners.	2.96	Moderately Practiced	.874
3. I incorporate activities that promote both silent and oral reading to develop fluency and comprehension.	2.96	Moderately Practiced	.898
4. I prepare a weekly reading plan that includes a balance of fiction and non-fiction texts.	2.81	Moderately Practiced	.816
5. I design reading tasks that encourage learners to predict, summarize, and ask questions about the text.	2.96	Moderately Practiced	.849
6. I outline clear steps for guided reading sessions to support learners who need extra help.	2.79	Moderately Practiced	.898
7. I create a variety of post-reading activities, such as discussions, role-plays, and reflections, to reinforce understanding.	2.92	Moderately Practiced	.821
8. I integrate vocabulary development strategies into reading plans to enhance comprehension.	2.94	Moderately Practiced	.861
9. I adjust my reading plans based on the progress and feedback on my learners to address their needs.	2.85	Moderately Practiced	.772
10. I include opportunities for peer reading and group discussions to foster collaborative learning and critical thinking.	2.98	Moderately Practiced	.956
General Mean Rating	**2.92**	**Moderately Practiced**	**.793**

The indicator with the highest mean, "I incorporate activities that promote both silent and oral reading to develop fluency and comprehension" (M = 2.96), suggests a focus on enhancing reading skills through diverse reading activities, indicating that respondents were moderately effective in promoting a balanced approach to reading instruction. The findings of Barends and Reddy (2024) align with the present study, showing similar moderate levels of practice in reading instruction among respondents.

4.2.2. Reading Resources

Table 8 presents the mean and standard deviations of the reading instruction practices of the respondents in terms of reading resources. The ranges of the mean (M) indicated that the practices were moderately practiced, with values ranging from 2.79 to 3.02. The standard deviation (SD) ranged from .812 to .932, suggesting variability in the implementation of these practices. The general mean was 2.90, which is interpreted as moderately practiced, indicating a consistent application of reading resources across the respondents. The general standard deviation of .795 reflects a moderate level of agreement among respondents about their reading instruction practices.

Table 8. Mean and Interpretations of the Reading Instruction Practices of the Respondents in terms of Reading Resources

Indicator	M	Interpretation	SD
1. I choose age-appropriate books and materials that cater to different reading levels and interests of learners.	2.92	Moderately Practiced	.895
2. I provide access to a variety of reading materials, including stories, poems, informational texts, and digital content.	2.94	Moderately Practiced	.932
3. I ensure that reading resources reflect diverse cultures and perspectives to promote inclusivity.	2.98	Moderately Practiced	.838
4. I utilize interactive resources such as audio books and digital readers to engage learners with different learning styles.	2.79	Moderately Practiced	.898
5. I supplement textbooks with additional resources like magazines, newspapers, and graphic novels to make reading more engaging.	2.92	Moderately Practiced	.919
6. I organize the reading corner or library to make it easy for learners to find and select books that interest them.	2.81	Moderately Practiced	.891
7. I prepare reading kits that include visual aids, word lists, and comprehension questions to enhance understanding.	3.02	Moderately Practiced	.812

8. I incorporate multimedia resources like videos and interactive stories to support comprehension and vocabulary development.	2.92	Moderately Practiced	.895
9. I evaluate the quality and relevance of reading resources regularly to ensure they meet the instructional needs of my learners.	2.90	Moderately Practiced	.831
10. I encourage learners to bring and share their favorite books to build a community of readers in the classroom.	2.83	Moderately Practiced	.907
General Mean Rating	**2.90**	**Moderately Practiced**	**.795**

The indicator with the highest mean, "I prepare reading kits that include visual aids, word lists, and comprehension questions to enhance understanding" (M = 3.02), implies a focus on providing comprehensive and engaging reading resources, indicating that respondents were moderately effective in enhancing learners' reading comprehension. The findings of Widiati, Sharif, Hanifiyah, and Nindya (2023) align with the present study, showing similar moderate levels of practice in reading instruction among respondents.

4.2.3. Reading Strategies

Table 9 presents the mean and standard deviations of the reading instruction practices of the respondents in terms of reading strategies. The ranges of the mean (M) showed that the practices were moderately practiced, with values ranging from 2.88 to 3.00. The standard deviation (SD) ranged from .810 to .911, indicating variability in the implementation of these strategies. The general mean was 2.95, which is interpreted as moderately practiced, suggesting a consistent application of reading strategies across the respondents. The general standard deviation of .817 reflects a moderate level of agreement among respondents regarding their reading instruction practices.

Table 9. Mean and Interpretations of the Reading Instruction Practices of the Respondents in terms of Reading Strategies

Indicator	M	Interpretation	SD
1. I use questioning techniques before, during, and after reading to enhance comprehension and critical thinking.	2.98	Moderately Practiced	.887
2. I apply think-aloud strategies to model how to approach and understand complex texts.	2.88	Moderately Practiced	.866
3. I teach learners to use context clues to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases.	3.00	Moderately Practiced	.851
4. I encourage learners to summarize the main ideas and details of the text	2.98	Moderately Practiced	.911

after reading to reinforce understanding.			
5. I guide learners in making connections between the text and their own experiences, other texts, and the world around them.	2.98	Moderately Practiced	.887
6. I implement graphic organizers, such as story maps and Venn diagrams, to help learners organize information and ideas from the text.	2.94	Moderately Practiced	.909
7. I foster prediction skills by asking learners to anticipate wat will happen next in the story or text.	2.94	Moderately Practiced	.810
8. I practice repeated reading of short passages to improve learners' fluency and confidence in reading.	2.90	Moderately Practiced	.905
9. I integrate cooperative learning strategies, such as paired reading and group discussions, to support collaborative comprehension.	2.94	Moderately Practiced	.836
10. I provide opportunities for learners to visualize and create mental images while reading to enhance understanding and retention.	2.96	Moderately Practiced	.874
General Mean Rating	**2.95**	**Moderately Practiced**	**.817**

The indicator with the highest mean, "I teach learners to use context clues to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases" (M = 3.00), suggests an effective strategy for vocabulary development and comprehension, indicating that respondents were moderately effective in enhancing learners' reading skills. The findings of Zulianti and Hastomo (2022) align with the present study, showing similar moderate levels of practice in reading instruction among respondents.

4.2.4. Reading Assessment

Table 10 presents the mean and standard deviations of the reading instruction practices of the respondents in terms of reading assessment. The ranges of the mean (M) indicated that the practices were moderately practiced, with values ranging from 2.85 to 3.02. The standard deviation (SD) ranged from .799 to .887, suggesting variability in the implementation of these assessment practices. The general mean was 2.92, which is interpreted as moderately practiced, indicating a consistent approach to reading assessment across the respondents. The general standard deviation of .785 reflects a moderate level of agreement among respondents regarding their reading instruction practices.

Table 10. Mean and Interpretations of the Reading Instruction Practices of the Respondents in terms of Reading Assessment

Indicator	M	Interpretation	SD
1. I assess learners' reading comprehension through a variety of methods, such as quizzes, oral questioning, and written summaries.	3.02	Moderately Practiced	.887
2. I provide regular feedback on reading assessments to help learners understand their strengths and areas for improvement.	2.92	Moderately Practiced	.846
3. I use running records to monitor learners' reading fluency, accuracy, and expression over time.	2.96	Moderately Practiced	.824
4. I design comprehension questions that range from literal to inferential to evaluate different levels of understanding.	2.92	Moderately Practiced	.871
5. I incorporate peer and self-assessment activities to encourage learners to reflect on their reading progress.	2.90	Moderately Practiced	.831
6. I conduct informal assessments, such as observation and anecdotal notes, to gauge learners' reading behaviors and strategies.	2.94	Moderately Practiced	.861
7. I create rubrics that clearly outline the criteria for successful reading performance, including comprehension and fluency.	2.94	Moderately Practiced	.810
8. I administer diagnostic tests at the beginning of the school year to identify the reading levels and needs of each learner.	2.85	Moderately Practiced	.875
9. I use cloze tests to assess learners' ability to understand context and infer missing information from a text.	2.85	Moderately Practiced	.799
10. I analyze assessment data to tailor my reading instruction to meet the diverse needs and abilities of my learners.	2.92	Moderately Practiced	.846
General Mean Rating	**2.92**	**Moderately Practiced**	**.785**

The indicator with the highest mean, "I assess learners' reading comprehension through a variety of methods, such as quizzes, oral questioning, and written summaries" (M = 3.02), implies a comprehensive approach to reading assessment, suggesting that respondents were moderately

effective in evaluating learners' reading skills. The findings of Wanna (2022) align with the present study, showing similar moderate levels of practice in reading instruction among respondents.

4.3. Perceived Comprehension Levels of Learners
4.3.1. Literal Comprehension

Table 11 presents the mean and standard deviations of the perceived comprehension levels of learners by the respondents in terms of literal comprehension. The ranges of the mean (M) indicated that the comprehension levels were at the proficient level, with values ranging from 2.54 to 2.73. The standard deviation (SD) ranged from .874 to .962, suggesting variability in the perceived comprehension levels. The general mean was 2.66, which is interpreted as a proficient level of comprehension, indicating that respondents perceived their learners to have a moderate to high ability in identifying main ideas, recalling facts, recognizing sequences, and other literal comprehension tasks.

Table 11. Mean and Interpretations of the Perceived Comprehension Levels of Learners by the Respondents in terms of Literal Comprehension

Indicator	M	Interpretation	SD
1. My learners identify the main idea and supporting details from a given text.	2.54	Proficient Level	.874
2. My learners recall specific facts, events, and characters from stories or informational texts.	2.69	Proficient Level	.949
3. My learners recognize the sequence of events in a story, such as what happened first, next, and last.	2.73	Proficient Level	.917
4. My learners locate information in a text by using headings, subheadings, and keywords.	2.58	Proficient Level	.895
5. My learners state the meaning of words and phrases based on their use in the text.	2.65	Proficient Level	.911
6. My learners answer questions that require them to provide direct information from the text, such as who, what, when, and where.	2.73	Proficient Level	.962
7. My learners list key points and details found explicitly in a paragraph or passage.	2.65	Proficient Level	.934
8. My learners match characters, settings, and events with the appropriate descriptions provided in the text.	2.63	Proficient Level	.937

9. My learners summarize the content of a text by mentioning the key points in their own words.	2.67	Proficient Level	.953
10. My learners describe the main events and settings of a story using information directly stated in the text.	2.73	Proficient Level	.962
General Mean Rating	**2.66**	**Proficient Level**	**.870**

The indicator with the highest mean, "My learners answer questions that require them to provide direct information from the text, such as who, what, when, and where" (M = 2.73), suggests that respondents perceived their learners to be proficient in understanding and recalling explicit information from the text. The findings of Manuel (2022) align with the present study, showing similar comprehension levels among respondents in terms of literal comprehension, reflecting that learners generally perform at a proficient level in these tasks.

4.3.2. Inferential Comprehension

Table 12 presents the mean and standard deviations of the perceived comprehension levels of learners by the respondents in terms of inferential comprehension. The ranges of the mean (M) indicated that the comprehension levels were at the proficient level, with values ranging from 2.52 to 2.69. The standard deviation (SD) ranged from .874 to .978, suggesting variability in the perceived inferential comprehension levels. The general mean was 2.63, interpreted as a proficient level of comprehension, indicating that respondents perceived their learners to have a moderate to high ability in making predictions, drawing conclusions, interpreting figurative language, and other inferential comprehension tasks.

Table 12. Mean and Interpretations of the Perceived Comprehension Levels of Learners by the Respondents in terms of Inferential Comprehension

Indicator	M	Interpretation	SD
1. My learners predict what might happen next in a story based on clues from the text.	2.65	Proficient Level	.978
2. My learners infer the feelings or motivations of characters based on their actions and dialogue.	2.65	Proficient Level	.934
3. My learners draw conclusions about the main ideas or themes that are implied but not directly stated in the text.	2.69	Proficient Level	.926
4. My learners interpret figurative language, such as metaphors and similes, to understand deeper meanings in the text.	2.58	Proficient Level	.895
5. My learners make connections between different parts of the text to understand cause-and-effect relationships.	2.67	Proficient Level	.975

6. My learners suggest possible solutions or endings to a story by analyzing the plot and character actions.	2.63	Proficient Level	.914
7. My learners explain the underlying message or moral of a story that is not explicitly mentioned.	2.69	Proficient Level	.926
8. My learners deduce the author's purpose or point of view by examining word choice and text structure.	2.52	Proficient Level	.967
9. My learners identify the implied meaning of specific sentences or paragraphs by considering the context.	2.54	Proficient Level	.874
10. My learners formulate questions about the text that require interpreting information beyond what is directly stated.	2.65	Proficient Level	.934
General Mean Rating	**2.63**	**Proficient Level**	**.878**

The indicator with the highest mean, "My learners infer the feelings or motivations of characters based on their actions and dialogue" (M = 2.65), suggests that respondents perceived their learners to be proficient in understanding and interpreting character motivations. The findings of Sulfa, Ernawati, and Fatmawati (2023) align with the present study, showing similar comprehension levels among respondents in terms of inferential comprehension, reflecting that learners generally perform at a proficient level in these tasks.

4.3.3. Critical Comprehension

Table 13 presents the mean and standard deviations of the perceived comprehension levels of learners by the respondents in terms of critical comprehension. The ranges of the mean (M) indicated that the comprehension levels were at the proficient level, with values ranging from 2.50 to 2.63. The standard deviation (SD) ranged from .825 to .945, suggesting variability in the perceived critical comprehension levels. The general mean was 2.56, interpreted as a proficient level of comprehension, indicating that respondents perceived their learners to have a moderate to high ability in critically evaluating information, comparing viewpoints, analyzing evidence, judging relevance, and critiquing logic in texts.

Table 13. Mean and Interpretations of the Perceived Comprehension Levels of Learners by the Respondents in terms of Critical Comprehension

Indicator	M	Interpretation	SD
1. My learners evaluate the credibility of the information presented in a text by considering the author's background and purpose.	2.56	Proficient Level	.897
2. My learners compare and contrast different viewpoints or arguments	2.60	Proficient Level	.939

within a text to understand various perspectives.			
3. My learners analyze the effectiveness of the author's use of evidence and examples to support their claims or arguments.	2.63	Proficient Level	.914
4. My learners judge the relevance and importance of the information provided in a text relative to their own experiences or knowledge.	2.56	Proficient Level	.943
5. My learners critique the logic and reasoning behind the conclusions drawn by the author in the text.	2.54	Proficient Level	.898
6. My learners identify any biases or assumptions in the text and discuss how these may affect the overall message.	2.56	Proficient Level	.943
7. My learners reflect on how the text connects to broader societal issues or real-world situations.	2.58	Proficient Level	.871
8. My learners propose alternative solutions or viewpoints based on their understanding of the text and its context.	2.50	Proficient Level	.945
9. My learners debate the strengths and weaknesses of different arguments or ideas presented in the text.	2.50	Proficient Level	.825
10. My learners discuss how the text's themes or messages relate to their own lives and experiences.	2.58	Proficient Level	.919
General Mean Rating	**2.56**	**Proficient Level**	**.859**

The indicator with the highest mean, "My learners analyze the effectiveness of the author's use of evidence and examples to support their claims or arguments" (M = 2.63), suggests that respondents perceived their learners to be proficient in evaluating and understanding the effectiveness of evidence in supporting arguments. The findings of Moeiniasl, Taylor, DeBraga, Manchanda, Huggon, and Graham (2022) align with the present study, showing similar comprehension levels among respondents in terms of critical comprehension, reflecting that learners generally perform at a proficient level in these tasks.

4.3.4. Creative Comprehension
Table 14 presents the mean and interpretations of the perceived comprehension levels of learners in terms of creative comprehension. The ranges of M values indicate that most indicators were rated at the proficient level (2.50 to 2.69), with some items rated at the developing level (below 2.50). The ranges of SD values suggest moderate variability across responses (.868 to

1.007). The general mean rating was 2.54, interpreted as a moderately practiced proficiency level, and the general SD was .868, indicating consistent responses across items.

Table 14. Mean and Interpretations of the Perceived Comprehension Levels of Learners by the Respondents in terms of Creative Comprehension

Indicator	M	Interpretation	SD
1. My learners create alternate endings to a story based on their understanding of the plot and characters.	2.52	Proficient Level	.899
2. My learners design their own characters and settings inspired by the stories they read.	2.58	Proficient Level	.986
3. My learners write a new scene or chapter for a book that extends the existing narrative in a creative way.	2.52	Proficient Level	.922
4. My learners develop a comic strip or storyboard that illustrates a key event from the text in their own style.	2.46	Developing Level	.988
5. My learners invent a new title for the story that reflects their interpretation of its main themes.	2.52	Proficient Level	.945
6. My learners produce a short skit or role-play based on a scene from the book to demonstrate their understanding.	2.50	Proficient Level	.945
7. My learners compose a poem or song that captures the emotions or message of the text.	2.60	Proficient Level	.869
8. My learners draw a detailed illustration or diagram that represents important concepts or scenes from the story.	2.58	Proficient Level	1.007
9. My learners imagine and describe how the story would change if set in a different time period or location.	2.58	Proficient Level	.919
10. My learners create a board game or interactive activity based on the plot and characters of the text to engage their peers.	2.48	Developing Level	.875
General Mean Rating	**2.54**	**Proficient Level**	**.868**

The indicator with the highest mean (2.60) was "My learners compose a poem or song that captures the emotions or message of the text," which suggests that learners are more adept at expressing their creative understanding through artistic forms. This has implications for the study, indicating that while some creative comprehension tasks are well-practiced, others, like developing

a comic strip, may need further attention. These findings align with Rubenstein, Thomas, Finch, and Ridgley (2022), which also found that while learners excel in certain creative tasks, there remains room for improvement in more complex creative activities.

4.4. Difference Between the Reading Instruction Practices of the Respondents and Their Profile
4.4.1. Age

Table 15 presents the difference between the reading instruction practices of respondents across different age groups. The values of H indicate a low effect size, with degrees of freedom (df) of 3 and a p-value of .977, leading to the decision to accept the null hypothesis (H0) as Not Significant across all age groups (20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59 years old).

Table 15. Difference Between the Reading Instruction Practices of the Respondents and Their Age

Groups	H	df	P	Decision
20-29 years old	.202	3	.977	Accept H_0
30-39 years old				Not
40-49 years old				Significant
50-59 years old				

The findings imply that there is no significant difference in reading instruction practices among different age groups, suggesting that age does not influence the respondents' instructional methods. These results are consistent with Ahmad, Hashmi, and Mukhtyar (2022), which similarly found no significant difference between demographic variables and instructional practices.

4.4.2. Gender

Table 16 shows the difference between the reading instruction practices of respondents across different gender groups. The values of H show a moderate effect size, with degrees of freedom (df) of 2 and a p-value of .243, leading to the decision to accept the null hypothesis (H0) as Not Significant across all gender groups (Male, Female, LGBTQIA+).

Table 16. Difference Between the Reading Instruction Practices of the Respondents and Their Gender

Groups	H	df	P	Decision
Male	2.829	2	.243	Accept H_0
Female				Not
LGBTQIA+				Significant

The findings indicate that there is no significant difference in reading instruction practices among different gender groups, suggesting that gender does not influence the respondents' instructional methods. These results align with Wardat, Belbase, and Tairab (2022), which similarly concluded no significant difference between gender and instructional practices.

4.4.3. Teaching Assignment

Table 17 illustrates the difference between the reading instruction practices of respondents across different teaching assignment groups. The values of H show a small effect size, with degrees of freedom (df) of 2 and a p-value of .919, leading to the decision to accept the null hypothesis (H0) as Not Significant across all teaching assignment groups (Grade 4, Grade 5, Grade 6).

Table 17. Difference Between the Reading Instruction Practices of the Respondents and Their Teaching Assignment

Groups	H	df	P	Decision
Grade 4	.169	2	.919	Accept H_0
Grade 5				Not
Grade 6				Significant

The findings suggest that there is no significant difference in reading instruction practices among respondents teaching different grade levels, indicating that teaching assignment does not impact instructional methods. This outcome corresponds with Aucejo, Coate, Fruehwirth, Kelly, and Mozenter (2022), which similarly found no significant difference in instructional practices based on grade level.

4.4.4. Teaching Position

Table 18 presents the differences in reading instruction practices across various teaching positions. The values indicate that Teacher III had the highest Mean Rank (MR = 31.19), suggesting they employed the most advanced reading instruction practices among the groups. The eta squared (η^2 = .767) denotes a large effect size, indicating a significant difference in reading instruction practices among teaching positions. The statistical analysis showed a significant effect (p = .022), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H0).

Table 18. Difference Between the Reading Instruction Practices of the Respondents and Their Teaching Position

Groups	MR	Eta squared (η^2)	H	df	P	Decision
Teacher I	17.76	.767	11.438	4	.022	Reject H_0
Teacher II	22.50	(Large)				Significant
Teacher III	31.19					
Master Teacher I	40.50					
Master Teacher II	25.67					

The findings imply that higher teaching positions correlate with more advanced reading instruction practices, which could impact how these teachers deliver instruction to learners. Aliakbari and Sadeghi (2022) found a similar trend, with more experienced teachers showing advanced instructional practices. This present study aligns with that finding, suggesting a progression in reading instruction practices as teaching positions advance.

4.4.5. Length of Service

Table 19 presents the difference between the reading instruction practices of the respondents based on their length of service. The values of H indicate a moderate effect size, with degrees of freedom (df) of 3 and a p-value of .130, leading to the decision to accept the null hypothesis (H0) as Not Significant across all length of service groups (0-9 years, 10-19 years, 20-29 years, 30 years and above).

Table 19. Difference Between the Reading Instruction Practices of the Respondents and Their Length of Service

Groups	H	df	P	Decision

0-9 years	5.651	3	.130	Accept H_0
10-19 years				Not
20-29 years				Significant
30 years and above				

The findings imply that there is no significant difference in reading instruction practices among respondents with different lengths of service, suggesting that experience does not significantly influence their instructional methods. These results align with Gore, Rosser, Jaremus, Miller, and Harris (2023), which similarly found no significant difference between years of experience and instructional practices.

4.4.6. Highest Educational Attainment

Table 20 shows the differences in reading instruction practices across various levels of educational attainment. The Mean Rank (MR) indicates that respondents with a Doctorate Graduate had the highest MR (41.88), suggesting they utilized the most advanced reading instruction practices. The eta squared (η^2 = .619) indicates a large effect size, confirming a significant difference in reading instruction practices across the groups. The statistical analysis (p = .021) resulted in the rejection of the null hypothesis (H0), indicating significant differences in reading instruction practices.

Table 20. Difference Between the Reading Instruction Practices of the Respondents and Their Highest Educational Attainment

Groups	MR	Eta squared (η^2)	H	df	P	Decision
Education Graduate	15.00	.619	11.599	4	.021	Reject H_0
With Master's units	27.53	(Large)				Significant
Master's Graduate	21.37					
with Doctorate units	28.17					
Doctorate Graduate	41.88					

These findings suggest that higher educational attainment corresponds with more advanced reading instruction practices, which may influence the quality of instruction provided to learners. This finding is consistent with Zalsos and Corpuz (2024), which also found that advanced educational qualifications were associated with more sophisticated reading instruction practices, supporting the notion that higher education levels contribute to enhanced teaching practices.

4.5. Correlation Between the Reading Instruction Practices of Intermediate Teachers and Comprehension Levels of Learners

Table 21 displays the Spearman's Rho Coefficient correlation to test the correlation between the reading instruction practices of intermediate teachers and the comprehension levels of learners. The values in the table show a correlation coefficient of .764 between reading instruction practices and comprehension levels, indicating a very high positive correlation. The significance level (Sig. = .000) is less than the alpha level of 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This signifies that the correlation is statistically significant with a strong positive correlation between the two variables. The sample size (n = 48) supports the comprehensiveness of the findings.

Table 21. Spearman's Rho Coefficient Correlation to Test the Correlation between the Reading Instruction Practices of Intermediate Teachers and Comprehension Levels of Learners

Sources of Correlation (Spearman's Rho)		Reading Instruction Practices	Comprehension Levels	Decision/ Interpretation
Reading Instruction Practices	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.764	**Very High Positive Correlation**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	N	48	48	
Comprehension Levels	Correlation Coefficient	.764	1.000	**Reject H₀ Significant**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	48	48	

The implications of these findings suggest that effective reading instruction practices significantly contribute to higher comprehension levels among intermediate learners. This underscores the importance of targeted instructional strategies to enhance learners' reading comprehension. These findings align with those of Hudson (2022), which also highlighted a significant correlation between instructional practices and learners' reading comprehension, confirming the consistency and reliability of this association across different studies.

4.6. An Enhanced Reading Instruction Program to Improve the Reading Instruction Practices of Intermediate Teachers and Comprehension Levels of Learners

The enhanced reading instruction program aims to address critical issues in the reading instruction practices of intermediate teachers to improve teaching strategies and learner outcomes. Teachers have been identified to moderately practice key aspects of reading instruction, such as planning, resource utilization, strategies, and assessment, which may limit the comprehension levels of their learners. The program also seeks to bridge disparities in instructional practices influenced by teaching position and educational attainment while providing equal opportunities for professional development across all demographic groups. By aligning instructional practices with evidence-based strategies, the program aspires to directly enhance learners' comprehension outcomes. Ultimately, this initiative underscores the significance of fostering improved teaching practices to ensure that learners achieve their highest potential in reading comprehension.

5. CONCLUSIONS

1. The intermediate teachers predominantly belonged to the age bracket of 40-49 years old, were predominantly female, primarily assigned to teaching Grade 5 classes, held the position of Teacher I, had rendered 10-19 years of service, and were mostly master's degree holders.

2. Intermediate teachers were found to have moderately practiced their reading instruction across the dimensions of reading plans, reading resources, reading strategies, and reading assessment.

3. The learners exhibited proficient comprehension levels as perceived by their intermediate teachers. These levels were assessed across the domains of literal comprehension, inferential comprehension, critical comprehension, and creative comprehension.

4. No significant differences were observed in the reading instruction practices of intermediate teachers when grouped according to age, gender, teaching assignment, and length of service.

However, there was a significant difference in the reading instruction practices of intermediate teachers based on their teaching position and highest educational attainment.

5. A very high positive significant correlation was established between the reading instruction practices of intermediate teachers and the comprehension levels of their learners, indicating that improved reading instruction practices strongly align with enhanced comprehension outcomes.

6. An enhanced reading instruction program was designed to further improve the reading instruction practices of intermediate teachers and the comprehension levels of their learners.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Schools and school heads should prioritize professional development programs that cater to the needs of teachers in the 40-49 age group and those with extensive teaching experience, ensuring that their knowledge and skills remain updated and relevant.

2. Intermediate teachers should enhance their practice of reading instruction by integrating innovative teaching strategies and regularly updating their reading plans, resources, strategies, and assessments to align with current educational trends and learners' needs.

3. Intermediate teachers should employ targeted instructional strategies that foster growth in all domains of comprehension—literal, inferential, critical, and creative—to sustain and further improve learners' proficiency levels.

4. School heads should provide additional support and recognition to teachers in higher teaching positions or with advanced degrees to encourage the application of their expertise in refining reading instruction practices.

5. Schools should implement ongoing training programs and collaborative learning activities for teachers to continuously improve their reading instruction practices, fostering significant improvements in learners' comprehension levels.

6. The proposed enhanced reading instruction program should be adopted and implemented in schools, with provisions for regular monitoring and evaluation to ensure its effectiveness in improving teachers' practices and learners' comprehension outcomes.

7. Further studies on the relationship between specific reading instruction practices and learners' comprehension levels across various grade levels should be conducted to determine the most effective instructional approaches that can be adapted to different learner profiles and classroom contexts.

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