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RESEARCH ARTICLE

IMPACT OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (PROJECT READERS) IN THE READING LEVEL OF GRADE 7 STUDENTS UNDER FRUSTRATION LEVEL IN SAN ISIDRO NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, ANTIPOLO CITY, PHILIPPINES

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Abstract

The research was designed to determine the impact of the Continuous Improvement Program (Project READERS) in the Reading Level of Grade 7 Students under Frustration Level of San Isidro National High School, Antipolo City, Philippines. The research utilized the experimental study design to collect the necessary data needed. In response to the study's statement of the problem, weighted mean, and paired t-test were utilized. Based from data obtained in the pre-test and post -test, the study revealed that the Continuous Improvement Program (Project READERS) has a great impact in the improvement of the Reading Level of the Grade 7 under Frustration level. The data collected showed that there is a 60 percent decrease of students under frustration level from 80 to only 32 after the reading program.

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Introduction:-

Reading is one of the most important skills in English that an individual must need to master. This is indeed a tool subject for it is a prerequisite in understanding all learning areas. It serves as a cornerstone for every student to learn other subjects because students who have difficulty in reading, may encounter also difficulties in all learning areas.

Reading means a lot to many people. It can be one of the most rewarding, preoccupation of the individual to widen his horizons and making it possible to partake of, means accumulated experience and achievements through the ages. It also plays a vital role in ones' success in school.

The central objective of reading is to comprehend what is being read. Though often viewed as only a facet of reading, related to but also distinguished from aspects such as fluency and phonemic awareness, most would agree with Durkin's (1993) assessment that reading comprehension is the "essence of reading"—so crucial to future learning that lesson designs, strategies, and assessment tools should address and reflect reading comprehension as a part of every subject.

Comprehension is reading with understanding. It is decoding meaning from the printed text not only in single words or sentences but also of the interrelationships among the sentences in discourse.

However, the biggest problem which beset the schools nowadays is the very poor reading comprehension skill of the students. The National Achievement Test given every year reveals the alarming decrease of the students' ability to read and comprehend.

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This horrendous problem is very evident in this institution. Based from the pre-reading test conducted there were 80 Grade 7 students identified under the frustration level.

Significance:-

It is in this light that this study aimed to determine the reading comprehension level of the students:

Specifically, it attempted to answer the following questions:

1. Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post test results after the reading program?
2. What is the Impact of the Continuous Improvement Program (Project READERS) in the Reading Level of the 80 Grade 7 Students under Frustration Level of San Isidro National High School?

Definition of Terms:-

Reading- The process of looking at a series of written symbols and getting meaning from them.

Reading Comprehension- The ability to read text, process it and understand its meaning.

Independent Level-The highest reading level. The student scores 80-100% in the reading comprehension test. The reader is classified as fast reader.

Instructional Level- The pupil scores 59-79% in the reading comprehension test. The pupil is classified as average reader.

Frustration Level- The lowest reading level. The student scores 58% and below in the reading comprehension test. The student is classified as slow reader.

Review of Related Literature and Studies

Reading is one of the four macro skills taught in an English language classroom, which requires a response from the reader through summarizing the main facts based on what was read (Zintz & Maggart, 1986, in Blay et.al, 2009).

In the same manner, Grabe-Villanueva (1988, 2006) stressed that reading is not just extracting meaning from the text but a process of connecting to the given information given by the text. Reading in this sense, is a communication between the reader and the text.

According to Dennis (2011), reading comprehension is a complex balance between recognizing printed symbols and interpreting the meaning behind the symbols.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO 2011) asserts that being able to read is not enough measure to be literate in reading. Rather, one must understand or comprehend what he reads; applies, integrates, and synthesizes. But how could a learner be able to understand the printed symbols if he has not acquired the proper reading and thinking ability?

In learning institutions, there is always a need to intensify the renewed efforts as well as commitment to promoting and sustaining effective reading skills even more in today's rapidly changing conditions (Mendoza, 2008). The success of the school nowadays is judged by its pupil's proficiency in reading. This is the reason why the Department of Education dreams of producing learners who are effective readers upon completion of third grade by launching the "Every Child A Reader Program" (ECARP) and the "Bright Child Program".

There is now a growing evidence supporting the concept that a reader's background knowledge about what he is reading is one of the most critical factors in determining whether a student will understand what he is reading or not (Hirsch, E>D0 (2006; Kamhi, A., (2007).

Worthy (1996) states that it is not sufficient to provide books that are geared solely to a student's instructional reading level. When reading level is solely considered, below basal readers are generally used for instructing struggling readers. Reading such "baby books" often makes struggling readers feel more defeated. Focusing on students' interest in selecting reading materials maybe more beneficial in promoting reading success than focus on the level. It turns out that interest is far more significant than readability. When students have strong interest in what they read, they can frequently transcend their reading level.

Many educators and researchers consider interest to be essential factor in all learning (hidi, 1990; Schiefele, 1991). Students who do not enjoy typical school texts often fail to engage in reading, and may develop a lifelong aversion to reading.

Some studies have shown that the reading comprehension performance of the students is affected by several factors. Rizardo & Tabuno, (1998) and Marquez (2008) in their study on reading comprehension of Fourth Year High school students of Iligan, made the following conclusions: 1. Parents' monthly income and educational attainments have contributed to the reading performance of the students. 2. The kind of materials that the respondents read enhanced their ability to comprehend a text. 3. The respondents' attitude towards reading differed from each other. 4. The availability of reading materials at home and in school and the students' curiosity to learn enhanced their reading comprehension. Educational researchers have also focused on the teacher's behavior that should effective in promoting students' motivation (Brophy, 1986 and Marquez, 2008)

For a child to survive in today's world, it is a requirement for him/her to know how to read with understanding. Maggart and Zintz (1970 in Marquez (2008) state that comprehension is the major purpose of reading-without comprehension, reading is a meaningless activity regardless of age or ability of the reader.

Records show that there is a widespread problem on literacy among high school students. On the report of The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's on January 2016 shows that literacy rates among young people are among the lowest in the developed world. Despite the fact that the student began with texts at reading levels 5 and 6 years below his/her actual grade level, the comprehension remains a challenge. Several factors contributed to the complexity of the task for the student (Bejos, 2009).

In the Philippines, there is also a nationwide problem on the poor reading comprehension among high school students. Based on the 2018 results of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a worldwide study by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in member and non-member nations intended to evaluate educational systems by measuring 15-year-old school pupils' scholastic performance on mathematics, science, and reading, the country ranked 41st or lowest among all the countries that participated in the said examination.

In San Isidro National High School, through the Pre-Reading Inventory almost 70% of the Grade students were identified to have problems on reading comprehension skill which is truly alarming.

It is therefore necessary that the reading performance level of the students be assessed in order to design an appropriate reading intervention program vis-a-vis to the needs and interests of the students in order to improve their reading level.

Methodology and Research Design:-

This research made use of T-test and percentage in order to assess if there is a significant difference between the pre-test and the post test results.

The researchers administered Reading Comprehension Test prepared by the researchers of San Isidro National High School and was validated by a Master Teacher in English. To check the validity and reliability of the test, it was also administered to the Grade 7 students of another school. The pre-test was administered to identify the reading level of the grade 7 students and the least mastered skills in reading.

The identified 80 students under frustration level underwent the reading program, Project READERS and the identified least mastered skills were addressed during the conduct of the reading program.

Results and Discussion:-

The following discussions of the results were anchored on the research questions:

Problem No.1:

Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and the post test results of the 80 students under frustration level after reading program? Table 1.

Pre-Test vs Post-Test Results				
	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Gain/Gap	% of difference
MEAN	20.54	30.26	9.72	47.32
MPS	41.08	60.52	19.44	47.32

The table showed that there is an increase of 19.44 or 47.32% in the MPS of the 80 students under frustration level from Pre-test to Post-test. This implies that there is a significant difference between the pre-and the post tests after the conduct of the reading program. It also implies that the reading program significantly improved the reading comprehension skills of the students under frustration level.

Problem No.2: On the Impact of the Reading Program-Project Readers in the Reading Level of the Identified students under Frustration Level.

Table 2:- Reading Level on Pre-Test and Post-Test.

Reading Level	Pre-Reading	Post -Reading	Increase / Decrease	%
Independent	0	2	Increase	2.5
Instructional	0	46	Increase	57.5
Frustration	80	32	Decrease	40
Total	80	80		100

The data revealed that there is a 60 percent decrease of students under frustration level. This implies that the reading program for students under frustration level has a great impact in improving the reading level of the 80 students.

Table 3:- Reading Ability on Pre-Test and Post-Test.

	Pre-Reading	Post-Reading	Increase/Decrease	%
Word Reader	49	8	Decreased	10.00
Sentence Reader	31	19	Decreased	23.75
Paragraph Reader	0	53	Increased	66.25
				100.00

The data revealed that there is a 66.25 percent increase of paragraph readers from the pre-reading to the post-reading inventory. This means that the reading program for the students under frustration level has a great impact in improving their reading ability.

Conclusions:-

In the light of the said findings, the researchers concluded the following: (1) that the Continuous Improvement Program (Project READERS) in the Reading Level of the 80 Grade 7 Students under Frustration Level of San Isidro National High School is effective since it significantly improved the performance of the students in the post-evaluation. The data also implies that (2) the reading program has a great impact in the improvement of the reading level of the identified students under frustration level and that (3) the reading comprehension skill of the students is an unending concern that needs to be addressed by the teachers.

Recommendations:-

The implications of this study present various rigorous challenges and demands to improve the reading comprehension skill of the students. Hence, the researchers suggest the following: (1) continuous and judicious conduct of the reading program addressing this issue must be ensured (2) design a mechanism that will help involve both teachers and parents to closely help and monitor their children in reading at home (3) create a team that will ensure the strict monitoring and evaluation of the reading intervention and the reading progress of the students (4) future researchers may look into the reading comprehension skills of their students and using the Continuous Improvement Program and other schools may adapt this study to address the needs of their students under frustration level.

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