

Impact Assessment of the Brigada Pagbasa Program: Bridging the Gap of Illiteracy

James R. Linao, MBA, Dr. Lorna Alestre

Univeristy of Mindanao-Bansalan College

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INTRODUCTION

The sudden shift in education has affected the learning foundation of the primary learners due to the COVID-19 pandemic (World Health Organization, 2020) where it prompted the schools to implement home-based schooling. (Lau & Lee, 2021). One of the most vulnerable groups affected in this novel crisis are the learners in their formative years. Their lives have been overturned and every key measure of their development has gone backward. This shift generated challenges for learners' academic progress (Panagouli et al., 2021). Due to a massive earthquake in 2019 followed by the COVID-19 Pandemic in 2020, public schools in Bansalan, Davao del Sur have been closed for the past two years. Because of these, most elementary pupils reading skills, particularly in kindergarten, Grade I, and Grade II, were not improved at home. According to the findings of the EGRA (Early Grade Reading Assessment) for the school year 2021- 2022, these students, particularly in kindergarten, are mostly non-readers, meaning they lack mastery of letter sounds and letter names in the English alphabet. Similarly, due to the disruption of schooling caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, oral reading fluency for students in early grades is estimated to be about 30% lower than in typical years. Therefore, a national reading movement was implemented.

The Brigada Pagbasa Program aims to bring together all education champions and supporters in order to contribute to nation building by assisting all Filipino children in improving their reading skills in a collaborative setting. This is in support of the DepEd's goal of providing children with access to high-quality education. The Brigada Pagbasa campaign also aims to help Filipino children become functionally literate and to empower parents, caregivers, community volunteers, and education stakeholders within the context of transparency and local accountability by establishing a link between partners and vulnerable communities to support last-mile learners and ensure access to after-school structured literacy development programs.

Moreover, Rizal Elementary School's Massive Reading Advocacy for Struggling Kids (MASK) program support the Department of Education's (DepED) Every Child a Reader Program (ECRP) and Massive Reading Advocacy for Struggling Kids (MASK) programs, which aim to produce functionally literate learners who can decode and make sense of what they read, as well as instill a love of reading. This intervention program is similar to the reading program of Lipa City National High School, in Lipa City, Batangas Philippines called *HAMON: Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative)*. It was revealed to be effective in eradicating the reading problems in the school. Results showed that learners' level of consonance to word reading and reading comprehension has improved. Therefore, even in the midst of distance learning, addressing reading difficulties is still possible through remote learning instructions (Dorado & Medina, 2022).

Thus, the Community Extension Center (CEC) of UM Bansalan College (UMBC) works closely with the

Department of Teacher Education (DTE) and other stakeholders, including local officials from Barangay Rizal, Bansalan, Davao del Sur, including the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK), and St. Mary’s College of Bansalan Inc.

Furthermore, through the Brigada Pagbasa Project, anchored in the school-based learning intervention program dubbed Project MASK, UM Bansalan College and Rizal Elementary School, in collaboration with stakeholder partners, aim to reduce the number of Non-Readers and Frustration Level Readers by 75 percent by the end of May 2022.

As a result, this study was conducted to evaluate the program’s effectiveness by improving the reading skills of identified Rizal Elementary School pupils from February to June 2022.

METHODS

The program served thirty-five (35) kindergarten, eleven (11) Grade I, and seven (7) Grade II students, for a total of fifty-three (53) struggling children. Purok reading sessions were led by forty-six (46) learning tutors. Each session focused on letter names and letter sounds, with four fundamental skills such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking used to develop mastery and instill a love for reading. To validate the intervention’s effectiveness, the Letter Identification Score Sheet was used as a reading assessment in comparing the pretest and post test results in order to measure the beneficiaries’ improvement.

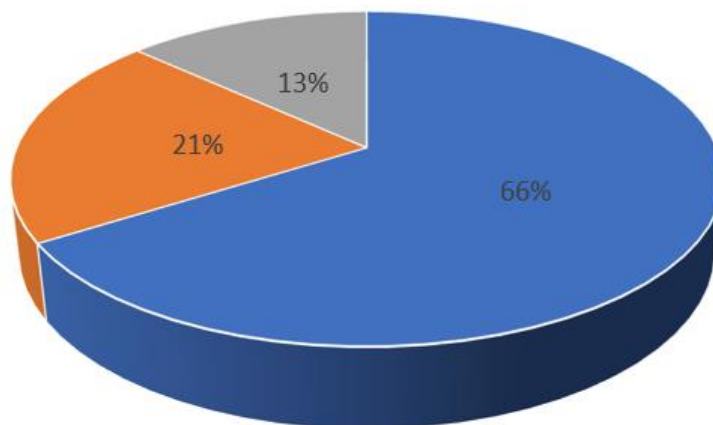
WORK PLAN

PHASE	ACTIVITIES/ STRATEGIES	TIMELINE
PRE- IMPLEME NTATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preparation of the plan of activities for Reading Intervention 2. Orientation of the SH, School Reading Coordinator, and teachers on the Reading Intervention Plan 3. Collaboration and Networking with Local Officials and other stakeholders for program implementation support and information dissemination 4. Student -Mapping or Locate and Contact the identified Non-Readers and Frustration readers and identify learning tutors. 5. Launching of the Brigada Pagbasa Program and Signing of Memorandum of Agreement 6. Learning Tutors Orientation 7. Parents’ Orientation on Brigada Pagbasa Program 8. Preparation of Reading Intervention Materials 	<p>November 15, 2021 November 22, 2021</p> <p>November 29, 2021</p> <p>January 10, 2021</p> <p>January 20, 2022</p> <p>January 21, 2022 January 24, 2022 January 25-31, 2022</p>
IMPLEME NTATION PROPER	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Simultaneous Pretest Assessment of learners as to give priority of the reading intervention 2. Mastery of Letter Names and Letter Sounds of M and S 3. Mastery of Letter Names and Letter Sounds of A , I , O 4. Mastery of Letter Names and Letter Sounds of B ,E ,U 	<p>February 21, 2022</p> <p>February 22-25, 2022 February 22-25, 2022</p> <p>Feb 28-March 4, 2022 March 7-11, 2022</p> <p>March 14-18, 2022</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Mastery of Letter Names and Letter Sounds of T, K , L 6. Mastery of Letter Names and Letter Sounds of Y, N, G 7. Mastery of Letter Names and Letter Sounds of NG, P ,R 8. Mastery of Letter Names and Letter Sounds of D, H, W 9. Mastery of Letter Names and Letter Sounds of C, F,J 10. Mastery of Letter Names and Letter Sounds of Ñ, Q, V 11. Mastery of Letter Names and Letter Sounds of H,Z 12 Review of Letter Names and Letter Sounds 13. Review of Letter Names and Letter Sounds 14. Review of Letter Names and Letter Sounds Review of Letter Names and Letter Sounds 	<p>March 21-25, 2022</p> <p>March 28-31, 2022</p> <p>April 4-8, 2022</p> <p>April 11-15,2022</p> <p>April 18-22, 2022</p> <p>April 25-29,2022</p> <p>May 16-20, 2022</p> <p>May 23-27, 2022</p> <p>May 30-31, 2022</p>
POST IMPLEMENTATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Administer Posttest Assessment 2. Consolidate the result 3. Validate the result 4. Conduct culminating activity 5. Submit narrative report with photo documentation 	<p>June 1, 2022</p> <p>June 2, 2022</p> <p>June 3, 2022</p> <p>June 10, 2022</p> <p>June 20, 2022</p>

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The program served 35 (66%) kindergarten students, eleven 11 (21%) Grade I students, and seven 7 (13%) Grade II students, for a total of 53 struggling children. Purok reading sessions were facilitated by 46 learning tutors.



Kindergarten Grade 1 Grade 2

Figure 1. Distribution of Learners in Rizal Elementary School.

During the pre-test, it was discovered that 0% of the learners passed the test. As a result, it demonstrates that a literacy program is required to address the issue. Each session focused on letter names and letter sounds, with four fundamental skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

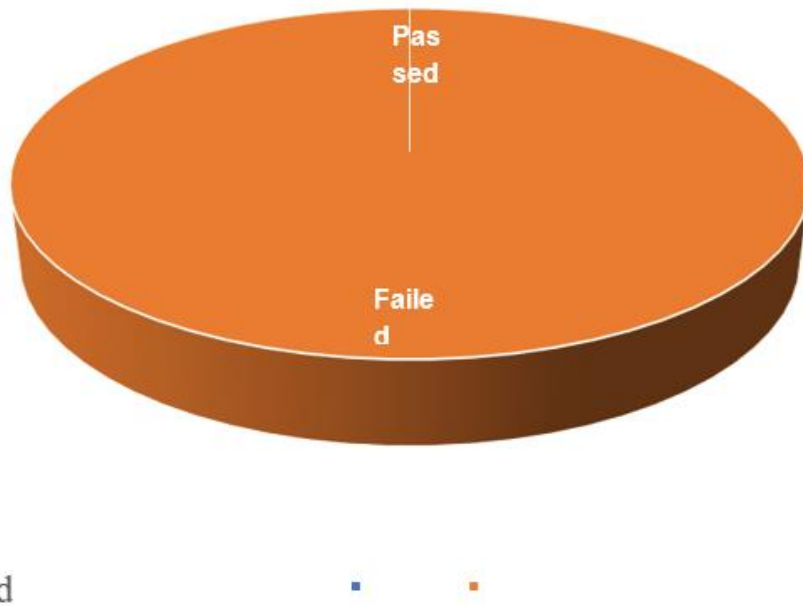


Figure 2. Pre-test Performance Result of Learners in Rizal Elementary School.

With the intervention and series of activities done every Friday by volunteer tutors from UM Bansalan College and other volunteers. The result of the post-test shows that 42 or 79% among 53 identified learners passed the test and consider now as reader. However, 11 or 21% of the learners failed the post test conducted. The Letter Identification Score Sheet was used as a reading assessment in comparing the pretest and post test results in order to measure the beneficiaries' improvement in order to validate the intervention's effectiveness.

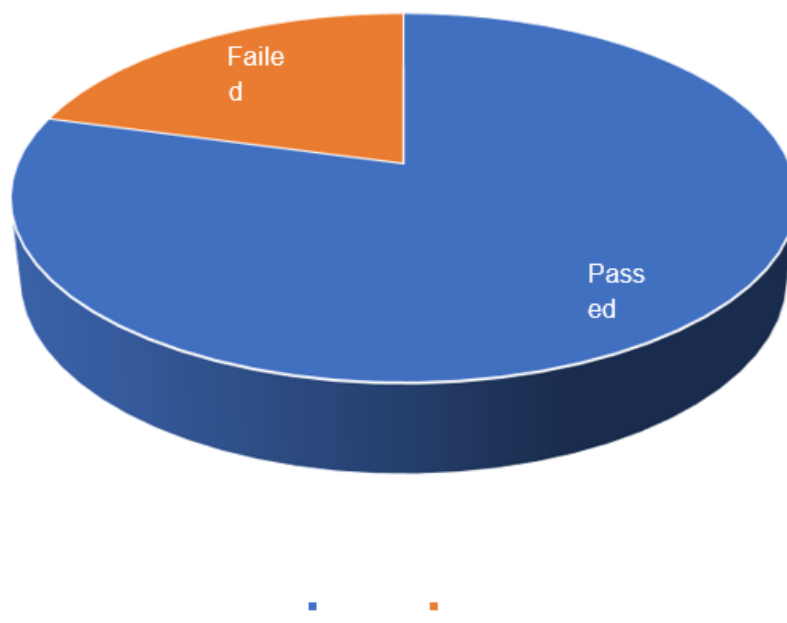


Figure 3. Post-Test Performance of Learners in Rizal Elementary School.

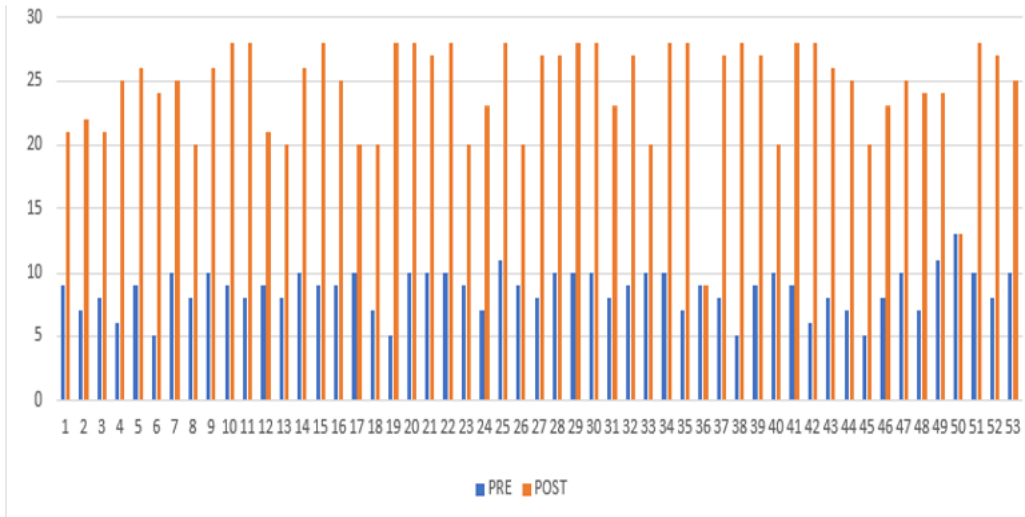


Figure 4. Comparative Score on the Learner’s Pre-test and Post-Test Assessment.

The graph shows that 51 out of 53 learners received a significant increase in their post-test score based on their pre-test and post-test scores. However, only 42 out of 51 students received a passing grade. On the other hand, 2 out of 53 people had no change in their post-test score.

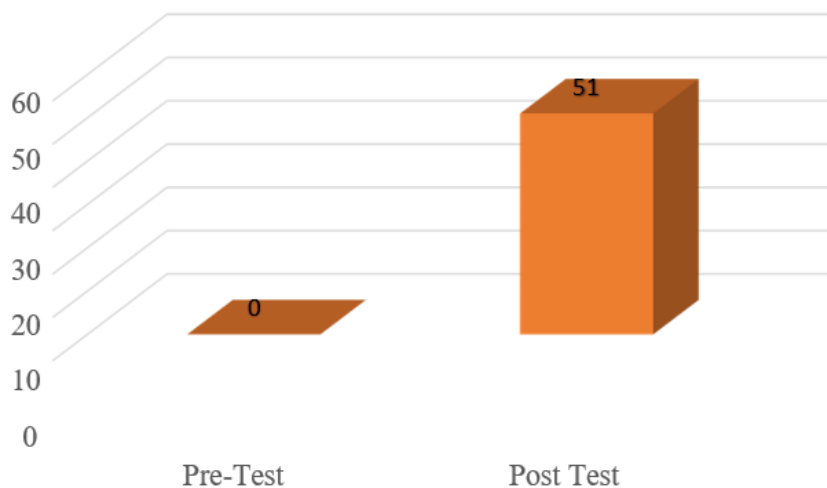


Figure 5. Comparative Result on the Mastery Level of the Learners in Rizal Elementary School

The graph depicts the significant increase in mastery level of the pre-test and post-test based on the collected scores. 42 out of 53 students, or 79 percent, were able to master the letter names and sounds.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The Brigada Pagbasa program yielded positive result in improving the mastery level of the learners in decoding letter names and letter sounds.
2. The Brigada Pagbasa program proved that remote learning instruction is effective in helping struggling kids in their formative years.
3. The diligence of volunteer students of Department of Teacher Education in teaching the basic fundamental skills had transformed the lives of the learners in terms of education.

4. UM Bansalan College realized the importance of connecting and collaborating to the community in all matters of development to sustain the quality of life.
5. This project is an eye-opener that support and assistance through community linkages can generate positive effect, that however big or small the effort, the result will always leave a lasting impact that can change the course of life of individuals.

RECOMMENDATION

The following are highly recommended in order to maintain the mastery level of these identified Rizal Elementary School pupils:

1. Brigada Pagbasa should be continuously implemented since it was able to improve the mastery level of the struggling kids;
2. More intervention materials and reading engagements should be designed and created by teachers to increase interest and involvement of struggling kids;
3. The human resource community and other stakeholders like NGOs, alumni, parents, Sangguniang Kabataan, Senior Citizens, barangay or any civic organizations and other private entities should work together to uplift the students' academic achievement and performance in school;
4. Conduct Parent-Teacher Training Program among parents to continuously monitor and mentor the struggling kids.

Brigada Pagbasa should be one of the priority projects of Committee on Education of the Local Government Unit (LGU).

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