

# Literacy Leadership of Public Secondary School Heads and the Implementation of Reading Programs: Basis for Intervention

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## ABSTRACT

This study examined the level of literacy leadership of secondary school heads and its implications for the implementation of reading programs in the Division of Camarines Norte during School Year 2024–2025. It assessed literacy leadership in terms of shared literacy vision, evidence-based literacy practices, supporting and monitoring, and collaborative literacy culture, and determined the level of implementation of Catch-Up Fridays, Brigada Pagbasa, and school-based reading programs. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed involving 75 secondary school principals and heads selected through total enumeration. Data were collected using a survey questionnaire and analyzed through weighted mean and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. Results revealed a very high level of literacy leadership across all domains and generally high implementation of reading programs. However, the integration of educational software and reading applications was the least practiced component. Significant positive relationships were found between literacy leadership and reading program implementation. Based on the findings, the study proposed tech-REAdy, a training program aimed at enhancing teachers' skills in developing and integrating reading applications to strengthen literacy instruction.

**Keywords:** Literacy leadership, literacy vision, reading programs, school heads, school leadership

## INTRODUCTION

School heads play a vital role in shaping the educational environment by fostering learning conditions that are engaging, supportive, and conducive to student development. They guide teachers in implementing instructional programs, manage resources and policies, and oversee the overall operation of the school. Their responsibilities include promoting literacy, which is a fundamental competency that extends beyond basic reading skills to include critical thinking and lifelong learning. As educational leaders, school heads influence how literacy initiatives are implemented and sustained within the school community (Allen, 2023).

The concept of literacy leadership highlights the role of school leaders in strengthening literacy teaching and learning processes (Jay, 2015). Literacy leaders help shape literacy education by ensuring that appropriate support systems, resources, and instructional practices are available to teachers and learners (Abella et al., 2024). They have a crucial role in establishing a literacy-supportive school culture and fostering collaboration among teachers and stakeholders (Suriagiri (2022), Francois (2021), and Duncan (2020).

School leaders also promote literacy through community partnerships, parental engagement, and the creation of literacy-rich learning environments. Literacy initiatives may involve multimodal learning strategies, opportunities for metacognitive thinking, and differentiated instruction that respond to learners' diverse needs. In addition, school leaders contribute to literacy development by fostering supportive learning environments and encouraging the professional growth of teachers (Darling-Hammond & Rothman, 2011).

Several studies investigated different aspects of literacy leadership and its impact on improving literacy outcomes. Allen (2023); Sharp et al. (2018) highlights that effective literacy leadership involves aligning literacy goals with the school's broader objectives and promoting evidence-based literacy practices that respond to the contextual needs of learners. McDaniel (2024), Townsend and Bayetto (2020), and Maraño and Estera (2026) investigated how school leaders support teachers through professional development, instructional supervision,

and leadership competencies that improve literacy instruction. Similar to the present study, these researchers highlighted the importance of leadership practices such as supporting and monitoring literacy instruction and guiding teachers in implementing literacy strategies. Merga et al. (2020), Fazri et al. (2021), and Khaeratul et al. (2025) investigated how school leaders organize, monitor, and sustain literacy programs in their institutions. Similar to the present study, these studies emphasized the importance of leadership in planning, monitoring, and sustaining literacy initiatives while promoting collaboration among teachers, parents, and stakeholders. Estacio and Estacio (2022), Barayuga (2024), and Abella et al. (2024) investigated how leadership styles, vision, and collaboration influence literacy instruction and overall school improvement. These studies are similar to the present research in recognizing the significant role of school heads in guiding literacy initiatives, supporting teachers, and cultivating a strong reading culture within the school community. Mansueto et al. (2024), Cordova et al. (2024), Kilag et al. (2024), and Bonita (2025) investigated instructional leadership practices and their relationship with literacy outcomes and student academic performance. These studies share similarities with the present research in emphasizing how leadership behaviors, teacher support, and collaboration with stakeholders influence literacy learning and school improvement.

Globally, several countries implement systematic strategies to promote literacy development in schools. Education systems in Finland, Singapore, and Ontario emphasize strong learning support systems, quality teacher preparation, and leadership development in literacy education. Finland, recognized for its educational excellence, fosters collaboration and professional growth among teachers and school leaders (Sahlberg, 2015). Literacy initiatives in Finland also prioritize high-quality preschool education, coherent curricula, early identification of struggling learners, and the recruitment of highly qualified teachers (Barber et al., 2007). Similarly, Singapore invests in developing master teachers and school leaders capable of designing and implementing structured literacy programs to strengthen learners' reading and writing skills (Stewart, 2013).

Despite these global initiatives, literacy challenges persist in the Philippines. Reading literacy remains a concern, as reflected in the low performance of Filipino learners in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022 results (Descartin et al., 2023). Many students enter secondary school with limited reading proficiency and difficulties in comprehending basic texts (Baltazar, 2017). To address these issues, the Department of Education implemented programs such as Every Child a Reader Program (ECARP), which aims to ensure that learners develop reading skills appropriate to their grade level (DepEd Order 50, s. 2012). These literacy programs were investigated by Bitantes and Estera (2025) and Aclan (2022) whose findings highlighted the importance of school leadership, teacher collaboration, and community involvement in strengthening the implementation of literacy programs.

In the Bicol Region, initiatives such as 6Bs: Bawat Batang Bicolano Bihasang Bumasa at Bumilang aim to strengthen collaboration between schools and communities in improving literacy and numeracy outcomes. However, the Rapid Literacy Assessment (RLA) revealed that some learners from Grades 4–12 still struggle with decoding and word recognition. In the Division of Camarines Norte, 3,268 out of 56,217 secondary learners were identified under the deficit level (Division Memorandum No. 305, s. 2024). Similarly, results from Jose Panganiban National High School showed that 180 learners across Grades 7–12 were classified under the deficit category. These findings highlight the need to further examine the role of school principals as literacy leaders and determine how their leadership practices influence the implementation of reading programs in secondary schools. The current study aimed to determine the level of literacy leadership of secondary school heads on the implementation of reading programs.

The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in four key theories on literacy leadership. Vision Theory (Nanus & Bennis, 1992) emphasizes collaboration, capacity building, and a shared vision to guide decision-making and resource allocation. Theory of Leadership Content Knowledge (Stein & Nelson, 2003) stresses the importance of school leaders having a deep understanding of literacy content to provide effective instructional leadership. Distributed Leadership (Spillane, 2005) highlights the collaborative roles of school leaders, literacy coordinators, and teachers in shaping literacy practices. Finally, Systems Theory (Friedman & Allen, 2014) views the school as an interconnected system, where small changes can significantly impact the success of literacy programs. These theories together guide the study in assessing the role of secondary school principals in implementing and sustaining effective literacy programs.

## METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a quantitative method employing a descriptive–correlational research design to examine the literacy leadership practices of secondary school heads and their relationship with the implementation of reading programs. The respondents consisted of 75 secondary school heads, including those from integrated schools, in the Division of Camarines Norte. A total enumeration method was employed to include the entire population, ensuring comprehensive representation and reliable results. The respondents came from various districts, including Jose Panganiban, Paracale, Labo, Sta. Elena, Capalonga, Basud, Daet, Mercedes, San Vicente, San Lorenzo Ruiz, Talisay, and Vinzons, and were selected because they directly oversee and implement reading programs in their respective schools.

Data were collected using a researcher-made and validated survey questionnaire composed of two parts. The first part measured the level of literacy leadership of school heads in terms of shared literacy vision, evidence-based literacy, supporting and monitoring, and collaborative literacy culture, based on the Framework for Literacy Leadership Development of Education Northwest and aligned with selected domains of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (DepEd Order No. 24, s. 2022). The second part determined the level of implementation of reading programs such as Brigada Pagbasa, Catch-Up Fridays, and other school-based reading initiatives in terms of resource allocation, program support and monitoring, student assessment and intervention, educational technology, progress monitoring and feedback, and student motivation. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure the extent of leadership practices and program implementation.

The instrument underwent expert validation from English Master Teachers, a department head, an English-major principal, and the Education Program Supervisor in English of the Division of Camarines Norte. A pilot test was conducted with elementary school principals from the Jose Panganiban District to determine reliability. Cronbach’s alpha values ranging from .730 to .938 indicated high internal consistency of the instrument.

Ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the study. Approval was secured from the Schools Division Superintendent and district supervisor before data collection. Respondents were informed of the purpose of the research and provided informed consent prior to participation. Confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents were ensured in accordance with the Data Privacy Act.

The collected data were analyzed using the International Business Machines Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. Weighted mean was used to determine the level of literacy leadership and the level of implementation of reading programs, while Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient ( $r$ ) was used to determine the significant relationship between literacy leadership and reading program implementation.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Level of Literacy Leadership of the School Heads

This section examines how effectively secondary school heads foster a strong literacy environment through four key dimensions: shared literacy vision, evidence-based literacy practices, supporting and monitoring systems, and collaborative literacy culture. These areas collectively reflect the extent to which school heads not only set clear goals for literacy achievement but also translate those goals into practical, data-driven actions, provide ongoing support and supervision, and promote a culture of teamwork and shared responsibility among teachers and stakeholders.

**Shared Literacy Vision.** This indicator examines how school heads articulate and communicate a unified literacy vision, aligning stakeholders toward common goals for student literacy success.

Table 1 shows the level of literacy leadership of school heads along the literacy shared vision, with an overall weighted mean of 4.52, interpreted as very high. The highest-rated indicator is Include literacy goals in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) with a weighted mean of 4.71, while

the lowest is Regularly review and communicate literacy vision through school bulletins, assemblies, and development plans with a weighted mean of 4.34, both still very high.

The high rating for including literacy goals in SIP and AIP indicates that school heads consistently institutionalize literacy as a priority, embedding it within the school’s strategic direction, operational plans, and monitoring processes. Alignment with the Department of Education’s (DepEd) Basic Education Development Plan 2030 (BEDP 2030), which emphasizes access, equity, quality, and wellbeing, further encourages school leaders to integrate literacy targets into formal planning, ensuring initiatives are structured and sustainable rather than isolated activities.

The comparatively lower rating for reviewing and communicating the literacy vision suggests that while mechanisms like bulletins, assemblies, and development plans exist, practical challenges, such as time constraints, school size, scheduling, and the no-disruption-of-classes policy, limit their frequency and depth. Despite this, school heads maintain consistent efforts to reinforce literacy goals across the school community.

Table 1 Level of Literacy Leadership of the School Heads along Literacy Shared Vision

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. Include literacy goals in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Annual Implementation Plan (AIP)	4.71	VHL
2. Conduct consultative planning with stakeholders for literacy programs (LAC sessions, PTA consultations)	4.51	VHL
3. Regularly review and communicate literacy vision through school bulletins, assemblies, and development plans	4.34	VHL
Overall Weighted Mean	4.52	VHL

Rating Scale:                      Descriptive Interpretation:

4.20 – 5.00    -    Very High Level (VHL)

3.40 – 4.19    -    High Level (HL)

2.60 – 3.39    -    Moderate Level (ML)

1.80 – 2.59    -    Low Level (LL)

1.00 – 1.79    -    Very Low Level (VLL)

The very high level of literacy leadership indicates strong, coherent leadership guiding literacy initiatives. Secondary schools operate with a clearly defined literacy vision that informs planning, implementation, and daily practices. Policy support from DepEd, leadership training, and awareness of literacy’s impact on learner achievement enable school heads to translate literacy goals into concrete actions, such as inclusion in SIP and AIP, school-wide reading programs, and outcome monitoring. The consistency across indicators shows that literacy is embedded in school culture, driven by clear leadership direction and reinforced through regular planning and communication.

The PALL program (Townsend and Bayetto, 2020) affirmed the practice of communicating the literacy vision, as it emphasizes the importance of a shared vision and collaborative leadership, which explains why school heads continue to use mechanisms like bulletins and assemblies to reinforce literacy goals despite administrative constraints. The study affirms that strong leadership commitment and a coherent literacy vision contribute to sustained school-wide literacy practices and improved outcomes, consistent with the very high overall rating of literacy leadership among school heads.

**Supporting and Monitoring.** This indicator assesses how school heads provide ongoing support, supervision, and feedback to teachers to strengthen literacy teaching and learning.

Table 2 presents the level of literacy leadership of school heads in support and monitoring, with an overall weighted mean of 4.34, interpreted as very high. The highest-rated indicator is Provides adequate support (resources, guidance, and capacity-building activities) to teachers with a weighted mean of 4.43, while the lowest is Uses monitoring results to provide timely feedback and improve reading interventions for struggling readers with a weighted mean of 4.20, both still very high.

The high rating for providing adequate support indicates that school heads consistently maintain a structured system enabling teachers to implement reading programs effectively. Instructional resources, professional guidance, and capacity-building initiatives, delivered through DepEd national policies, regional trainings, Learning Action Cells (LACs), and instructional coaching, are prioritized, enhancing teachers’ skills and confidence. School reading coordinators receive proper guidance prior to program implementation, ensuring that reading initiatives are systematically carried out.

The lower rating for using monitoring results suggests that school heads actively engage in evidence-based leadership by reviewing learner progress to guide reading interventions. However, feedback may be delayed due to delegated intervention design, differences in assessment tools, teacher workloads, and the time needed to consolidate assessment data. Despite these practical challenges, the very high rating reflects school heads’ consistent recognition of the importance of using monitoring results to support struggling readers.

Table 2 Level of Literacy Leadership of the School Heads along Support and Monitoring

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. Provides adequate support (resources, guidance, and capacity-building activities) to teachers for the effective implementation of reading programs.	4.43	VHL
2. Regularly monitors the implementation of reading programs through classroom observations, review of reading data, and program evaluations.	4.41	VHL
3. Uses monitoring results to provide timely feedback and improve reading interventions for struggling readers.	4.20	VHL
Overall Weighted Mean	4.34	VHL

Rating Scale:	Descriptive Interpretation:
4.20 – 5.00 -	Very High Level (VHL)
3.40 – 4.19 -	High Level (HL)
2.60 – 3.39 -	Moderate Level (ML)
1.80 – 2.59 -	Low Level (LL)
1.00 – 1.79 -	Very Low Level (VLL)

The overall very high level of literacy leadership in support and monitoring implies that school heads demonstrate effective leadership in sustaining both assistance and accountability. This indicates that literacy programs benefit from structured oversight, adequate teacher support, and evidence-informed decision-making, contributing to the stability and effectiveness of school-wide literacy initiatives.

Secondary school heads show strong and consistent literacy leadership, characterized by active oversight, structured support, and the use of monitoring data to guide decisions. Operational factors such as workload, data

consolidation timelines, and delegation of intervention design may affect the immediacy of feedback, but these do not diminish overall leadership effectiveness. Instead, school heads balance strategic direction with shared responsibility, providing guidance and resources while empowering teachers and coordinators to implement targeted interventions, ensuring literacy initiatives are both well-directed and effectively implemented.

McDaniel (2024) affirmed the finding that school heads provide strong support to teachers through resources, guidance, and professional development, as the study revealed that principals’ active involvement in developing literacy strategies and supporting teacher growth is perceived as essential for improving literacy instruction. The study emphasizes that principals who engage in capacity-building and monitor how literacy programs are implemented help teachers feel supported and better equipped to execute reading programs effectively. Furthermore, McDaniel (2024) also supports the monitoring aspect of leadership by highlighting that principals’ supervision and follow-through on literacy implementation are critical for sustainability, which relates directly to the finding that school heads use monitoring results for feedback and intervention, even if challenges in data management and time constraints may slightly affect consistency.

**Evidence-Based Literacy.** This explores the extent to which school heads use data and research-based practices to guide literacy instruction and decision-making.

Table 3 presents the level of literacy leadership of school heads in evidence-based literacy, with an overall weighted mean of 4.41, interpreted as very high. The highest-rated indicator is Facilitate in-service training on reading content and pedagogy (phonics, comprehension strategies) with a weighted mean of 4.46, while the lowest is Use literacy-focused teaching guides and curriculum materials in instructional supervision with a weighted mean of 4.38, both very high.

Table 3 Level of Literacy Leadership of the School Heads along Evidence-based Literacy

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. Facilitate in-service training on reading content and pedagogy (phonics, comprehension strategies)	4.46	VHL
2. Lead classroom observations that assess literacy lesson alignment with learning competencies	4.41	VHL
3. Use literacy-focused teaching guides and curriculum materials in instructional supervision	4.38	VHL
Overall Weighted Mean	4.41	VHL

Rating Scale:                      Descriptive Interpretation:

4.20 – 5.00   -      Very High Level (VHL)

3.40 – 4.19   -      High Level (HL)

2.60 – 3.39   -      Moderate Level (ML)

1.80 – 2.59   -      Low Level (LL)

1.00 – 1.79   -      Very Low Level (VLL)

The high rating for facilitating in-service training indicates that school heads actively support teachers’ professional development, ensuring they are equipped with up-to-date strategies in key literacy components such as phonics, fluency, and comprehension. In secondary schools, continuous professional development is prioritized, with school heads organizing trainings through annual division- or regional-led sessions, school-based Learning Action Cells (LACs), and scheduled coaching sessions. The strong rating shows that literacy-

focused professional development is consistent and sustained, with school heads ensuring participation, follow-up, and application in classrooms.

The lower rating for using literacy-focused teaching guides and curriculum materials reflects that school heads consistently integrate literacy resources into instructional supervision. Classroom observations are guided by standardized teaching materials to align instruction with DepEd literacy standards and objectives. Practical constraints such as limited time, large class sizes, and multiple administrative responsibilities may reduce the frequency or depth of guide-based supervision, explaining the slightly lower rating, yet literacy materials are still consistently used.

The very high level of literacy leadership in evidence-based literacy indicates that school heads use research-based evidence to guide instruction and professional growth. This reflects effective leadership that supports teachers in implementing evidence-based practices, ensuring literacy remains a priority. Secondary school heads demonstrate instructional leadership through capacity-building activities and resource-based supervision, integrating current research and DepEd initiatives into classroom instruction. School heads prioritize literacy by investing in teacher professional growth and monitoring instruction with literacy-focused guides. Their support for continuous training demonstrates awareness that effective reading instruction requires up-to-date knowledge of literacy components. Despite minor practical constraints affecting guide-based supervision, school heads consistently integrate literacy standards into observations and feedback, reinforcing evidence-based literacy practices across the school.

Abella et al. (2024) corroborated these findings by showing how elementary school heads contribute to the delivery of literacy education and how their actions affect students' reading performance. Their findings revealed that school heads actively participate in curriculum and program development, facilitate professional development for teachers, and foster a positive reading culture among students, parents, and stakeholders. The study highlights that effective literacy leadership involves not only guiding instructional practices but also supporting teacher capacity-building and creating an environment conducive to literacy development. Abella et al. (2024) cited that school heads' proactive engagement in professional development and instructional guidance directly contributes to improved literacy outcomes.

**Collaborative Literacy Culture.** This variable evaluates the degree to which school heads cultivate a collaborative environment where teachers and stakeholders work together to promote literacy development.

Table 4 presents the level of literacy leadership along Collaborative Literacy Culture, with an overall weighted mean of 4.57, interpreted as very high. The highest-rated indicator is Establish functional reading teams or committees (reading coordinators, reading teachers) with a weighted mean of 4.65, while the lowest is Organize school-wide literacy events (Reading Month, book drives, Brigada Pagbasa) with a weighted mean of 4.47, both very high.

Table 4 Level of Literacy Leadership of the School Heads along Collaborative Literacy Culture

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. Establish functional reading teams or committees (reading coordinators, reading teachers)	4.65	VHL
2. Organize school-wide literacy events (Reading Month, book drives, Brigada Pagbasa)	4.47	VHL
3. Promote learning actional cells (LACs) focused on collaborative planning and reflection for literacy enhancement	4.61	VHL
Overall Weighted Mean	4.57	VHL

Rating Scale:                      Descriptive Interpretation:

4.20 – 5.00      -      Very High Level (VHL)

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3.40 – 4.19	-	<i>High Level (HL)</i>
2.60 – 3.39	-	<i>Moderate Level (ML)</i>
1.80 – 2.59	-	<i>Low Level (LL)</i>
1.00 – 1.79	-	<i>Very Low Level (VLL)</i>

The high rating for establishing reading teams or committees indicates that school heads strongly promote collaborative structures to support literacy. Responsibilities are distributed among staff, with teams coordinating reading programs, monitoring progress, and supporting instructional strategies. This reflects a culture where literacy is a collective effort rather than the responsibility of a few individuals, emphasizing shared accountability across grade levels and subject areas.

Secondary school heads actively foster teamwork by assigning specific roles to literacy team members, such as planning activities, coordinating training, organizing book drives, and monitoring progress. Structured mechanisms, including reading teams, professional learning communities, and school-based literacy programs, ensure consistent collaboration for planning, implementing, and monitoring literacy initiatives. Regular meetings allow teams to discuss learners' needs, analyze assessment data, share strategies, and adjust interventions. This collaborative culture strengthens community engagement, encourages collective ownership of literacy goals, and sustains reading development across the school.

The lower rating for organizing school-wide literacy events indicates that school heads engage the entire school community in promoting literacy through activities like Reading Month, book drives, and Brigada Pagbasa. These events foster enthusiasm for reading and reinforce literacy as a shared value. While practical constraints such as scheduling, budget limitations, and reliance on external support may limit the frequency or scope of events, the very high rating shows school heads consistently prioritize opportunities to cultivate a school-wide reading culture.

The overall very high level of literacy leadership in collaborative culture implies that school heads effectively mobilize teamwork, shared responsibilities, and community engagement to sustain literacy initiatives. Structured mechanisms such as reading teams and professional learning communities ensure that planning, monitoring, and literacy promotion are coordinated and continuous.

Secondary school heads not only establish literacy teams and shared responsibilities but also communicate a clear school-wide vision for reading. They encourage joint problem-solving and teacher participation in decision-making, increasing commitment and ownership of literacy goals. Resource-sharing, coordinated planning, and recognition of collaborative achievements, including involvement of parents and community partners, ensure that literacy becomes a sustained, collective effort rather than isolated activities, explaining the very high overall rating.

Mansueto et al. (2024) supported the finding that school heads foster a strong collaborative literacy culture through structured teamwork and shared responsibility. Their study emphasizes that literacy development is catalyzed by collaboration with parents, families, and community stakeholders, indicating that literacy leadership is not confined to school personnel alone but extends to broader partnerships. This supports the very high rating for establishing functional reading teams or committees, as the study highlights the importance of collaborative leadership structures and collective efforts in sustaining literacy improvement. The study also supports the finding that school heads organize school-wide literacy events, as these activities represent community engagement and collective participation in promoting a reading culture. It further reinforces that strong collaborative leadership and community involvement contribute to a sustained literacy culture.

### **Level of Implementation of the Reading Programs in the District**

This section presents the findings of the study on the level of implementation of key reading programs in the division. Reading is a critical skill that serves as the foundation for academic success and lifelong learning. To

strengthen learners’ reading competencies and address learning gaps, the district has implemented various literacy interventions, including Catch-Up Fridays, Brigada Pagbasa, and the schools’ reading programs as shown in table 5.

**Catch-Up Fridays Reading Program.** This part analyzes the level of implementation of Catch-Up Fridays, an intervention designed to provide additional instructional time for learners to recover and strengthen their reading skills. The level of implementation of the Catch-Up Fridays Reading Program obtained an overall weighted mean of 4.18, interpreted as mostly implemented. The highest-rated indicator is ‘The program provides assessments to identify students’ reading levels, struggling readers, and areas of need, and utilizes appropriate interventions for individualized support’ with a weighted mean of 4.46 interpreted as fully implemented, while the lowest is Implementation of educational software and apps designed to improve reading skills with a weighted mean of 3.76 interpreted as mostly implemented.

The high rating for providing assessments indicates that the program strongly emphasizes assessment-driven instruction. Diagnostic and progress-monitoring assessments allow teachers to identify each student’s reading level and learning gaps, ensuring interventions are tailored to individual needs. This approach is particularly important for struggling readers, who require targeted support in areas such as phonics, fluency, vocabulary, or comprehension.

Table 5 Level of Implementation of the Reading Programs

Measures	Catch-Up Fridays Reading Program		Brigada Pagbasa		School’s Reading Program	
	WM	I	WM	I	WM	I
1. Manpower, funding, and materials are readily available and consistently allocated to support the reading program.	4.33	FI	4.30	FI	4.48	FI
2. A comprehensive system for program support and monitoring is in place, including ongoing training for teachers, regular program assessments, and classroom observations.	4.27	FI	4.19	MI	4.41	FI
3. The program provides ongoing assessments to identify students' reading levels, struggling readers, and areas of need, and utilizes appropriate interventions for individualized support.	4.46	FI	4.28	FI	4.51	FI
4. Implementation of educational software and apps designed to improve reading skills.	3.76	MI	3.70	MI	3.82	MI
5. Ongoing monitoring and feedback to track student progress and adjust instruction accordingly.	4.35	FI	4.32	FI	4.52	FI
6. Conducting reading challenges and competitions to motivate students to read more.	3.94	MI	3.92	MI	4.28	FI
Overall Weighted Mean	4.18	MI	4.12	MI	4.34	FI

Rating Scale: Descriptive Interpretation:

4.20 – 5.00 - Fully Implemented (FI)

3.40 – 4.19 - Mostly Implemented (MI)

2.60 – 3.39 - Partially Implemented (PI)

1.80 – 2.59 - Minimally Implemented (MI)

1.00 – 1.79 - Not Implemented (NI)

Assessment data guide teachers in designing differentiated lesson plans, grouping students by similar needs, and providing one-on-one support when necessary. For example, students struggling with phonics receive focused decoding practice, while those with comprehension difficulties engage in guided reading and discussion activities. This ensures interventions directly address students' weaknesses rather than using a generic approach.

Merga et al. (2020) affirmed these findings with their study on the national Supporting Struggling Secondary Literacy Learners (SSSLL) project, highlighting the importance of assessment-driven, targeted support for struggling readers. The authors emphasize that a whole-school approach and adequate support strategies are essential to effectively address literacy difficulties, reinforcing the idea that systematic identification and intervention are critical components of successful literacy programs. Although their findings point out limited awareness among teachers regarding existing literacy support structures, this indicates that when such strategies are properly implemented, they can significantly strengthen literacy support for struggling learners, especially when assessment data is used to inform instruction and interventions.

The lower rating for the use of educational software and apps indicates that technology integration within the program is limited. Many secondary schools face challenges such as device shortages, unreliable internet connectivity, and limited access to appropriate software. Teachers' limited training and experience in technology-enhanced literacy instruction further restrict the use of digital tools.

Additionally, the program prioritizes traditional, teacher-led instruction during weekly sessions, which naturally emphasizes face-to-face methods over digital resources. Budget constraints and the allocation of resources toward materials and personnel for in-person interventions further limit the adoption of educational software.

The Catch-Up Fridays Reading Program is effectively implemented in most areas. Structured weekly sessions allow teachers to identify struggling readers, provide targeted support, monitor progress, and adjust instruction. Interventions such as guided reading, phonics reinforcement, and comprehension practice are consistently applied, demonstrating a reliable support system for learners.

Despite these strengths, limitations remain in technology use. Logistical barriers such as insufficient devices, unstable internet, and prioritization of face-to-face instruction restrict the regular integration of educational apps and software. While traditional methods remain effective, these constraints prevent the program from achieving full implementation.

**Brigada Pagbasa.** This section examines the extent to which Brigada Pagbasa has been implemented, focusing on community involvement and school-based activities aimed at promoting reading among learners.

The level of implementation of the Reading Programs under Brigada Pagbasa has an overall weighted mean of 4.12, interpreted as mostly implemented. The highest-rated indicator is 'Ongoing monitoring and feedback to track student progress and adjust instruction accordingly' with a weighted mean of 4.32 interpreted as fully implemented, while the lowest is also related to monitoring and feedback with a weighted mean of 3.70 with a weighted mean of mostly implemented.

The high rating for ongoing monitoring and feedback indicates that Brigada Pagbasa emphasizes continuous assessment practices. Although the program currently focuses on reading sessions, book donations, and creating reading corners, it maintains a strong commitment to tracking student progress. Reading facilitators and teachers regularly conduct brief reading checks, fluency measures, and comprehension activities during sessions. Data gathered from these practices enable instructors to adjust teaching approaches, ensuring instruction remains responsive and effective. When students show growth, facilitators provide more advanced tasks; when students struggle, instruction is tailored to specific skill areas, such as decoding or comprehension. This cycle of monitoring, feedback, and adjustment demonstrates the program's learner-centered and evidence-based approach.

The findings from the Brigada Pagbasa implementation align with research by Cordova et al. (2024), who discussed the positive relationship between leadership practices, especially transformational leadership, and literacy development in early childhood education. The authors highlighted the long-term benefits of strong literacy leadership, which echoes the program's emphasis on ongoing monitoring and feedback for effective instructional adjustments. The tailored approaches used in Brigada Pagbasa, where instruction is adjusted based on student progress, mirrors the practices emphasized in Cordova et al.'s study, where leadership plays a crucial role in adapting programs to meet specific needs.

Furthermore, Cordova et al. (2024) indirectly support the observation of limited technology integration in Brigada Pagbasa. Similar to the context described in their study, many literacy programs in community-based settings, such as Brigada Pagbasa, rely more on human facilitation and school-based or community-driven interventions than on technology-driven tools. The challenges identified in Brigada Pagbasa, including insufficient devices, unreliable internet, and limited digital tool familiarity, reflect the broader trend in literacy programs that prioritize community and school-based activities over technology, aligning with the study's findings on the nature of literacy initiatives in early childhood education.

**School's Reading Program.** This indicator evaluates the implementation of the school's reading program, highlighting how schools integrate structured reading activities into the curriculum and daily routines. The overall weighted mean for the School's Reading Program is 4.34, interpreted as fully implemented.

The highest-rated indicator is The program provides ongoing assessments to identify students reading levels, struggling readers, and areas of need, and utilizes appropriate interventions for individualized support with a weighted mean of 4.51, interpreted as fully implemented, while the lowest is Implementation of educational software and apps designed to improve reading skills with a weighted mean of 3.82, interpreted as mostly implemented.

The high rating for ongoing assessments indicates that the program strongly emphasizes diagnostic assessment and individualized support. Assessment data guide instructional decisions, ensuring interventions are targeted to students' specific needs. In secondary schools, teachers regularly assess phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, and comprehension to identify learning gaps. Struggling readers receive tailored support, and instructional strategies are adjusted based on continuous progress monitoring. This structured, evidence-based approach ensures that the program responds effectively to learner differences.

The lower rating for educational software and apps indicates that technology is present but not fully embedded in daily reading activities. Limited devices, unreliable internet, and insufficient teacher training restrict consistent use. Digital tools are mainly supplementary, supporting activities such as interactive reading practice or skill-building games, rather than forming a central component of instruction.

The School's Reading Program is well-organized and consistently implemented. Teachers conduct regular assessments, track progress, adjust lessons, group students by need, and provide targeted support such as guided reading and skill-based practice. These practices demonstrate a strong focus on improving students' reading abilities.

However, technology integration remains an area for improvement. With more devices, reliable internet, and teacher training, digital tools could enrich instruction, support diverse learning styles, and make reading sessions more engaging, while maintaining the program's strong assessment and support framework.

Suriagiri (2022) affirmed these findings by emphasizing that effective school leadership, through fostering strong relationships among school officials, faculty, and staff, plays a crucial role in the successful implementation of literacy initiatives. The study highlighted that leadership mediates collaboration among stakeholders, ensuring that teaching and learning processes focus on long-term literacy improvement. The fully implemented School's Reading Program, with its emphasis on ongoing assessments and individualized support for struggling readers, reflects a structured and coordinated approach guided by school leadership. The high level of program implementation observed in the present study demonstrates how leadership-driven collaboration and guidance enable literacy initiatives to be effectively executed and responsive to students' needs.

## Relationship between the Level of Literacy and Leadership of the School Heads and the Level of Implementation of the Reading Programs

Table 6 presents the results of the test for a significant relationship between the level of literacy leadership of school heads and the implementation of reading programs. Before analyzing these relationships, a normality test was conducted, indicating that the data were normally distributed. The Pearson Product–Moment Correlation ( $r$ ) was therefore applied to determine the strength and direction of the relationships. The correlation coefficients ranged from 0.383 to 0.579, with  $p$ -values less than 0.01 ( $p < 0.01$ ), indicating statistically significant positive relationships.

Table 6 Test for Significant Relationship between the Level of Literacy Leadership of the School Heads and the Level of Implementation of the Reading Programs

Literacy Leadership	Implementation of Reading Programs					
	Catch-Up Fridays' Reading Program		Brigada Pagbasa		School Reading Program	
	$r$	$p$ -value	$r$	$p$ -value	$r$	$p$ -value
Shared Literacy Vision	.444**	.000	.462**	.000	.468**	.000
Supporting and Monitoring	.383**	.000	.384**	.000	.418**	.000
Evidence-based Literacy	.405**	.000	.456**	.000	.579**	.000
Collaborative Literacy Culture	.395**	.000	.513**	.000	.513**	.000

\*\*Correlation is significant @ 0.01 level \*Correlation is significant @ 0.05 level

The findings reveal that all literacy leadership variables are positively and significantly related to the implementation of reading programs. This indicates that higher levels of literacy leadership among school heads are associated with more effective and consistent execution of school reading initiatives. Specifically, shared literacy vision shows moderate positive correlations with Catch-Up Fridays' Reading Program ( $r = .444$ ,  $p < .01$ ), Brigada Pagbasa ( $r = .462$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and the School Reading Program ( $r = .468$ ,  $p < .01$ ). When school heads clearly articulate and promote a unified literacy vision, including integration in the School Improvement Plan and Annual Implementation Plan, teachers and stakeholders are more aligned and motivated to implement reading programs effectively.

Shared vision supports ongoing assessments, enabling teachers to identify students' reading levels, target struggling readers, and implement individualized interventions such as small-group guided reading, targeted phonics instruction, or personalized reading materials. Continuous monitoring and feedback ensure that instruction is adjusted based on observed outcomes, such as fluency or comprehension challenges. School heads also organize targeted professional development sessions to address common instructional challenges.

Support and monitoring similarly show significant positive correlations with Catch-Up Fridays ( $r = .383$ ,  $p < .01$ ), Brigada Pagbasa ( $r = .384$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and the School Reading Program ( $r = .418$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Consistent instructional support, supervision, and monitoring help sustain systematic implementation, ensuring that activities are executed and evaluated as planned. In practice, school heads observe classroom reading sessions, provide feedback, facilitate workshops, review assessment data, and coordinate with teachers and parents to track attendance and participation. These actions reinforce the quality and effectiveness of reading programs.

Evidence-based literacy demonstrates moderate positive correlations with Catch-Up Fridays ( $r = .405$ ,  $p < .01$ ), Brigada Pagbasa ( $r = .456$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and a strong correlation with the School Reading Program ( $r = .579$ ,  $p < .01$ ). This suggests that school heads' literacy expertise, including knowledge of phonics, comprehension strategies, and reading pedagogy, critically supports instructional guidance, selection of interventions, and alignment of reading activities with learners' needs. Deep understanding of literacy instruction strengthens

program design, monitoring, and professional development, ensuring that long-term, school-wide reading initiatives are effectively implemented.

Collaborative literacy culture also exhibits moderate-to-strong positive correlations with Catch-Up Fridays ( $r = .395, p < .01$ ), Brigada Pagbasa ( $r = .513, p < .01$ ), and the School Reading Program ( $r = .513, p < .01$ ). Promoting collaboration among teachers, parents, and community stakeholders through functional reading teams or committees strengthens shared responsibility and collective action. In practice, this includes joint planning, coordination of interventions, and collective monitoring of learners' progress. Collaboration ensures consistency, enhances support systems, improves resource allocation, and increases community engagement, all of which contribute to the sustainability and effectiveness of literacy initiatives.

The correlation results indicate that both evidence-based literacy and collaborative literacy culture are key drivers of successful reading program implementation. Positive relationships across all programs show that when school heads possess strong literacy expertise and actively foster collaboration, reading initiatives are implemented with higher quality and fidelity. Evidence-based literacy is particularly influential for sustaining school-wide programs, while collaborative culture enhances community-based interventions such as Brigada Pagbasa.

Estacio and Estacio (2022) corroborated the significant positive relationships found between literacy leadership and the implementation of reading programs. Estacio's study highlights that the effectiveness of school heads in implementing programs relies heavily on the clarity of their vision, leadership capability, and collaboration with key stakeholders, which directly aligns with the positive correlations observed across shared literacy vision, support and monitoring, evidence-based literacy, and collaborative literacy culture. The author provides strong support for the finding that higher levels of literacy leadership among school heads are associated with more effective and consistent implementation of reading programs.

### **Proposed Intervention to Enhance Literacy Leadership and Improve the Implementation of Reading Programs**

The study revealed that the integration of educational software and applications for reading instruction was the lowest-rated aspect of school heads' literacy leadership. While teachers demonstrated competence in conventional reading strategies, they showed limited knowledge, confidence, and experience in using technology-based tools to enhance reading programs. Minimal exposure to educational application development and limited use of digital platforms restricted opportunities for interactive learning, learner engagement, and differentiated instruction. To address this gap, the tech-READY: A Beginner's Training on Developing and Implementing Reading Apps program was developed. The two-day intervention aims to enhance teachers' understanding of educational reading applications, build skills in designing simple apps using beginner-friendly platforms, and strengthen their ability to implement and evaluate these tools in classrooms. Day one focuses on foundational knowledge, instructional content design, and analyzing existing reading apps, while day two emphasizes hands-on app development, peer testing, and formulating classroom implementation plans. Initially piloted at Jose Panganiban National High School, the program will be expanded to other schools subject to positive results and resource availability, aiming to optimize the use of technology in reading instruction.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the findings, several conclusions were drawn. School heads in the Division of Camarines Norte demonstrate a very high level of literacy leadership by institutionalizing literacy goals in planning documents such as the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Annual Implementation Plan (AIP), providing strong support and monitoring for reading programs, enhancing literacy knowledge through professional development, and fostering collaboration through active reading teams and committees. However, communication of the literacy vision and the use of monitoring results for timely feedback may still be improved. Reading programs in the district are generally well implemented, with the School Reading Program fully implemented and Catch-Up Fridays and Brigada Pagbasa mostly implemented, although the use of educational software and reading applications remains limited. The results also revealed a significant positive relationship between literacy leadership and reading program implementation, indicating that strong literacy leadership contributes to effective

program implementation. Consequently, the proposed tech-READY training program was developed to strengthen teachers' capacity to integrate educational software and reading applications into literacy instruction.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, several recommendations are proposed to further strengthen literacy leadership and the implementation of reading programs. School heads may establish structured literacy leadership routines by conducting quarterly literacy planning and review meetings to clearly communicate the school's literacy vision, monitor progress of literacy goals in the SIP and AIP, and provide timely feedback to improve reading interventions. They may also work with ICT coordinators to enhance reading programs by integrating educational software and reading applications into activities such as Catch-Up Fridays, Brigada Pagbasa, and the School Reading Program, including providing access to devices and training teachers to utilize digital tools for differentiated instruction and progress monitoring. Education Program Supervisors and Public Schools District Supervisors may organize capacity-building workshops for school heads focusing on evidence-based literacy instruction, data-driven decision-making, and collaborative leadership practices to strengthen program implementation. In addition, school administrators may support the implementation of the proposed tech-READY training program to enhance teachers' skills in developing and integrating reading applications into instruction. Future researchers may also conduct follow-up studies to examine the effectiveness of reading applications on learners' reading performance and further improve literacy intervention programs.

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