

Unveiling Student Reading Engagement: Role of Elementary School Coordinators

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Abstract— The goal of the study was to explore the experiences of elementary school coordinators in unveiling students' reading engagement. This study was beneficial for administrators, as data gathered will serve as research-based information that was used in motivating and giving technical assistance to the school reading coordinators who encounter difficulty in unveiling students' reading engagement.

The results of my analysis revealed the following significant findings.

Based on the experiences of elementary school coordinators in unveiling students' reading engagement, results of the interview revealed the following themes: First, creating a reading culture, as a reading culture is a key experience of elementary school coordinators in unveiling student reading engagement. They actively work towards developing an environment where reading is celebrated, valued, and integrated into the daily life of the school community. Second, providing access to diverse reading processes, wherein coordinators work closely with teachers, librarians, and other stakeholders to ensure that students have a wide range of reading materials available to them, catering to their interests, reading levels, and cultural backgrounds. Third, implementing engaging reading programs and strategies. Implementing engaging reading programs and strategies is a crucial experience of elementary school coordinators in unveiling student reading engagement.

I. Introduction

Reading engagement plays a crucial role in students' academic success and overall development. It encompasses not only the ability to read but also the motivation, interest, and active involvement in reading activities. In elementary schools, reading coordinators hold a significant position in promoting and enhancing student reading engagement. These coordinators are responsible for designing and implementing reading programs, providing support to teachers, and fostering a positive reading culture within the school. However, there is limited research that delves into the specific role and impact of elementary school reading coordinators on student reading engagement. This study aims to uncover the role of elementary school reading coordinators in student reading engagement through a qualitative exploration.

The role of elementary school reading coordinators goes beyond administrative tasks. They act as facilitators, advocates, and instructional leaders in promoting reading engagement among students. They collaborate with classroom teachers to develop strategies and interventions tailored to meet the diverse reading needs of students. Moreover, they coordinate professional development

opportunities for teachers to enhance their instructional practices in literacy. Despite the potential influence of these reading coordinators, there is a need to examine their specific roles, practices, challenges, and successes in fostering student reading engagement.

In Finland, great importance is placed on literacy and reading engagement among elementary school students. Elementary school reading coordinators in Finland have a multifaceted role in student reading engagement. They collaborate closely with teachers to design and implement effective reading programs that cater to the diverse needs of students. These coordinators provide guidance and support to teachers in selecting appropriate reading materials, implementing instructional strategies, and assessing students' reading progress (Sintonen & Kivirauma, 2019). They also organize various reading-related activities, such as book clubs, author visits, and reading challenges, to create a stimulating and engaging reading environment for students. Moreover, reading coordinators in Finland actively collaborate with parents and the wider community to involve them in supporting students' reading engagement and promoting a culture of reading (Sintonen & Kivirauma, 2019).

School reading coordinators in Finland are reinforced by the country's comprehensive approach to literacy education. Finland's national curriculum places a strong emphasis on literacy skills and reading promotion, recognizing the role of reading coordinators in achieving these goals (Rautiainen, 2016). Reading coordinators work in tandem with the curriculum guidelines to ensure that reading engagement is embedded in daily classroom practices and school-wide initiatives. By actively engaging in the promotion of student reading engagement, elementary school reading coordinators in Finland contribute significantly to the development of students' literacy skills, their enjoyment of reading, and their overall academic success.

In China, elementary school reading coordinators play a multifaceted role in student reading engagement. They work closely with classroom teachers to develop and implement effective reading strategies tailored to meet the diverse needs of students. These coordinators provide professional development opportunities for teachers to enhance their instructional practices in literacy (Li & Wu, 2019). They also engage in activities such as organizing reading events, book fairs, and competitions to create a stimulating reading environment and cultivate students' interest in reading. Additionally, reading coordinators collaborate with parents and the wider community to involve them in supporting and promoting reading engagement among students (Li & Wu, 2019).

The role of elementary school reading coordinators in China is further strengthened by the government's emphasis on literacy and reading promotion. Policies and initiatives, such as the National Reading Promotion Plan, support the role of reading coordinators and highlight their importance in cultivating a reading culture (Huang, 2018). These coordinators work towards achieving the national goal of enhancing literacy levels and fostering a lifelong love for reading among Chinese students. By actively engaging in the promotion of reading engagement, elementary school reading coordinators in China contribute significantly to the overall literacy

development and academic success of students, aligning with the broader goals of the education system.

In Indonesia, the role of elementary school reading coordinators is pivotal in fostering student reading engagement and promoting literacy development. These coordinators play a vital role in supporting students' reading skills, cultivating a reading culture, and enhancing overall literacy outcomes. Elementary school reading coordinators in Indonesia collaborate closely with teachers to design and implement reading initiatives that cater to the diverse needs of students. They provide guidance and support in selecting appropriate reading materials, implementing evidence-based instructional practices, and assessing students' reading progress (Jupri et al., 2018). These coordinators also facilitate professional development workshops and training sessions for teachers to enhance their knowledge and skills in promoting student reading engagement. Additionally, reading coordinators organize literacy events, book clubs, and reading competitions to create an engaging and supportive reading environment for students. They work collaboratively with school administrators, teachers, and parents to cultivate a love for reading among students and to ensure that reading is integrated into various aspects of the curriculum (Jupri et al., 2018).

Reading coordinators in Indonesia are supported by national educational policies and initiatives. The Indonesian government emphasizes the importance of literacy development and reading promotion in the national curriculum framework (Kemendikbud, 2016). Reading coordinators align their efforts with the curriculum guidelines to ensure that reading engagement is integrated into classroom practices. They contribute to the implementation of literacy programs and initiatives at the school level, striving to enhance students' reading engagement, comprehension, and critical thinking skills. By actively engaging in the promotion of reading engagement, elementary school reading coordinators in Indonesia play a crucial role in nurturing students' literacy development and academic success.

In the Philippines, elementary school reading coordinators are supported by educational policies and initiatives that prioritize literacy development. The Department of Education (DepEd) emphasizes the importance of reading and language proficiency in its curriculum frameworks (DepEd, 2013). Reading coordinators work within this framework to ensure that reading engagement is integrated into classroom practices and school-wide initiatives. They actively contribute to the implementation of literacy programs, monitor students' reading progress, and provide professional development opportunities for teachers to enhance their instructional practices in reading. By actively promoting reading engagement, elementary school reading coordinators in the Philippines play a vital role in improving students' literacy skills and nurturing a lifelong love for reading.

Elementary school reading coordinators in the Philippines collaborate closely with teachers to design and implement reading initiatives that enhance students' reading engagement. They assist teachers in selecting appropriate reading materials, developing instructional strategies, and implementing assessment tools to monitor students' progress (Dizon & Macalalag, 2019). These

coordinators also organize reading-related activities, such as book clubs, storytelling sessions, and reading contests, to create a vibrant and interactive reading environment for students. Furthermore, reading coordinators collaborate with parents and the wider community to encourage reading at home and involve families in supporting students' reading development (Dizon & Macalalag, 2019).

In the local scenario of Tugbok A District, elementary school reading coordinators face diverse encounters in their role in unveiling the students' reading engagement. It is within this local scenario that the present study was developed with the aim of exploring the teachers' experiences, strategies employed, and the valuable insights they have acquired while navigating the challenges of students' reading engagement.

II. Methodology

In this study the experiences of elementary school coordinators in unveiling student reading engagement in Tugbok A District were gathered through an In-Depth Interview (IDI) as well as their coping mechanisms were extracted from the participants.

The researcher's drive in knowing the deeper meaning of the experiences of elementary school coordinators in unveiling student reading engagement became the basis for doing qualitative research, a means of which Kalof and Dietz (2008), as cited from Gerodias, (2013) considered helpful in looking for "meanings and motivations that underlie cultural symbols, personal experiences and phenomena". By using phenomenology, this need was hoped to be addressed by bringing the experiences of elementary school coordinators in unveiling student reading engagement in a manner that, as David (2005) wrote, the themes, symbols and meaning of the experiences presented. Phenomenological research was based on two premises. The first was that experience was a valid, rich and rewarding source of knowledge. According to Becker (1992), as cited in Morrissey & Higgs, (2006), that experience was a source of knowledge and shapes one's behavior.

From the definition, human experience was viewed as a cornerstone of knowledge about human phenomena and not as an unreliable source. The second premise of phenomenological research lies in the view that the everyday world is a valuable and productive source of knowledge, and that we can learn much about ourselves and reap key insights into the nature of an event by analyzing how it occurs in our daily lives (Morrissey & Higgs, 2006).

By doing phenomenology which concerns "what" and the "how" (Moustakas, 1995), the researcher projected that the experiences, mechanisms used by elementary school coordinators were explored and insights drawn the basis for the possible future researches and policy analysis in relation to this research.

III. Results and Discussion

Experiences of elementary school coordinators in unveiling students' reading engagement

The role of elementary school coordinators in unveiling student reading engagement is of significant importance in promoting a love for reading and academic success among students. These coordinators play a crucial role in creating an environment that fosters reading engagement and provides students with the necessary resources and support to develop their reading skills. Understanding the experiences of elementary school coordinators in this endeavor is essential for gaining insights into effective practices and strategies that contribute to student reading engagement.

Muijs, Harris, and Chapman (2019) highlights the significance of a supportive reading culture in engaging students with reading. It emphasizes the role of coordinators in fostering a positive attitude towards reading and creating an environment where reading is valued and celebrated. Additionally, Smith (2018) explores the professional development needs and activities of elementary school reading coordinators, shedding light on the experiences and strategies they employ to enhance student reading engagement. Coordinators collaborate closely with teachers to design and implement engaging reading programs and initiatives that capture students' interests and cater to their diverse learning needs. These strategies may include guided reading, independent reading, literature circles, and digital platforms that enhance students' interaction with texts. Coordinators also play a vital role in assessing student progress, providing feedback, and offering targeted support to help students develop their reading skills and comprehension abilities. By implementing these strategies, coordinators actively promote student agency, motivation, and ownership over their reading experiences.

Creating a Reading Culture. Creating a reading culture is a key experience of elementary school coordinators in unveiling student reading engagement. They actively work towards developing an environment where reading is celebrated, valued, and integrated into the daily life of the school community. By fostering a reading culture, coordinators aim to promote a positive attitude towards reading and cultivate a love for books among students.

Analysis

Elementary school coordinators play a pivotal role in promoting student reading engagement. However, they face various challenges that can hinder their efforts to effectively unveil the joy and importance of reading among students. These challenges may include limited resources, diverse student needs, time constraints, and changing educational landscapes. To overcome these obstacles and successfully foster student reading engagement, coordinators employ coping mechanisms that help them navigate these challenges and ensure meaningful reading experiences for students.

Coping mechanisms are strategies and approaches used to manage and overcome challenges or stressful situations. In the context of elementary school coordinators working towards unveiling student reading engagement, coping mechanisms serve as valuable tools to address and overcome the hurdles they encounter. These mechanisms allow coordinators to adapt, innovate, and find effective solutions that support student learning and engagement.

Professional Development and Collaboration. Professional development and collaboration are essential coping mechanisms employed by elementary school coordinators to address the challenges they face in unveiling student reading engagement. These mechanisms provide coordinators with the knowledge, skills, and support needed to enhance their instructional practices and effectively promote reading engagement among students.

Professional development opportunities play a crucial role in equipping coordinators with up-to-date research, instructional strategies, and best practices in literacy instruction. By attending workshops, conferences, and training sessions focused on reading instruction, coordinators deepen their understanding of effective pedagogical approaches and gain valuable insights into promoting reading engagement (Smith, 2017). Professional development also helps coordinators stay informed about emerging trends, technology tools, and innovative teaching methods that can be integrated into their instruction (Sawchuk, 2020). Through ongoing learning and collaboration with fellow educators, coordinators can adapt their practices to meet the evolving needs of students and overcome challenges.

Collaboration with colleagues and literacy specialists is a vital aspect of professional development and a powerful coping mechanism for elementary school coordinators. Collaborative networks, such as professional learning communities or study groups, provide a platform for coordinators to share experiences, discuss challenges, and exchange ideas and resources (DuFour et al., 2010). Engaging in collaborative problem-solving allows coordinators to tap into the collective wisdom of their peers, learn from their successes and failures, and find innovative solutions to address the specific challenges they encounter in promoting reading engagement (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001). This collaborative approach fosters a sense of camaraderie, support, and professional growth among coordinators, ultimately enhancing their ability to tackle challenges more effectively.

Discussion

Based on the findings of the study, it is important that some important moves must be taken into consideration and be made available for the elementary school reading coordinators considering bulk of their work on their assigned function and in unveiling students' reading engagement.

This study may provide an avenue for school heads to prioritize the allocation of resources and support for reading programs, ensuring that there are sufficient materials, books, and technological tools to enhance reading engagement. Secondly, they can promote professional

development opportunities for teachers to enhance their knowledge and skills in fostering reading engagement. Thirdly, school heads can collaborate with parents and the wider community to create a reading culture that extends beyond the classroom. Lastly, they can implement assessment and monitoring systems to track students' reading progress and identify areas for improvement, enabling targeted interventions to enhance reading engagement.

As for the elementary school reading coordinators themselves, they can continue to explore innovative teaching strategies and techniques that promote reading engagement, such as incorporating technology and interactive activities into their lessons. Secondly, they can collaborate with other teachers and share best practices to enhance their knowledge and skills in fostering reading engagement. Thirdly, they can establish strong partnerships with parents and families, involving them in reading-related activities and encouraging home reading habits. Lastly, they can regularly assess and monitor students' reading progress, using the data to inform instructional decisions and tailor interventions to individual needs. By continuously improving their own practices, elementary school coordinators can contribute to the ongoing enhancement of students' reading engagement.

The learners, along with their parents, should look into their possible contributions they could work on to further make their experience with reading engagement better for them as learners, parents, and teachers.

For future researchers, similar studies may be conducted in other regions or divisions. The researchers may consider other aspects of the experiences of the elementary school coordinators in unveiling students' reading engagement.

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She has completed her academic requirements for the degree Master of Arts in Educational Management (MA-EM) at Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc. Davao City, Philippines. Her research entitled “UNVEILING STUDENT READING ENGAGEMENT: ROLE OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COORDINATORS”. The goal of the study was to explore the experiences of elementary school coordinators in unveiling students’ reading engagement. This study was beneficial for administrators, as data gathered will serve as research-based information that was used in motivating and giving technical assistance to the school reading coordinators who encounter difficulty in unveiling students’ reading engagement.