

Institutionalizing Instructional Supervision Praxis to Improve Reading Performance Among Grade 1 Learners

Anhar H. Ibrahim¹, Jocelyn A. Pajiji, EdD², Analyn A. Imuy³, Shernalyn K. Kalimuddin³, Judylyn T. Aminulla⁴, Lena T. Lastam¹

¹*Instructor II, Integrated Laboratory School, College of Education, Mindanao State University Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography*

²*Associate Professor V, Department of Educational Leadership and Professional Services, College of Education, Mindanao State University Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography*

³*Administrative Aide VI, Integrated Laboratory School, College of Education, Mindanao State University Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography*

⁴*Master of Arts in Education Student, College of Education, Mindanao State University Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography*

Publication history: Received: March 18, 2026; Revised: April 5, 2026; Accepted: April 9, 2026

Email of Corresponding Author: anharibrahim@msutawi-tawi.edu.ph

Abstract

This action research examined the effectiveness of institutionalizing a developmentally responsive instructional supervision praxis in improving the reading performance of Grade 1 learners in a public elementary school context in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi. Anchored on instructional supervision theory and guided by the Plan–Act–Observe–Reflect (PAOR) cycle, the study employed a quali-quantitative design involving 27 learners who participated in a one-month supervision-supported reading intervention. Quantitative data were gathered using pre-test and post-test reading assessments, while qualitative data were obtained through observation logs, supervision checklists, coaching notes, and teacher reflective journals. Results revealed a significant improvement in reading performance, with independent readers increasing from 3 to 7 and non-readers decreasing from 10 to 2. Statistical analysis confirmed a significant difference ($t(26) = 9.72, p < .001$). Qualitative findings indicated enhanced learner engagement, improved instructional consistency among teachers, and strengthened reflective teaching practices. Challenges such as learner fatigue and limited parental support were also observed. The study concludes that institutionalizing instructional supervision praxis is an effective and sustainable approach to improving early grade literacy. It recommends the expansion of supervision-based reading programs, sustained coaching and feedback, targeted remediation, and replication in similar educational contexts. This study supports Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) by promoting inclusive and equitable literacy development across diverse educational settings. It contributes to sustainability by strengthening institutional practices, enhancing teacher capacity, and fostering long-term improvements in learner outcomes in low-performing educational environments.

Keywords: Action Research, BARMM, Grade 1 Learners, Instructional Supervision, Reading Performance

1. Introduction

Reading literacy is a foundational skill for academic success, yet persistent challenges remain in early grade reading, particularly in geographically isolated and resource-constrained contexts. In regions such as Tawi-Tawi in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), low reading proficiency has been linked to limited instructional support, inadequate learning resources, and systemic constraints. While early reading interventions exist, their effectiveness is often undermined by the lack of sustained, developmentally responsive instructional supervision. This study examines the institutionalization of instructional supervision praxis as a strategy to improve reading performance among Grade 1 learners through structured support, coaching, and reflective teaching practices.

Reading difficulties among early learners remain a significant concern, particularly in underserved regions. According to the EDCOM II Report (2023), many children in BARMM demonstrate low reading proficiency due to geographic isolation, limited access to resources, and inconsistent instructional support. Despite the implementation of early grade reading programs, these interventions often yield limited long-term outcomes because supervision is frequently treated as a compliance-driven process rather than a developmental and supportive mechanism. Instructional supervision, when approached as a collaborative and reflective practice, has been shown to enhance both teacher effectiveness and student learning outcomes (Glickman et al., 2018; Hallinger, 2016). This study explores whether institutionalizing such supervision practices can address persistent literacy gaps.

Existing literature highlights the critical role of instructional supervision in improving teaching quality and learner performance. Developmental and reflective supervision models emphasize coaching, feedback, and professional dialogue as essential components of effective instruction (Glickman et al., 2018; Hallinger, 2016). Guided reading and structured literacy interventions have also been identified as effective strategies in early grade reading development (Fountas & Pinnell, 2017; National Reading Panel, 2000; Snow et al., 2020). Additionally, studies in the Philippine context demonstrate that supervision-supported reading interventions can significantly enhance literacy outcomes (Navarro, 2018; Reyes & Santos, 2020). These findings underscore the importance of integrating supervision with instructional practices to ensure consistency, responsiveness, and sustained improvement.

At the local level, literacy challenges in Tawi-Tawi reflect broader educational disparities in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas. Regional reports indicate ongoing struggles in learning recovery and literacy development (MBHTE-BARMM, 2022). Nationally, literacy remains a continuing challenge in Philippine basic education, with reports highlighting gaps in early reading proficiency and access to quality instruction (Bernardo, 2017; DepEd, 2020; Philippine Statistics Authority, 2025). Globally, early grade literacy is recognized as a key determinant of long-term educational success, with international research emphasizing the need for evidence-based instructional practices and sustained teacher support (National Reading Panel, 2000; Snow et al., 2020). These contexts collectively highlight the urgency of strengthening instructional systems, particularly through effective supervision.

This study is grounded in developmental and sociocultural learning theories that emphasize guided instruction and reflective practice. Instructional supervision frameworks advocate for collaborative, growth-oriented approaches that support teacher development and instructional improvement (Glickman et al., 2018; Sergiovanni, 2018). Additionally, Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory highlights the importance of scaffolding and guided learning within the learner's zone of proximal development, reinforcing the role of structured support in literacy acquisition. The integration of the Plan–Act–Observe–Reflect (PAOR) cycle further supports iterative improvement by aligning supervision with continuous monitoring and reflection.

Despite extensive research on early literacy and instructional supervision, gaps remain in understanding how supervision can be institutionalized as a sustained and developmentally responsive practice in low-performing and isolated contexts. Many interventions focus on short-term instructional strategies without addressing the systemic role of supervision in ensuring consistency and sustainability. Moreover, supervision is often implemented as an evaluative tool rather than a supportive mechanism, limiting its impact on teacher practice and learner outcomes. This study addresses these gaps by examining the effectiveness of institutionalizing supervision praxis as an integrated and sustainable approach to improving reading performance among Grade 1 learners.

This study aligns primarily with SDG 4 – Quality Education, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. By improving early grade reading proficiency through structured instructional supervision, the study contributes to foundational literacy development, a key target of SDG 4. It also supports SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities by addressing educational disparities in geographically isolated regions such as BARMM, where learners face systemic barriers to quality education. The focus on teacher development and instructional improvement further strengthens educational systems, contributing to sustainable learning outcomes.

The study contributes to educational sustainability by promoting consistent and effective teaching practices through institutionalized supervision. It supports socio-economic sustainability by enhancing literacy skills, which are essential for long-term academic success and workforce readiness. Additionally, the emphasis on reflective teaching and continuous improvement contributes to institutional sustainability, strengthening school systems and professional practices. By addressing literacy gaps in underserved communities, the study also advances community sustainability, fostering inclusive development and equitable access to education. Overall, the integration of supervision praxis represents a sustainable, scalable approach to improving educational outcomes in resource-constrained settings.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

A quali-quantitative action research design guided by the Plan–Act–Observe–Reflect (PAOR) cycle was utilized. This design enabled iterative implementation of the intervention while continuously monitoring learner outcomes and instructional practices. It allowed for simultaneous analysis of numerical improvements in reading performance and qualitative changes in teaching and learning processes.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in a public elementary school in Bongao Tawi-Tawi, within the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). The setting reflects an educational context where learners experience varying levels of access to instructional resources and academic support.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents included 27 Grade 1 learners with varying reading abilities, ranging from non-readers to independent readers. In addition to the learners, the Grade 1 teacher, school head, and instructional supervisor actively participated in the implementation of the supervision praxis by providing instructional support, feedback, and reflective guidance throughout the intervention.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study employed a purposive sampling approach, selecting all 27 Grade 1 learners in the class as participants. This complete inclusion ensured that the intervention addressed the full range of reading abilities present in the classroom, allowing for comprehensive observation of changes in learner performance.

2.5 Research Instrument

Multiple instruments were used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. A Reading Assessment Tool (RAT) was administered as a pre-test and post-test to measure decoding, fluency, and comprehension across five reading levels, from non-reader to independent reader. An instructional supervision checklist was used to monitor key instructional components such as lesson objectives, phonics instruction, guided reading, feedback, learner engagement, materials, and scaffolding. Observation logs and coaching notes documented classroom practices, teacher strategies, and learner responses, while a teacher reflective journal captured insights on instructional adjustments, learner progress, and encountered challenges. These instruments were adapted from EGRA, Phil-IRI (DepEd 2018), PPST standards, and guided reading practices to ensure contextual relevance and alignment with learner needs.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

The study followed a one-month intervention period integrating supervision and reading instruction. Initial data were collected through pre-test assessments to determine baseline reading levels. The intervention included weekly learning walks and classroom observations, daily guided reading sessions tailored to learners' reading levels, and regular coaching and feedback sessions for the teacher. Continuous monitoring and reflective practices were conducted throughout the implementation. Post-test assessments were administered at the end of the intervention to measure changes in reading performance, while qualitative data were gathered simultaneously through logs, checklists, and journals.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative data were analyzed by coding reading levels numerically from 1 to 5 and applying descriptive statistics to determine mean scores. A paired-sample t-test was used to evaluate the significance of differences between pre-test and post-test results. Qualitative data from observation logs, supervision checklists, coaching notes, and teacher reflective journals were analyzed thematically to identify patterns in learner engagement, instructional strategies, and the effectiveness of supervision practices.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Reading Performance and Instructional Supervision Outcomes

3.1.1 Improvement in Learners' Reading Levels

The results revealed a significant improvement in learners' reading performance after the intervention. The number of non-readers decreased from 10 to 2, while independent readers increased from 3 to 7. Similarly, learners progressed across reading levels, with notable increases in emergent and developing readers. The mean reading score improved from 2.07 in the pre-test to 3.30 in the post-test. Statistical analysis using a paired-sample t-test confirmed that this improvement was significant ($t(26) = 9.72, p < .001$), indicating measurable gains in decoding, fluency, and comprehension. These findings suggest that structured instructional supervision contributes to improved literacy outcomes. The observed gains align with the iterative nature of the Plan-Act-Observe-Reflect cycle, which promotes continuous refinement of teaching strategies and learner support. The results support the effectiveness of guided reading and systematic instruction, consistent with evidence from the National Reading Panel (2000) and Snow et al. (2020), which emphasize structured and responsive teaching in early literacy development.

3.1.2 Enhanced Learner Engagement

Qualitative data showed that learners became more engaged throughout the intervention. Initially hesitant non-readers began participating in oral reading and independently attempting to decode words. As the intervention progressed, learners

demonstrated increased confidence and active participation during guided reading sessions, indicating improved motivation and willingness to learn. This increased engagement reflects the positive impact of supportive and consistent instructional practices. When learners receive appropriate scaffolding and structured opportunities to practice reading, they become more confident and active participants in the learning process. This observation aligns with Vygotsky (1978), who emphasized the importance of guided support in promoting learner development within the zone of proximal development.

3.1.3 Improvement in Teacher Instructional Practices

The findings also indicated improvements in teacher instructional practices. Teachers consistently applied supervisory feedback by adjusting lesson pacing, implementing scaffolding strategies, and using guided reading approaches more effectively. Instruction became more structured and aligned with learners' needs, resulting in more consistent delivery of evidence-based reading strategies. These improvements highlight the role of instructional supervision as a developmental and collaborative process. The use of coaching, feedback, and reflective dialogue enabled teachers to refine their instructional approaches and maintain consistency in practice. This is consistent with Glickman et al. (2018) and Hallinger (2016), who emphasized that effective instructional supervision enhances teacher performance and leads to improved student outcomes.

3.1.4 Development of Reflective and Responsive Teaching

Teachers demonstrated increased reflective practice as evidenced by journal entries and coaching notes. They became more aware of learner needs, evaluated the effectiveness of their instructional strategies, and made necessary adjustments to improve learning outcomes. Teachers also reported feeling supported rather than evaluated, which contributed to their motivation and responsiveness to feedback. This shift toward reflective teaching underscores the importance of supportive supervision in professional development. When supervision is perceived as collaborative rather than evaluative, teachers are more likely to engage in continuous improvement and adapt their practices to meet learner needs. This finding aligns with Sergiovanni (2018), who emphasized the value of reflective leadership in fostering effective teaching and learning environments.

3.2 Challenges Affecting the Study

The study identified several challenges during the implementation of the intervention. Learner fatigue occasionally affected participation, particularly during intensive reading sessions. Additionally, varying levels of parental support influenced learners' progress outside the classroom. These factors highlighted the need for sustained supervision and stronger home-school collaboration to support reading development. These challenges suggest that while instructional supervision can significantly improve classroom practices and learner outcomes, external factors also play a critical role in literacy development. Addressing these issues requires a more comprehensive approach that includes family involvement and continuous monitoring. Sustained support systems are necessary to ensure long-term effectiveness of literacy interventions.

3.3 Relationship Between Supervision Praxis and Literacy Outcomes

The overall findings demonstrate a strong relationship between instructional supervision praxis and improved reading performance. Quantitative results showed significant gains in reading levels, while qualitative data revealed enhanced learner engagement, improved teaching practices, and increased reflective behavior among teachers. This relationship indicates that supervision praxis serves as a critical mechanism for integrating instructional improvement with learner development. The combination of structured guidance, continuous feedback, and reflective practice creates a supportive learning environment that benefits both teachers and learners. These findings are consistent with Glickman et al. (2018) and Vygotsky (1978), emphasizing that guided instruction and collaborative support are essential for achieving meaningful and sustained improvements in early literacy.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study demonstrates that institutionalizing developmentally responsive instructional supervision praxis significantly improves the reading performance of Grade 1 learners, as evidenced by the increase in independent readers and the reduction of non-readers, supported by statistically significant gains in post-test results. Qualitative findings further reveal enhanced learner engagement, improved instructional consistency, and strengthened reflective teaching practices, indicating that supervision, when implemented as a collaborative and supportive process, positively influences both teacher effectiveness and learner outcomes. These results affirm that structured, reflective, and sustained supervision aligned with the Plan-Act-Observe-Reflect (PAOR) cycle contributes to meaningful literacy development, consistent with established perspectives on instructional leadership and guided learning (Glickman et al., 2018; Hallinger, 2016; Vygotsky, 1978).

It is recommended that supervision-based reading programs be implemented across early grade classrooms and sustained beyond short-term interventions through continuous learning walks, coaching, and feedback mechanisms. Schools should also provide targeted remediation and strengthen home support for struggling readers while maintaining structured

supervision practices. Furthermore, replication of the study in other schools within BARMM is encouraged to validate and extend the applicability of the findings in similar low-performing contexts.

Compliance with ethical standards

This section must be presented as one narrative paragraph only and should integrate all matters related to ethical compliance and authorship responsibility, including adherence to institutional ethical standards, voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality of information, ethical approval, conflict of interest declaration, acknowledgement of contributions, copyright ownership, and any other relevant ethical considerations observed in the conduct of the research.

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