



**PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RAPID
IMPROVEMENT IN ZONE OF ARITHMETIC AND LITERACY
(RIZAL) PROJECT: BASIS FOR PROGRAM
RECOMMENDATION**

REZZA MAE B. LANDAZABAL

Teacher III

Rizal Elementary School

rezzamae.landazabal@deped.gov.ph

ABSTRACT

This qualitative study using phenomenological research design aimed to provide a comprehensive analysis of the implementation of Rapid Improvement in Zone of Arithmetic and Literacy (RIZAL) Project. The study was conducted in Rizal Elementary School, District of Pototan II, Pototan, Iloilo. A researcher-made interview guide was administered to twenty - five (25) selected stakeholders. The information gathered in this study was properly analyzed using a thematic approach. Results revealed that parents' involvement in RIZAL Project in terms of reading intervention were their support, participation in decision-making, and help in facilitating the program. In terms of their involvement in food preparation, parents were able to provide healthy and nutritious foods for breakfast and send children to school with lunch. Parents also conduct follow-up at home through encouraging their children to read, spending more time in helping them to read, and hiring tutors to assist their children to read. The output of the study is policy recommendations.

Keywords: *Reading Intervention, Reading and Arithmetic Proficiency, Program Improvement*

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INTRODUCTION

National and International assessments, including the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA, 2018), and the National Achievement Test (NAT), have consistently revealed alarming trends in reading proficiency and numeracy among Filipino learners. These assessments indicate that a significant portion of learners fall below proficiency levels, hindering their academic progress and prospects.

As part of the MATATAG: Bansang Makabata, Batang Makabansa agenda, the Department of Education will prioritize improving the literacy and numeracy program and integrating "peace competencies" into the K–12 curriculum to make it relevant to producing citizens who are responsible, engaged, and ready for the workforce (Duterte, 2023).

The execution of the K–12 curriculum underscores the importance of reading and mathematics proficiency as a foundational skill for all learners. However, despite these efforts, concerns persist regarding the literacy and numeracy abilities of Filipino learners. These skills underpin all aspects of education and personal development.

While there is a growing recognition of the importance of reading and arithmetic intervention in the Philippines, there is a paucity of comprehensive research that examines the effectiveness, challenges, and best practices of these programs within the local context. A deeper understanding of the experiences and outcomes of reading intervention initiatives is crucial for program enhancement and informed decision-making in education policy (Wasik & Bond, 2021).

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Effective arithmetic and literacy intervention programs play a crucial role in addressing reading difficulties and improving overall literacy rates. Research has shown that early intervention is particularly effective in addressing reading challenges and preventing academic disparities (Ehri et al., 2014).

RIZAL (Rapid Improvement in Zone of Arithmetic and Literacy) is a project that emerged as a response to the alarming decline in reading and arithmetic proficiency among learners in Rizal Elementary School, Schools District of Pototan II. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education serves as inspiration for the project. The pandemic, school closings, and the shift from in-person to modular and online learning all had a detrimental effect on pupils' reading abilities.

The aim of RIZAL Project is to address the pressing issue of declining reading and arithmetic skills and advocate for a culture of everyone across all levels of education.

The researcher observed that the implementation of this project has yielded promising results, with improvements in arithmetic and reading proficiency documented in our school, Rizal Elementary School in the Schools District of Pototan II. However, to sustain and enhance the program's impact, it is necessary in order to fully comprehend the experiences and difficulties faced by school heads, teachers, learners, and communities involved in RIZAL Project.

Additionally, this study aimed to offer a thorough examination of the implementation of RIZAL Project, exploring the experiences and perspectives of stakeholders within the school. By examining the program's successes, limitations, and areas for improvement, this research

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aimed to offer valuable insights that can inform the enhancement and sustainability of RIZAL Project and contribute to the broader discourse on arithmetic and reading advocacy and education reform in the Philippines in general.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

The research approach to be employed in the study is presented in this chapter. This covers the research methodology, research design, study participants, research tools, data collection, and data analysis processes.

Research Method

In-depth interviews were used as part of the qualitative research methodology in this study.

During the interview, the interviewer and the interviewee were permitted to sit apart and consider the set of questions regarding a certain topic. Through the participants' answers to the questions, the primary or essential points of view of the participants on a particular subject in a social context were to be obtained.

It is a way of understanding and inquiring into experience through collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and social interaction (Connelly & Clandinin, 2016).

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Research Design

A phenomenological research design was employed in the investigation. One philosophical method for conducting qualitative research is phenomenology. Phenomenology is the study of how people perceive the world, with an emphasis on how an individual's subjective interpretations of her experiences may differ from popular belief systems.

Phenomenology is done by interviewing the subjects to learn their impressions, and is frequently used in such fields as psychology, sociology, and social work (Creswell & Creswell 2017.)

Participants of the Study

The study's participants were twenty-five (25) parents of learners in Rizal Elementary School.

Participants were selected considering that they are relevant to the study which is both capable and interested in answering the interview questions restricted by ethical considerations and consent of the respondents (Smith, 2018.)

Sampling Design

A purposive sampling design was used in the study. A purposive sample is a non-probability sample that is selected based on the characteristics of a population and the objective of the study. Purposive sampling, sometimes referred to as judgmental sampling, this sampling method relies on the researcher's judgment when identifying and selecting the individuals, cases or events that can provide the best information to achieve the objective of the study (Nikolopoulou, 2022).

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Research Instrument

A set of research-made interview guiding questions was the main research tool used in the study.

Participants answered four incisive questions concerning their opinions and insights about the implementation and challenges of RIZAL Project.

The development of the interview guide aligns closely with the research objectives and inquiry. It encompasses a curated set of open-ended inquiries, probes, and prompts, all meticulously designed to elicit nuanced information and insight from participants (Rubin & Rubin, 2011). This research instrument facilitates the systematic collection of qualitative data by guiding the conversation and enabling consistent coverage of essential subjects, thereby ensuring the richness and depth of the obtained information.

The construction and validation of the interview guide questions is an integral aspect of the research process and necessitates alignment with the specific research goals and inquiries. It encompasses a range of questions, probes, and follow-up prompts carefully crafted to encourage participants to share their experiences, perspective, and insights (Seidman, 2013).

Cameras and voice recorders were utilized to record and collect data with participant agreement.

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Validity of the Research Instrument

Prior to the researcher, adviser, and Graduate School Dean determining the correctness of the interview schedule, a group of jurors chosen for their experience in research, testing, and evaluation and English were requested to validate each question for review and modification.

Validity pertains to the appropriateness, correctness, and usefulness of inferences that a researchers make. In content- related evidence of validity, the content and format must be consistent with the definition of variables and a sample of the subject to be measured, and is also

helpful in validating the items in the questionnaire (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2007).

Comments, adjustments, and recommendations made by the validation panel using the proper form of Good and Scates (Appendix A).

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher identified the respondents and those directly participated in this study after receiving consent to conduct the research from the mentor and the graduate school's dean. The principal of Rizal Elementary School in the School Districts of Pototan II received a letter requesting that the study be conducted.

Using the interview instructions, the researcher conducted the interview in person. Research participants were interviewed in-person to collect data through in-depth interviews.

Before the interview began, each participant was required to sign a permission form or waiver regarding the study's conduct by the researcher.

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Every response and piece of information was noted, gathered, and examined.

Due to moral concerns, the researcher chooses what to investigate and how to carry out the investigation, taking important ethical factors into account. These elements preserve academic or scientific integrity, promote study validity, and protect the rights of research participants.

Studies involving human respondents were conducted under the regimes and regulations of the ethical committee of the University of Iloilo, Graduate School.

Participants received complete information about the nature and goal of the study and voluntarily agreed to participate.

Researchers shall take steps to minimize any potential harm to participants, both physical and psychological.

Researchers shall avoid deceiving participants, or if deception is necessary, they should debrief participants after the study and ensure that any negative effects are minimized.

Lastly, researchers shall ensure that all participants are treated fairly and that there is no discrimination based on factors such as sex, race, and ethnicity or religion.

Data Analyses

A thematic approach was employed to appropriately examine the data collected for this investigation. The techniques of qualitative analysis were employed to determine the themes of the challenges and experiences of parents on the implementation of RIZAL Project in 2023–2024 academic year.

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The researcher interviewed a number of people who had experienced the event in-depth as part of a phenomenological investigation in an effort to identify the fundamental elements of a single occurrence.

The researcher extracts what he or she considers relevant statement from each participant's description of the phenomenon and then cluster these into themes. The researcher then integrates these themes into a narrative description of the phenomenon (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2009).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Qualitative research study using phenomenological research designed aimed to formulate a program recommendation on the implementation of RIZAL Project in the Schools District of Pototan II during the school year 2023-2024.

The study's primary goal was to ascertain the phenomenological experience of parents in the implementation of RIZAL Project as the basis for program recommendation.

Interviewees were permitted to sit at a significant distance during the session and to think about the series of questions about a certain issue. The objective was to get the essential or primary opinions of the participants regarding a certain matter in a social context through the responses of the participants to the queries.

The study used phenomenology under qualitative research design. Phenomenology can be considered a philosophical approach to undertaking qualitative research. Phenomenology is done by interviewing the subjects to learn their impressions and is

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frequently used in such field as psychology, sociology, and social work (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2007).

The study's participants were twenty-five (25) parents of learners who belong to the frustration level of Rizal Elementary School, Schools District of Pototan II, Iloilo.

An interview guide created by the researcher was the research tool used in the study. With the participants' consent, voice and video recorders were utilized for data collection and documentation.

The data-gathering instruments were subjected to face content validation by the experts of panel. Thematic analysis was used for descriptive data analysis.

The researcher was able to carry out the study with the participants' permission. The researcher directly visited the participants' preferred location, such as the school, to conduct the interview.

The following are the results of the study.

According to the results of the study, the parents' involvement in RIZAL Project were show support, participation in decision-making, and help in facilitating the program.

Parents also involved themselves in food preparation in the implementation of the RIZAL Project through providing healthy & nutritious food for breakfast and sending children to school with lunch.

Moreover, parents helped and supported the program financially through providing assistance voluntarily to improve the remedial reading program, and by reproducing reading materials for the program.

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In order to help follow-up reading at home, parents encourage their children to read, spend more time in helping them to read, and hire tutors for children to read.

The following insights were reached in light of the study's findings:

The most important thing that parents should do to make their child read is to take measure properly with the help of the teachers. Parents can help their children become better readers by pointing to each word as the kid reads, interacting with them in rhymes, and mindfulness exercises.

Parents' involvement in food preparation for their children was important in developing understanding, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors resulting in good reading habits for the child.

The ability of parents to meet their child's requirements financially in their reading program is support that will improve and develop the reading level of the child and will serve as a motivation to the learning process of the child.

Parents who make the time to read to their children on a daily basis, even for a short while, can help the child become a better reader and convey that reading is a priority. They should read books, newspapers, and periodicals to their kids as a way of modeling good behavior.

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Recommendations

Teachers may convey this to other parents by giving ideas of how the learners are likely to perform. As much as possible, they may train parents on how to handle learners with non-readers and non-numerates.

Since food is a key component in helping kids become ready to learn, parents may prepare healthy and nutritious foods for their children. Nutrition impacts brain development, memory, and cognition in their children.

Parents may extend financial support voluntarily to the school program as it can have a positive impact on the success of the program where the children are the beneficiaries.

Parents at home may provide a quiet, special place in their home for their child to read, write, and draw.

To collaborate with the results of the current analysis, this study may be replicated in other schools district within the Schools Division of Iloilo.

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