



INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT STRATEGIES AND NUMERACY SKILLS OF KEY STAGE 1 LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

Instructional support plays a pivotal role in shaping the development of foundational numeracy skills during the early years of schooling, as it provides learners with structured, meaningful, and engaging opportunities to understand basic mathematical concepts. In the context of this study, instructional support is viewed not only as the delivery of content but as a comprehensive approach that includes the use of varied teaching strategies, learning resources, and collaborative practices that respond to the diverse needs of young learners.

This study utilized a descriptive quantitative research design to systematically examine both the extent of instructional support practices and the numeracy skill levels of learners, as perceived by 60 Key Stage 1 teachers from Alangilan Central Elementary School, Balagtas Elementary School, and Balete Elementary School during the School Year 2024–2025. The findings revealed that teachers implement instructional support strategies to a great extent, with an overall weighted mean of 2.99. Among these strategies, parental involvement, use of manipulatives, and peer-assisted learning emerged as the most frequently and effectively utilized approaches. These strategies are particularly valuable in early numeracy because they

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make abstract mathematical ideas more concrete, interactive, and relatable to learners' everyday experiences.

However, while parental involvement was rated highly, the nature of this involvement appears to be more supportive than participatory. This indicates that although parents assist in learning tasks, there is still a need to deepen their engagement by involving them more actively in decision-making processes and structured home-based numeracy activities. Similarly, while peer-assisted learning fosters collaboration and social interaction, and manipulatives enhance conceptual understanding, there remains a need to further promote learner autonomy. Encouraging learners to independently explore, reason out solutions, and apply learned concepts can significantly strengthen their confidence and long-term retention of numeracy skills.

In terms of learner performance, the results showed a moderate level of numeracy proficiency, with an overall weighted mean of 3.27. Learners demonstrated strong performance in foundational skills such as counting (3.91) and number recognition (3.66), indicating that basic numeracy concepts are generally well-established. However, a notable decline was observed in more complex skills such as numerical pattern recognition and problem-solving, which obtained a lower mean of 2.25. This disparity suggests that while learners can recall and identify numbers, they experience difficulty in applying these skills to analyze patterns, make predictions, and solve real-world mathematical problems. These higher-order skills require deeper cognitive processing and more targeted instructional strategies.

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Further statistical analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between instructional support and higher-order numeracy skills, emphasizing that effective teaching strategies can enhance learners' ability to think critically and solve problems. However, the absence of a significant relationship between instructional support and foundational skills such as counting and number recognition may imply that these basic skills are influenced by other factors, such as prior exposure, home environment, or early childhood experiences. This finding highlights the importance of differentiating instructional approaches depending on the type of numeracy skill being developed.

The study also identified key challenges faced by teachers, particularly in addressing the wide range of learner abilities within the classroom and ensuring mastery of foundational skills for all students. Managing diverse learning needs requires time, resources, and continuous professional development, which may not always be readily available. These challenges underscore the need for systematic support for teachers, including access to instructional materials, training on differentiated instruction, and collaborative opportunities to share best practices.

In response to these findings, the researcher proposed the INSPIRE (Instructional Numeracy Support towards Proficiency, Independence, and Relevance in Early Literacy) Numeracy Enhancement Program. This program is designed to address identified gaps by integrating differentiated instruction, engaging and interactive learning strategies, and strengthened home-school collaboration. It also emphasizes ongoing teacher development to ensure that educators are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively

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support diverse learners. The INSPIRE program aims not only to improve numeracy performance but also to foster learner independence, critical thinking, and real-life application of mathematical concepts, while maintaining alignment with existing curriculum standards.

Based on the overall results, the study recommends strengthening parental involvement by encouraging more active participation in learners' numeracy development, both at home and in school-related activities. It also highlights the importance of providing continuous professional development opportunities for teachers, particularly in the areas of differentiated instruction and intervention strategies. Additionally, there is a need to design and implement targeted interventions focusing on numerical pattern recognition and problem-solving skills. The proposed INSPIRE program should undergo further review and validation to ensure its effectiveness and applicability in different contexts. Finally, future research is encouraged to explore the impact of differentiated instructional support across various grade levels to further enhance the understanding and development of early numeracy skills.

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