



**STAKEHOLDERS' EXPERIENCES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
PROJECT BUILDER (BEGIN UNDERSTAND INTEGRATE
LEARN DEVELOP EXEMPLARY READING):
BASIS FOR ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM**

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study revealed that the stakeholders of Project BUILDER. They experienced the development of well-rounded, better-adjusted, and fully adaptive individuals; provided better learners; provided opportunities for planning, coordination, and execution of development activities; strengthened camaraderie and collaboration among stakeholders; and fostered a sense of fulfillment. The challenges include learner-related difficulties and behavioral challenges; time constraints; workload demands and limited learning resources; and inconsistent parental support and home follow-up. To overcome challenges, several strategies emerged: personal commitment, values, and a positive mindset; effective time management and consistent scheduling; and collaboration, communication, and teamwork.

Keywords: *Stakeholders, Experiences, Implementation, Project BUILDER, Enhancement Program*

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INTRODUCTION

Reading is widely recognized by educators and researchers as a foundational skill that supports learning across all subject areas. The Department of Education (DepEd) underscores that literacy—particularly the ability to read and comprehend texts—is essential for students’ academic achievement, lifelong learning, and future success. Strong reading skills not only expand students’ knowledge but also enhance their communication, critical thinking, and problem solving abilities, which are increasingly important in today’s world.

Despite this, a significant number of Filipino learners, especially those in the early and intermediate grades, continue to face challenges in reading. According to the World Bank, approximately 91% of Filipino children in the later years of primary school are unable to reach the expected level of reading proficiency, even after accounting for out of school youth (UIS and World Bank, 2021).

The global health crisis caused by COVID-19 made this situation worse. Prolonged school closures and limited access to structured learning widened gaps in literacy. The shift to modular and distance learning also contributed. Learners had fewer chances to practice guided reading, join discussions, or get immediate teacher feedback. As a result, many students struggled with decoding, comprehension, and fluency, especially in English. This literacy crisis highlights an urgent need for targeted reading interventions.

In response to these concerns, the school launched an initiative to strengthen learners’ foundational skills in reading and numeracy, recognizing their interconnectedness as a key to academic growth. Building on the goals and learnings of this program, Project BUILDER (Begin

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Understand Integrate Learn Develop Exemplary Reading) was conceptualized and implemented. This project specifically focuses on improving learners' English reading comprehension and fluency through innovative, structured, and collaborative approaches.

Project BUILDER highlights the collective responsibility of stakeholders in education, teachers, school heads, and parents, to cultivate a culture of reading. Teachers serve as facilitators of learning by designing instructional strategies and activities that engage learners of varying reading levels. The school head ensures the effective implementation of the project through leadership, monitoring, and the provision of necessary support. Parents, as the learners' first and constant companions, are recognized as crucial partners who reinforce reading habits at home and sustain children's motivation to read beyond the classroom. The project therefore promotes a holistic approach, integrating the efforts of both school and home in addressing learners' reading difficulties.

Furthermore, Project BUILDER rests on the belief that reading extends beyond the classroom and continues as a lifelong process requiring ongoing practice and encouragement. By guiding learners to Begin, Understand, Integrate, Learn, Develop, and Exemplify Reading, the program aspires to improve literacy outcomes, foster critical and reflective thinking, and prepare learners to be competent, independent readers who can thrive academically and socially.

In light of these factors, it becomes imperative to explore the lived experiences of teachers, the school head, and parents in carrying out Project BUILDER. Their insights—ranging from the challenges they encountered to the strategies they employed—provide

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meaningful evidence on the project’s effectiveness and long-term viability, while also guiding enhancements for future literacy initiatives within the school.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This chapter includes the research design, the study population, the data collection processes, the instruments that were used in the research and the methods of analyzing data. The research topic will be the experiences of teachers, school heads, and parents in project: BUILDER (Begin, Understand, Integrate, Learn, Develop, Exemplary reading) implementation in selected elementary schools in the school year 2024-2025.

Research Method

This investigation utilized a descriptive qualitative research approach grounded in data collected through in depth interviews. A descriptive method systematically observes and records variables as they naturally occur, without manipulating the environment or conditions. Its primary aim is to provide a comprehensive portrayal of the characteristics, patterns, and relationships present within a specific group or situation (Singh, 2023).

Both the interviewer and the participant were given the space to sit comfortably and reflect on the series of questions related to the topic under study. The intent of this setup was to elicit meaningful and essential insights from the participants, allowing them to articulate their perspectives on the issue within its social context.

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Research Design

The study adopted a phenomenological research design. As a qualitative methodology, phenomenology provides a philosophical foundation for exploring how individuals understand and interpret their lived experiences. It emphasizes viewing the world from the participants' perspectives, acknowledging that their interpretations may diverge from widely accepted assumptions. This approach typically involves conducting in depth interviews to uncover personal insights and meanings, and is commonly applied in disciplines such as psychology, sociology, and social work.

Phenomenology examines the structures of conscious experience from the standpoint of the individual. Its central purpose is to investigate and describe phenomena as they are lived and perceived, free from causal explanations or unexamined assumptions that might distort understanding (Biemel and Spiegelberg, 2024).

Participants of the Study

The researcher utilized a purposive sampling technique in selecting the participants for this study. According to Berg and Lune (2021), purposive sampling is a non probability method commonly employed in qualitative research. It involves intentionally choosing individuals based on specific characteristics, expertise, experiences, or other attributes relevant to the study's objectives. This approach aims to gather rich, meaningful data from participants who can provide deeper insights into the phenomenon under investigation.

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Sampling Design

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Research Instrument

The study employed a researcher developed interview guide as its primary data gathering instrument.

The researcher designed the interview schedule to elicit in-depth responses about participants' lived experiences in implementing Project BUILDER (Begin, Understand, Integrate, Learn, Develop, Exemplary Reading). Specifically, the instrument focused on three central areas: (1) the experiences in the implementation of the project, (2) the challenges encountered during participation in the project, and (3) the coping strategies employed to address these challenges.

To ensure accurate data capture and documentation, voice and video recording devices were used during the interviews, with participants' informed consent and permission. These recordings facilitated precise transcription and enhanced the credibility and reliability of the data collected.

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Validity of the Research Instrument

To ensure that the interview guide was valid, the researcher sought evaluation from the adviser, the Dean of the Graduate School, and a panel of experts with backgrounds in research, assessment, testing, and English. They reviewed each item, suggested revisions, and confirmed whether the questions were appropriate for the study. Validity refers to the extent to which the interpretations drawn from an instrument are accurate, appropriate, and meaningful. As a form of content-related validity evidence, the structure and substance of the instrument should align with the definitions of the variables and the characteristics of the target respondents. Such alignment is essential in confirming that the tool accurately captures the constructs it is intended to measure (Creswell & Creswell, 2022).

The feedback, revisions, and recommendations provided by the panel of validators for the interview guide were incorporated, following the evaluation format developed by Good and Scates (see Appendix A)

Data Gathering Procedures

The researcher secured all necessary approvals from the adviser, the Dean of the Graduate School, the Office of the School District Supervisor, and the participating respondents prior to conducting the study. Data collection took place in locations convenient for the participants—whether in the school, the community, or another accessible venue. Before each interview, participants were informed of their rights and were asked to sign a consent form indicating their voluntary participation.

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In depth interviews served as the primary data gathering method. The researcher personally conducted all interviews through face to face interactions with the participants. Following the interview sessions, all responses were carefully compiled, organized, and manually transcribed to ensure accuracy and completeness.

Data Analyses

A thematic analysis was done on the information collected. The data collected in the form of in-depth interviews was qualitative data and was analyzed by using the thematic analysis; a structured method of finding, coding and explaining patterns of meaning among the responses of the participants. This approach was considered suitable because the research was aimed at discussing the lived experiences of teachers, school heads, and parents when implementing Project: BUILDER.

Thematic analysis is a qualitative method of analysis, which is deemed suitable to any research that tries to comprehend the possibilities of an issue on a broader scale through interpretations of data (Mason and Francis, 2022).

Six phases were used in the data analysis. To begin with, the researcher became conversant with the data by reading the interview transcripts several times to have a general overview of the answers given by the participants. Second, the researchers used the creation of initial codes based on the establishment of significant statements based on the research questions. Third, they analysed these codes and placed them under possible themes. Fourth, they revised and narrowed the themes to make sure that they are internally consistent and

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separate. Fifth, they outlined and labelled the last themes to reflect the experiences of the participants correctly. Lastly, they displayed and analyzed the results in the form of stories.

In order to increase the credibility and the trustworthiness of the findings, each identified theme was supported with the help of verbatim quotations of the participants. Member checking was carried out by giving the specific members an opportunity to check the meanings of their answers with accuracy and authenticity. Peer debriefing was also used to reduce bias of researcher and enhance rigor of analysis. In this organized effort, the study had been able to give a clear and believable exploration of the experiences of stakeholders in the implementation of Project: BUILDER.

Conclusion

This study examined the lived experiences of stakeholders' involved in carrying out Project BUILDER (Begin, Understand, Integrate, Learn, Develop Exemplary Reading), and drew from their insights to craft an enhancement program tailored for Barotac Nuevo Central Elementary School in Barotac Nuevo, Iloilo, for the 2025–2026 school year.

The study adopted a qualitative research approach and gathered data through in depth interviews. A narrative research design, supported by thematic analysis, was utilized to examine and interpret the participants' lived experiences. A total of twenty one (21) individuals participated in the study, consisting of school heads, teachers, and parents who were directly engaged in implementing Project BUILDER.

The researcher gathered data through validated interview guides, formal coordination with school heads, and scheduled interviews conducted during vacant periods. The researcher

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personally conducted the interviews with participants' consent, using audio recordings, note-taking, and photo documentation. All collected narratives were transcribed, analyzed, and interpreted using thematic analysis.

Findings revealed that the stakeholders of Project BUILDER. They experienced the development of well-rounded, better-adjusted, and fully adaptive individuals; provided better learners; offered opportunities for planning, coordination, and execution of development activities; strengthened camaraderie and collaboration among stakeholders; and fostered a sense of fulfillment.

The challenges identified include learner-related difficulties and behavioral challenges; time constraints; workload demands and limited learning resources; and inconsistent parental support and home follow-up.

The ways to overcome challenges include Several strategies: personal commitment, values, and a positive mindset; effective time management and consistent scheduling; and collaboration, communication, and teamwork.

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