



Addressing Students' Learning Loss through the National Learning Recovery Program: Teachers' Crucible Experiences

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Abstract

This study sought to address the learning gaps of students based on the experiences of nine elementary school teachers in Cebu Province that were selected using purposive sampling, who participated in four NLRP subprograms: 1) National Learning Camp, 2) National Reading Program, 3) National Mathematics Program, and 4) National Science and Technology Program. Using a qualitative descriptive phenomenological design, the researchers conducted 20-25-minute semi-structured interviews within the teachers' school environment. Data were analyzed using Colaizzi's thematic analysis, revealing five core themes: Challenges in the Program, Diversity and Learning Loss Recovery, Teaching Methods, Provision of Resources and Support, and Teacher Satisfaction and Professional Growth. The findings highlighted that while certain aspects of the NLRP effectively support student learning recovery, other areas would benefit from targeted reforms and improvements to meet the program's goals more effectively. It also underscored the importance of incorporating teachers' experiences and insights into educational recovery initiatives as first-hand implementers. Expanding this research to other regions with a larger sample size, conducting a quantitative study and continuity of the program with the targeted reforms including regular teacher training, ample resources, and ongoing monitoring for better outcomes may further validate and strengthen the findings on NLRP's impact.

Keywords: Cebu Province, Department of Education, Learning Loss, National Learning Recovery Program (NLRP), Philippines, Teachers' Experiences

Introduction

Embedded on MATATAG: Bansang Makabata, Batang Makabansa agenda of the Department of Education (2023) ^[11], the National Learning Recovery Program refers to the strengthening of the learning recovery and continuity program of the department, enhancing numeracy and literacy, and increasing the attainment of educational goals. Several notable studies found that learning recovery programs reduce the learning gaps that were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic (Gershenson & Lomax, 2021), offer supplementary tutoring such as academic mentorship (Harland *et al.*, 2022) ^[16], and provide personalized learning and instruction, develop a strategic plan for educational recovery, and give enrichment activities to meet the tailored needs of the learners (Parida & Nayak, 2024) ^[32]. However, there are issues with voluntary participation, materials, and resource restraints, assessment difficulties, and policy framework gaps (Llego, 2024) ^[24]. Quantitative studies have been conducted on this, yet there is a significant lack of qualitative data from the teachers' experiences regarding learning loss during the pandemic (Kaffenberger, 2020) ^[22]. Hence, this study aims to delve deeper into the teachers' lived experiences of the National Learning Recovery Program in the Philippines.

The COVID-19 pandemic according to Pokhrel and Chhetri (2021) ^[34] caused the most severe disruption of education in history, forcing school closures and transitioning from traditional to remote learning modalities, affecting around 26 million Filipino learners. This caused significant learning loss and gaps, especially in low-middle-income countries like the Philippines

prompting government agencies to initiate efforts and recovery programs (Magno, 2022) ^[25]. One of these initiatives, pioneered by the Philippine Department of Education (DepEd), is the National Learning Recovery Program (NLRP). Llego (2024) ^[24] stated that this consists of five subprograms: National Learning Camp, National Reading Program, National Mathematics Program, National Science and Technology Program, and other supporting programs, each aiming to target specific aspects of the learning recovery process. Vanderlinde and Braak (2010) emphasized that cooperation between researchers and practitioners is necessary to bridge the gap between educational research and practice. As the actual classroom practitioners and implementers, it is crucial to understand the teachers' input on NLRP and their lived experiences during its implementation.

Nearly all existing research on learning recovery programs was established and implemented mainly after the COVID-19 pandemic, as students underwent learning loss during the lockdown. In 2021, Gershenson and Lomax stated in their action plan that funds for the Learning Recovery Programs will help ensure the students get back on track by addressing and reducing the learning gaps disrupted by the pandemic. Several evidence-based approaches to learning recovery were identified, such as summer learning and enrichment programs, comprehensive after-school programs, and extended day or year programs. Similarly, Harland *et al.* (2022) ^[16] stated that England's Government introduced the National Tutoring Programme (NTP) in November 2020, offering subsidized tutoring from verified providers and supplementing it with academic mentorship. The study concluded that despite the pandemic challenges, the learning recovery activities are deemed effective and should be focused on, given the recent evidence of a narrowing achievement gap in the region.

In a recent study in April 2024, Parida and Nayak evaluated the Learning Recovery Programme (LRP) in secondary schools in Odisha. It is inferred that the LRP offers different kinds of learning assistance, some of these are personalized learning, remedial instruction, strategic plan demonstration for educational recovery and advancement, and enrichment activities that cater to each of the students' needs. They also stated that LRP was an effective program to address the learning gaps of the learners and boost their academic intellect mainly in Science, English and Mathematics, Language, and Environmental studies subjects as 80% of the learners think that participating in learning recovery classes had a positive impact in their engagement in regular classes. However, integrating LRP alongside the regular classes had some significant challenges for teachers, particularly in having time management issues, struggling to balance LRP and regular classes, and having limited proficiency in operating the software. Ghavifekr and Rosdy (2015) ^[15] highlighted that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) integration enhances the teaching and learning experiences. However, in the context of LRP, the actual experiences of teachers towards it remained under-explored, and the insufficiency of related research suggests that there is still no concrete evidence and possible factors that hinder its efficiency and effectiveness inside the classroom coming from the teachers themselves.

According to Llego (2024) ^[24], as COVID-19 became widespread, schools were closed for a long period, resulting in learning losses worldwide. There are only a small number

of data generalizing about the NLRP itself as well as the studies that focus on the five subgroups under NLRP, such as the National Learning Camp (NLC), National Reading Program (NRP), National Mathematics Program (NMP), National Science and Technology Program (NSciTP), as well as other programs. He concluded after his findings that learning losses and enhancing educational outcomes in the Philippines must be addressed by DepEd. However, ongoing issues regarding the policy framework, volunteerism, and scarcity of resource materials are still pertinent.

In 2023, referencing Division Memorandum No. 0373, there is an allocated budget or support funds for the implementation of the NLC, a voluntary learning summer camp, and other End-of-school-year break activities that support the NLRP. According to Dianela *et al.* (2023) ^[12], the 8-Week Learning Recovery Program implementation is a reading intervention program aligned with the goal of NRP which significantly improved the students' reading competence in English, Filipino, and MTB-MLE. Similar to the said study, Radan's (2023) ^[35] findings about improving Reading Performance through the Project Reading Enables Advancement and Development (READ) are also in line with the MATATAG agenda to address the reading literacy gaps among Filipino learners. Differential reading activities, materials imparted, and the remedial sessions that are given to them, helped achieve the educational goals, for instance, in developing the comprehension skills of the learners. However, further qualitative research is essential to recognize insightful information coming from the teachers' first-hand experiences on how prepared they are to implement these recovery programs. This includes their self-efficacy, expected support coming from the DepEd, and any other necessary resources, training, and seminars deemed necessary for the success of the implementation.

Most existing research, such as the study of Azevedo *et al.* (2020) ^[3], primarily focuses on quantitative estimates of learning loss. Similarly, Kaffenberger (2020) ^[22] reported disparities in learning loss across different demographics, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to support the most affected populations. On the contrary, qualitative studies regarding teachers' lived experiences are limited, particularly capturing teachers' experiences in implementing the NLRP, considering it was only introduced in 2023. Research has shown that the success of programs depends greatly on the experiences of teachers, however, there needs to be more investigation into these aspects, within the framework of the Implementation of School Learning Recovery and Continuity Plan (Torio, 2022). Hence, this study seeks to bridge the knowledge gap by delving into the teachers' experiences that may offer insights into the programs' areas that need enhancement. This study aims to determine teachers' experiences of the National Learning Recovery Program (NLRP) in addressing the significant learning losses caused by the COVID-19 pandemic experienced by elementary students in Cebu Province.

Philosophical Assumptions

The foundation of this study is based on an ontological assumption. Ontological Assumption involves establishing the nature of reality, even when the phenomena in question are not directly observable (Patil & Giordano, 2010; cited by Abalo-Rodriguez & Blithikioti, 2023) ^[33, 27]. This study assumes that teachers' lived experiences with the NLRP construct their understanding of its impact on learning loss,

indicating that reality is shaped through these individual experiences rather than an objective framework. The researchers will then conduct an extensive interview to explore the teachers' experiences within the educational environment.

Methodology

Research Design

The researchers used a descriptive phenomenological research design to explore and describe the teachers' lived experiences on the National Learning Recovery Program (NLRP) in addressing students' learning loss. Descriptive phenomenology is an effective method for exploring subjective experiences and gaining insights into people's actions and motivations. It challenges established assumptions and wisdom, potentially leading to the creation of new theories, policy changes, or shifts in responses (Rodriguez & Smith, 2018) ^[27]. Through this design, the researchers gathered useful data and interpreted the data to present valuable results relevant to NLRP.

Sampling Design, Research Respondents & Environment

For this qualitative study, the researchers employed a Purposive Sampling design. According to Rai and Thapa (2015), purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling where the researcher selects participants for the sample based on specific criteria, such as their expertise on the research topic or their ability and willingness to take part in the study. This sampling allows for a better matching of the sample to the studies' aims and objectives, which enhances the study's rigor and the reliability of the data and findings (Campbell, 2020) ^[7]. The respondents were elementary school teachers with direct experience in teaching in at least one of the following NLRP subgroups: National Learning Camp, National Reading Program, National Mathematics Program, and National Science and Technology Program. The study was conducted within Cebu Province focusing on the schools where the participating teachers are employed, providing a specific understanding of the NLRP in this geographical setting.

Research Instrument

The researchers were the main instrument of the study as they served a crucial role during the data collection process. According to Maguire and Delahunt (2017), qualitative researchers are often described as instruments due to their capacity to understand, describe, and interpret experiences and perceptions, a crucial skill for analyzing specific contexts. To qualitatively evaluate and understand the teachers' experiences of the National Learning Recovery Program (NLRP) in addressing the student's learning loss, the researchers used a Semi-Structured interview to gather more in-depth and contextual information. Ruslin *et al.* (2022) state that this type of interview aims to find problems in the open, where interviewee freely expresses their opinions and ideas. This approach allowed more natural conversation, enabling researchers to probe deeper into specific topics and better understand teachers' insights allowing them to express their candid opinions freely and impart their lived experiences without constraints.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers filed a request for ethics approval with the institution's Research Ethics Committee to ensure that the

research study abides by the ethical standards and confidentiality of the participants. The researchers then asked for approval of the interview questionnaire. This questionnaire was utilized to gather data. Once approved, the researchers proceeded to the research process. The researchers selected nine (9) teachers from different elementary schools in Cebu Province.

Before data gathering, the researchers listed all the research biases to avoid conflicts that might intervene in the study, however, the researchers did not disclose the information. Then, the researchers sought the informed consent of the participants to participate in the interview. The participants were given pseudonyms and codes for confidentiality and assured that all information was for research purposes. Next, the interview only took 20-25 minutes during the teacher's most convenient time. Data collection ended until data saturation was met. The researchers asked the participants' permission to record the interview. Lastly, after the interview, the participants received a token of appreciation for their valuable time and effort.

Data Analysis

A thematic analysis was utilized to evaluate the teachers' responses regarding their experiences. Colaizzi's (1978) ^[27] method is rigorous and robust, ensuring that its qualitative results are credible and reliable. This allows the researchers to identify the emerging themes and investigate the interconnections. Hence, it was used since it has a clear and logical process through which the fundamental structure of an experience was explored (Wirihana *et al.*, 2018). In Colaizzi's thematic analysis, these are the steps to follow: Familiarisation, Identifying significant statements, Formulating meanings, Clustering themes, Developing an exhaustive description, Producing the fundamental structure, and Seeking verification of the essential structure. The primary themes from which it was derived offer significant value for exploration and presentation in identifying the National Learning Recovery Program (NLRP) in addressing the student's learning loss through the teacher's experiences (Morrow, 2015) ^[27].

Rigor of the Study

The researchers implemented several strategies to ensure the rigor of the study, focusing on credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. To enhance credibility, the researchers utilized a semi-structured interview design (Creswell, 2018) ^[9], allowing for an in-depth exploration of teachers' experiences while maintaining a consistent framework. As outlined by Colaizzi (1978) ^[27], a thematic analysis framework was conducted to facilitate a refined understanding of the data that involves identifying, coding, and categorizing key themes that emerge from the interview data. Colaizzi emphasizes the importance of verification and validation throughout the analysis. The researchers compared their interpretations of the data with the original interview transcripts to ensure that they have accurately captured the teachers' experiences. Additionally, member checking was employed, wherein preliminary findings were shared with participants for feedback and validation, ensuring that the results accurately reflect their true experiences (Birt *et al.*, 2016) ^[5].

To maintain dependability, the researchers documented all research processes and decisions, including interview transcripts and the rationale for participant selection.

Additionally, peer review was also sought, allowing colleagues to evaluate the research methods and findings for consistency and reliability (Nowell *et al.*, 2017) ^[29]. Confirmability was addressed by engaging in reflexivity in enhancing and disclosing their biases and assumptions throughout the research process keeping an audit trail of the data collection and analysis process, and ensuring that the findings are grounded in the participants' responses rather than the researchers' biases (Korstjens & Moser, 2018) ^[28]. Lastly, the researchers facilitated transferability by providing thick descriptions of the participant's experiences and the setting and allowing for comparisons with other educational contexts and recovery programs (Baxter & Jack, 2010) ^[4]. This comprehensive documentation enabled readers to assess the applicability of the findings to other educational settings, thereby enhancing the overall rigor and relevance of the study.

Ethical Consideration

The reliability, validity, and fairness of this study are of utmost importance. To ensure that conflicts of interest do not affect the results, the researchers fully disclosed any relationships they have with the participants and ensured that biases are avoided, with data collection and analysis conducted objectively. All research participants were provided with informed consent, detailing their role, an overview, and the duration of the study, so they could freely decide whether to participate. In accordance with Republic Act No. 10173 (Data Privacy Act of 2012), the researchers treated the respondents with utmost privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity, avoiding any risks of deception or violation of ethical standards. Recruitment was conducted transparently, with participants being informed about any potential benefits or incentives associated with their participation. These benefits include participants' contribution to knowledge, and as an incentive, they received a free meal and a few classroom supplies such as notebooks and pens as a token of appreciation for their valuable time and efforts.

Results and Discussion

Eighty-nine (89) significant statements were extracted from the interview transcripts, resulting in 184 codes that generated nine formulated meanings. These codes were grouped into nine categories, leading to the emergence of nine themes that provided a comprehensive view of the participants' shared experiences. These themes include (1) Challenges in the Program, (2) Diversity and Learning Loss Recovery, (3) Teaching Methods, (4) Provision of Resources and Support, and (5) Teacher Satisfaction and Professional Growth.

Theme 1: Challenges in the Program

Challenges in the Program encompass various obstacles and issues that arise, putting the program to the test and ultimately leading to impediments in its implementation (Horikoshi, 2023) ^[18]. This theme delves into the challenges faced by both teachers and students in the implementation of the NLRP framework. The findings reveal significant issues, including challenges related to students' literacy and engagement, subject expertise mismatches and instructional misalignment, time and scheduling constraints, and shortcomings in program implementation. These challenges and lapses in the program impact both academic progress and the overall

success of the NLRP.

Teachers highlighted the challenges they faced in the immediate implementation and execution of the program. Teachers reported encountering significant challenges related to students' literacy and engagement which are low-level reading abilities, short attention spans, and significant struggles in comprehension and memorization. Teacher Fanny shared that she conducted one-on-one sessions with her students every Friday to help those who are struggling with reading but unfortunately, her students rarely attend these sessions.

“...kada-birnes one-on-one og pabasa jud ko. Katong mga hinay mobasa, dili jud motunga usahay... every Friday, I do one-on-one reading sessions. Some of those who read slowly sometimes don't even show up...” - Teacher Fanny

Another challenge arises when different teachers manage the main subject and intervention classes, resulting in inconsistencies in teaching methods and covered competencies, which can impede student learning progress. Teacher Nimona explained that she is not the one handling the subject; instead, it is being taught by another teacher. This situation has caused confusion among the students. To address this, Teacher Nimona coordinated with the other teacher to align their lessons and ensure that the students stay on track.

“... di man jud ako ang naghandle sa NMP; lain man... Sa akong nakita, different ang competency nila sa akong gihandle na competency sa akong daily lesson... Dayon mahibong na ang mga bata, pero kami mag coordinate man mi sa NMP teacher, kay moana si si ma'am: “Unsa na ka ron ma'am?” so mao na siya...maka coincide mi niya ang learning sa bata, dili malayo, so mag coordinate na lang mi sa among i-klase, sa iyang NMP ug sa akong Mathematics subject... it's not really me handling the NMP; it's someone else. From what I've observed, their competencies are different from the ones I handle in my daily lessons. Then, the students get confused. But we do coordinate with the NMP teacher, because Ma'am will ask, “What are you teaching now, Ma'am?” So, that's how it works. We make sure the students' learning aligns and doesn't go off track. We coordinate what we're teaching in her NMP and my Mathematics subject.” - Teacher Nimona

Additionally, time and scheduling constraints affect the learning progress of the students. Teacher Nimona shared that the division of a 90-minute session into three lessons, and the allocation of only 30 minutes for certain activities highlight how limited time can hinder effective teaching. For slower learners who require more time to absorb information, these time pressures can be overwhelming, leading to gaps in understanding.

“...90 minutes divided into 3 lessons so mao na siya nga kanang maglisod jud mag catch-up ang learners especially nga full of pressure or full of pressure means nga need pajud sila ug kanang further instruction or mediation mga in-ana gud na klase sa learners, slow gyud sila... 90 minutes divided into 3 lessons so it's hard for the learners to catch-up especially, they are full of pressure or full of pressure means they need further

instruction or meditation, they are that kind of learners — slow.” - Teacher Nimona

Lastly, the teachers emphasized the shortcomings and flaws in the program’s implementation, including the lack of orientation, insufficient resources, and the shortage of teachers to handle different subgroups. Teacher Cassie mentioned that a major issue with the NLRP framework is the lack of orientation, as this orientation would serve as a guide on how to teach students. However, instead of proper training, they were simply given the materials and told to teach on their own.

“Ang problema is the kuan gyud, like orientation namo. Ang nahitabo is gihatagan ra mi ana and then do it, “Kamo nay bahala.” The problem really is the orientation. What happened was they just provided the material and said “Do it, it’s up to you.” - Teacher Cassie

The responses underscore the need to address these issues to improve the effectiveness of the program. The teachers’ feedback highlights that overcoming these barriers requires consistent and targeted instructional strategies, such as individualized interventions and active student participation. To support learners in overcoming these challenges, teachers should incorporate methods like differentiated instruction, peer-assisted learning, and cognitive scaffolding, all of which have been shown to enhance both engagement and learning outcomes (Scammacca *et al.*, 2013).

On the other hand, the Philippine Inquirer (Sampang, 2024) reports that during a Senate hearing, Senator Gatchalian asserted that the NLRP requires significant reform, as it is not producing the intended learning outcomes for students despite its original goals. Based on these shared experiences, the researchers found that the current design and implementation of the NLRP may lack the alignment needed to effectively fulfill its remedial objectives. This suggests a need for improved coordination, structural organization, and targeted reform of the overall program to achieve its intended impact on student learning.

The researchers also note that time and scheduling constraints significantly affect both teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes. Without sufficient time for instruction and individualized support, teaching quality may decline, and students may struggle to meet learning objectives (Blömeke *et al.*, 2022) ^[6]. These constraints can lead to frustration for both teachers and students, as the rigid schedule may not accommodate the diverse needs of learners. To resolve this, it is crucial to allocate ample time for instruction, ensuring lessons are delivered effectively and that students can achieve the desired learning outcomes within the program.

Ultimately, the researchers identified several shortcomings in the program, including teacher shortages, insufficient orientation for teachers and parents, issues with lesson plan revisions leading to increased workloads, and resulting exhaustion and stress for teachers (Jomuad *et al.*, 2021). These challenges make the program more difficult to execute. Therefore, improved preparation is needed, with detailed instructions and orientation for teachers, stakeholders, parents, and students to ensure the success of future program implementations.

Overall, these challenges in the program demonstrate a dire need for reform and changes so that the program can meet the needs of the teachers and students, ultimately enhancing the

effectiveness of teaching and improving the learning outcomes. Addressing these issues through focused interventions, enhanced coordination, and adequate resources can foster a more structured and supportive framework, allowing teachers to accommodate the diverse needs of their students. By doing so, the program can achieve its initial goals and guarantee sustainable academic progress for both teachers and students.

Theme 2: Diversity and Learning Loss Recovery

This theme highlights how the integration of instructional grouping and targeted recovery programs addresses the learning needs of diverse students. Teachers shared how recovery programs adapted to the varying readiness levels of students, helping them regain confidence, skills, and knowledge. By grouping students according to their abilities, teachers were able to deliver more effective and personalized instruction, ensuring that every student received the support they needed to thrive.

“Gigroup according to their levels kung nabelong ba siya sa ‘intervention,’ ‘consolidation,’ kay tulo mana sila ka levels, and ‘enhancement.’ The students were grouped according to their level if they belonged in the ‘intervention,’ ‘consolidation,’ or ‘enhancement.’” – Teacher Jill

As what Teacher Jill highlighted, grouping students by ability allows for targeted instruction that is better suited to each student’s capabilities. By sorting students into ‘intervention,’ ‘consolidation,’ and ‘enhancement’ categories, teachers can address the specific needs of each group. This strategy helps in delivering more focused lessons and allows for personalized support, which results in better outcomes for students across different levels of readiness.”

“Nakatabang jud siya sa mga bata kay kanang naa lagy kanang di makuha na kanang lesson ba, dili kaayo sila makakuan ba... Katong mga hina jud ba kanang makuan man diri kanang sa NMP kanang mamaster sad sila... It really helps the children, especially those who can’t grasp the lesson... those who are struggling, they actually master it through NMP.” – Teacher Katey

On the other hand, Teacher Katey’s response emphasizes how recovery programs like NMP help struggling students overcome challenges. These programs break down lessons into more manageable parts, allowing students to master key concepts at their own pace. By targeting those who struggle the most, the program fosters an environment where students can catch up and even excel in areas they previously found difficult. This approach gives struggling learners the confidence they need to succeed.

“Nakit-an jud na namo kay three (3) weeks raman to pero naay jud siyay kanang kuan ba kanang ‘changes,’ improvements sa ilahang confident, sa ilaha sang reading ability... Pwerte nakong lipaya oyy ‘ma-ta’ makamao najud ba...kung continue lang gyud ni saw-on ni siya, ang bata kamao jud; kanang kuan ba ‘no one left behind’... so mao na siya... We really saw that after three weeks, there were changes, improvements in their confidence, and in their reading ability... I’m so happy, like ‘ma-ta,’ they really know now. If we continue to push

this, the child will truly learn; it's like that 'no one left behind' approach." – Teacher Jill

"So, ang nakanindot lang sa NLC kay matutokan jud tanan, matagsa-tagsa jud. What makes NLC commendable is that you can attend to everyone, each one of them is given focused attention." – Teacher Barbie

Both Teacher Jill and Teacher Barbie emphasize the importance of personalized attention in programs. These programs provide focused, one-on-one support that ensures no student is overlooked. Teacher Jill highlights how this 'no one left behind' approach boosts students' confidence and helps them improve academically. Teacher Barbie agrees, emphasizing how giving each student individual attention helps ensure they fully grasp the material. This individualized approach is essential in supporting students of diverse needs and overcoming learning barriers.

The responses underscore the impactful role of recovery programs in addressing learning gaps and meeting the diverse needs of students. Teachers observed significant improvements in student confidence, reading ability, and subject mastery, indicating that targeted recovery programs can effectively bridge academic gaps. Grouping students according to ability, as described by Teacher Jill, enables a more focused and personalized approach to instruction, ensuring that every learner's needs are met. Teacher Barbie's emphasis on individualized attention further underscores the importance of this approach in fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

These findings align with research by White *et al.* (2022) [29] and Ismajli (2018) [21], which underscore the role of differentiated instruction in supporting diverse student profiles. Integrating instructional grouping with recovery programs not only addresses academic gaps but also nurtures student confidence and motivation. Continued implementation and expansion of such programs are important to achieving educational equity and fostering meaningful learning experiences for all students.

Theme 3: Teaching Methods

This theme explores how different teaching methods are tailored to diverse learners' needs during the NLRP intervention classes. Highlighting the significant proceedings of these responses, the teachers under the National Learning Program from the different subgroups collectively agree that these pedagogical strategies are deemed effective. These pedagogical strategies underscore the importance of finding suitable teaching methods to accommodate every diverse learning style and needs.

"... sa akong nakita, like mag games-games mo, mada man gud sila. Like "Hala, unsaon ni?" "Odd, even, mao diay ni siya." Pwede naa ka moadto sa mga games-games, and then paper and pencil. Kuan siya murag nakasabot sila, tungod sa games. Based on what I see, if you have to employ games, they are more interested. Like "Wow! How should I do this?" "Odd, even, so this is it." It can be though games and then paper and pencil test. Uhm, they can understand better through games. - Teacher Cassie

"... kuan interactive kong naa gyuy gipakita ganie na "pictures." Yes, naa juy pictures kay mas mogana man gud na ilahang attention, usually amo jud na ipakuan sa

TV kay more on focus man sila sa kanang story ana..." uhm it is interactive if there are pictures to show. Yes, there should be pictures to catch their attention, we usually present it in the TV because they are more focused in the story."- Teacher Jill

As what Teacher Cassie and Teacher Jill highlighted, these teaching methods effectively address students' low engagement such as incorporating games to enhance learning and learning styles to complement your instruction. Teacher Cassie mentioned that games seem to activate the interest and understanding of students, as students were very responsive. Teacher Jill shared the same sentiments, suggesting images as visual aids that would help grab a student's attention and increase their understanding.

The responses claimed that teaching methods are effective in the context of activity-based and engaging learning activities, experiential and adaptive learning, multidisciplinary integration, and remediation. These findings lie in the various teaching methods that teachers believe are best suited to each learner's needs and style. They emphasize the importance of adapting teaching strategies to enhance students' learning and engagement. Teaching methods pertain to a systematic way of teaching that involves various strategies, techniques, and approaches educators employ to facilitate learning and achieve instructional goals (Hasanova *et. al.*, 2021) [17].

"I encourage always my students to apply and practice in their everyday life what we have discussed in the field of Sciences especially when it comes to preventive measures in avoiding different kinds of diseases that affect the learning and growth of the body and mind." - Teacher Cal

Teachers can incorporate activities that align with students' evolving needs using practical and real-world scenarios which Teacher Cal shared, fostering a more dynamic and engaging learning environment. As confirmed by Hovhannisyanyan (2023) [19], the effectiveness of each teaching method depends on the teacher's experience and abilities, the subject matter, and the needs and abilities of the students. Teachers must be flexible and adaptable in their approach, eager to try out new techniques and modify their lesson plans to suit the needs of their students. The researchers imply the need to enhance teacher training and assessment methods and integrate differentiated instruction. By this, it guarantees that the desired learning outcomes are met with effective teaching methods and strategies.

Theme 4: Provision of Resources and Support

This theme refers to how the Department of Education provides resources and support to the schools and teachers to implement the NLRP. Ibrahim, *et al.* (2017) emphasized that successfully meeting educational goals and supporting academic excellence largely depends on the effective long-term management of these physical resources. However, additional support and resources from the government are essential to maintain and scale up these initiatives (Ondong, 2024). The results revealed several gaps in the support and resources teachers receive for program implementation, including training, seminars, and physical resources.

Teacher Cassie appreciated the completeness and quality of the scripts, which included everything needed, such as dialogue and instructions. This helped teachers focus more on teaching instead of spending time preparing lessons. The

provided answer sheets were also helpful, as they reduced the need for teachers to create extra materials.

“Naa naman gud mi lesson scripts. Ang lesson scripts, naa na jud tanan... dialogue, like unsa na among isulti, naa na tanan, provided na tanan sa DEPEd. Ang amoa nalang is ang pag-deliver. We already have lesson scripts. The lesson scripts contain everything... dialogue, like what we’re supposed to say, everything is there, provided by DepEd. Our only task is to deliver it.” - Teacher Cassie

“... So, okay ra siya in terms sa materials, provided man tanan... Overall, ah, I find it effective in terms sa kanang lesson scripts provided, very well written, nindot siya pagkuan pagka like pagka-craft, and then the answer sheets provided are also very helpful kay di na mi ma-stress og himo... So, it’s okay in terms of materials, everything is provided... Overall, I find it effective in terms of having lesson scripts provided—they’re very well-written, crafted nicely, and the answer sheets provided are also very helpful because we’re not stressed about making them ourselves...” - Teacher Cassie

However, there were challenges with the program as well. Teacher Bell pointed out the issue with physical materials. While DepEd provided digital copies of the lesson scripts, teachers had to print them themselves, which led to extra costs for ink and paper. This financial burden was a significant concern, as teachers had to pay for these materials out of their own pockets.

“...ang materials kay we’re not given bond papers, ink, and kit. Ang kuan ra kato rang softcopy pero the hardcopy, we were the one to produce it. So, ink, bondpaper, mao na sha ang kalas kay we need to kuan, we need to find resources nga kami nalang, bisag unsaon namog approach sa kuan, wala may budget, so we need to use our resources, our own money among gamiton para makabuy sa bondpaper... regarding materials, we weren’t given bond paper, ink, or kits. What we got was only a soft copy, but the hard copy—we had to produce it ourselves. So, ink, bond paper—that’s what we’re spending on because we need to... we need to find resources ourselves. No matter how we approach this, there’s no budget, so we have to use our own resources, our own money, to buy bond paper...” - Teacher Bell

On the other hand, Teacher Nimona found the program flexible and used online tools to improve her lessons. She could enhance the learning experience by incorporating videos from YouTube as long as there was internet in the classroom. This flexibility allowed her to engage students more and address different learning needs.

“Sa NMP, when it comes to tools, there are so many basta naa lay internet connection sa inyohang classroom kay you can have, you can refer to Youtube somewhat like that, and you can have the online, more references, compared jud sa gihatag ninyo nga kanang murag module gani. So mo go beyond pajud ko sa kato rajung gihatag ba, di rako mo-stick ra jud ato. Hmm. Soft copy then kami na ang nag print. Oo, sa DepEd, we printed it, then one by one we give it to our learners, kay para ma kuan jud ba

maoy nindot kay naa jud sila tagsa ba maka hands on jud sila compared anang regular nga di baya ka makahatag anatagsa-tagsa jud nila. In NMP, when it comes to tools, there are so many as long as you have an internet connection in your classroom because you can refer to YouTube, something like that, and you can have online, more references, compared to the modules given. So I go beyond what’s just provided; I don’t stick only to that. Hmm. It’s a soft copy, and we’re the ones printing it. Yes, with DepEd, we printed it, then handed it out one by one to our learners so that they could have it; it’s really nice because each one has their own copy and can actually get hands-on, compared to regular classes where you can’t really provide each one with a copy.” - Teacher Nimona

Another positive aspect was the support from school leadership. Teacher Nimona shared that her principal made sure teachers had access to the materials they needed. This support made it easier for teachers to implement the program and boosted their confidence in delivering lessons.

“...for the support, it is good, kay for material naman, among principal is very supportive; whatever materials we need, we can immediately address or give us what we need. Okay rajud so far sa NLC... for the support, it’s good because, for materials, our principal is very supportive; whatever materials we need, we can immediately address or are given what we need. So, everything is okay so far with the NLC.” - Teacher Nimona

The responses indicated varying levels of satisfaction among elementary teachers regarding the Department of Education’s provision of resources and support for NLRP implementation. Some teachers appreciated the availability of lesson scripts, which they found beneficial for improving their teaching efficiency within their assigned NLRP subgroups. However, others noted challenges with these lesson scripts being provided only as soft copies, adding to their workload as they had to print the materials using personal resources. Additionally, experiences with pre-program seminars and orientations varied; while some teachers could attend orientation sessions or seminars that positively impacted their teaching, others received no orientation and were merely provided with lesson scripts. This lack of initial guidance left teachers to interpret the materials independently, with one teacher noting that an orientation could have facilitated understanding and addressed their questions. Tarraya (2023) confirms that substantial inequalities in educational access, location-based resources, and insufficient funding for schools, classrooms, and learning facilities ultimately affect teachers in the school environment. Based on these responses, the researchers found that in terms of resources and support, the program has its advantages and limitations, highlighting ongoing inconsistencies. This implies the need to continue providing lesson scripts, as they are helpful and efficient for teachers, while also introducing supplementary resources such as workbooks for both teachers and learners. Additionally, there is a need to enhance the consistency of seminars and orientations to ensure that all teachers are adequately prepared for NLRP implementation.

Theme 5: Teacher Satisfaction and Professional Growth

This theme focuses on the critical relationship between job satisfaction and the professional development of teachers in the context of implementing the National Learning Recovery Program (NLRP). It emphasizes how the program influences teachers' satisfaction and supports their professional growth while addressing the challenges posed by its implementation. The researchers found that teachers experienced a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction in teaching learners under the program, particularly when they observed positive results and improvements in addressing students' learning losses. According to the teachers, there were particular circumstances where learners initially struggled, such as being unable to read. However, by the final days of the program, significant improvements were evident, with those learners demonstrating the ability to read. Moreover, the teachers highlighted that they viewed the program as an opportunity for professional development and growth. Teacher Barbie emphasized the profound sense of happiness she felt when at least one learner could finally read. She described this achievement as a source of fulfillment for teachers, highlighting how such moments encapsulate the essence of their profession. Additionally, she expressed her strong willingness to continue participating in the program, recognizing it as a valuable avenue for her professional development and growth. She also noted the lasting impact of her efforts, emphasizing that the children she taught would remember her as the one who helped them during a crucial time in their learning journey.

“During NLC, kanang malipay ka kung naay usa ka bata na makabasa na. Oh, mao ra jud na; ang goal gyud nato na mga maestra, malipay bitaw ka na makaachieve, ang bata ba, mahappy ka kung ang usa ka bata itagsa tagsa nimo ana, nakabasa na sila. So, maong imong achievements—imong kaugalingon na nakapabasa ka ug usa ka bata na nakamao siya, so para nako ra na ha. During NLC, you feel happy when there's one child who can finally read. Yes, that's really it; our goal as teachers is to feel fulfilled when a child achieves, you know, you feel happy when each child, one by one, starts reading. So, that's your achievement—being able to teach a child to read. That's just how I see it.”

- Teacher Barbie

“...gusto sad ko na movolunteer gihapon ug NLC... kay uh mafeel nako ug nindot siya sa feelings bitaw na uh naachieve nimo na nakatudlo ka usa ka bata na kamao siya and then nakahelp ka ana niyang bataa na naglisod unya ang nakanindot sad kay kanang mga bataa, di jud na sila kalimot nimo na ikay gatudlo anang orasa...it's an opportunity pud kay kuan na sad professional development... I also want to volunteer in NLC... because I feel good about it, that feeling when you achieve something by teaching a child who now knows

something, and you've helped that child who was struggling. What's even better is that those kids, they never forget you as the one who taught them at that time...it's an opportunity since it is for professional development.” - Teacher Barbie

Teacher Jill also highlighted the program's significant impact on both learners and teachers. She explained that the program

was specifically designed to address the needs of learners who struggled with fundamental skills, such as reading. She noted how it provided teachers with a distinct advantage, particularly through the preparatory seminar conducted before the program began. This seminar equipped them with strategies and techniques for remediation, enabling them to identify and address the needs of struggling learners more effectively.

“So ang program kung sa didto jud to sa kanang dijud kamao ba, which is helpful siya sa karon na katong teachers nga naapil sa NRP naa siya'y kanang gayng unsay tawag nato ana—advantage. Naa siya'y advantage because na... before man gud mi ana nikuan kay naa mi “seminar”, naa mi seminar. Those teachers nga naseminar, so advantage namo, easily nalang namo to identify how to kanang making “remediation” to our pupils, so pag-ana palang daan 'pak! Kabasa.’ So the program was really designed for those who truly couldn't read, which is helpful now because teachers who joined the NRP have what you might call—an advantage. There's an advantage because... before we joined, we had a ‘seminar,’ we had a seminar. Those teachers who attended the seminar, so we have the advantage; it became easy for us to identify how to do ‘remediation’ for our pupils, so once we started, 'pak! They could read.’” - Teacher Jill

Another key factor that contributed to the development of teachers' skills and knowledge under the program was the collaboration and regular meetings held twice a week with teachers from other schools. During these sessions, they discussed the challenges and concerns they encountered, allowing them to identify areas that needed improvement. This collaborative effort helped them reflect on their teaching practices, revise approaches, and make necessary adjustments

“...every kuan Monday and Friday, naa manay collaboration sa lain na school... pagahisgutan unsa nahitabo ana na week sa Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday unsa nahitabo... unsa mga issues and concerns... ang ilang mga pagkulang or naay irevise nya kami magmodify na pod... every Monday and Friday, there's collaboration with another school... we discuss what happened that week, on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, what happened... any issues and concerns... what they lacked or need to revise, and then we modify it too...” - Teacher Barbie

On the other hand, Teacher Bell expressed her appreciation for the allowance provided during the program's implementation. She emphasized that the program also served as a valuable refresher for her teaching knowledge and skills, particularly since her usual focus is on kindergarten lessons. She noted how the experience allowed her to revisit topics and approaches beyond her regular teaching scope, refreshing her understanding and broadening her perspective.

“Mao to siya, ang isa kay, advantage in terms of money, ”giggles” kay naay allowance, then second, kay kuan nalang pud as a teacher, refreshment pud nako kay since kindergarten man akoang lesson. So kato nabalik akoang dili pang kinder nga, ”giggles” kuan ba, at least murag na

refresh akong mind, nga okay, mao diay ni, nalimot ko ani, in-ani diay to... That's how it is; first, there's an advantage in terms of money, "giggles" since there's an allowance, and second, as a teacher, it was a bit of a refresher for me because my usual lessons are for kindergarten. So this allowed me to revisit things that aren't for kindergarten," giggles "you know, at least it refreshed my mind, like, Oh, that's how it is; I'd forgotten about this, so that's how it works..." - Teacher Bell

According to Smet (2022), there is a significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and the need for professional development in teaching. The programs are intended to equip teachers with a "toolbox" that will extend their knowledge regarding the subject matter taught, instructional strategies, and interpersonal communication skills (Adam & Bogler, 2008). Furthermore, literature has shown that professional development is most effective when it is long-term, school-based, focused on students' learning, and aligned with the curricula. This idea is further supported in this theme.

To sum up, the responses highlight the significant relationship between job satisfaction and professional development for teachers, as emphasized by Smet (2022). Teachers are more satisfied when they have access to programs that enhance their skills and knowledge, particularly those that are long-term, school-based, and tied to student learning. This aligns with existing research that underscores the value of continuous professional development, especially when linked to specific outcomes like curriculum implementation and student achievement (Rehman *et al.*, 2023). Teachers also find value in professional development programs for both intrinsic reasons, such as the satisfaction of helping students succeed, and extrinsic benefits, such as financial incentives and personal refreshments. The personal fulfillment gained from achieving milestones with students, like helping them learn to read, is a key motivator for many educators. Prior exposure to specialized seminars, such as those related to the National Reading Program also provides teachers with a clear advantage in addressing student needs, particularly in literacy. The response suggests that professional development is most effective when it equips teachers with practical, targeted skills that foster both personal growth and improved student outcomes hence, it is recommended to continue the teacher's professional development programs.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The National Learning Recovery Program (NLRP) underscores both the potential and challenges of the framework for teachers. The significant results reveal that teachers encountered several hurdles in teaching different subgroups under the program. While these challenges surfaced, the teachers continued to adapt their teaching strategies and methods to attain the goals of the recovery program and create a positive outcome in addressing the student's learning loss. The targeted reforms and improvements, particularly in resource provision, teacher support, and program alignment with the classroom needs, highlight the call to improve the program's effectiveness. Hence, the researchers recommend the continuity of the program with the targeted reforms to enhance the initiatives of the educational recovery program. Such recommendations include regular teacher training, ample resources, and

ongoing monitoring for better outcomes.

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