

Remedial reading programs for improving reading comprehension and fluency: A critical narrative literature review

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Abstract

The implementation of remedial reading programs is vital in addressing the persistent reading difficulties of learners. This study, a critical narrative literature, looks into the effectiveness of these programs in solving the problems in reading. More or less forty peer-reviewed studies which were published from 2019 to 2025 were analyzed and reviewed. The studies were analyzed and summarize through thematic analysis. This critical narrative review of the literature highlights important aspects of remedial reading. These include learner's background, strategies in remedial reading instruction, sustainability of the programs and the role of leaders in the implementation of the programs. Findings suggest that the improvement of reading skills through remedial reading is consistent and depends not only on how it is implemented but also on teacher readiness, proper implementation and strong instructional leadership. While numerous studies have been conducted on remedial reading programs, there are still gaps in the literature, particularly in leadership-focused analysis, long-term research, and studies specific to the Philippine context. This study contributes to the existing literature by treating remedial reading programs not only as an intervention for struggling readers, but also as a product of strong leadership support. And it stresses the importance of strategies that respond to the needs of different learning environments and communities.

Keywords: remedial reading, reading comprehension, reading fluency, instructional leadership, educational administration

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1. Introduction

Reading is one of the macro skills that a learner must have in order to be successful in school. However, persistent reading challenges persist throughout the years. Many students are promoted to the next grade level without having reached the expected level of reading proficiency. This situation raises concern not only about the effectiveness of instructional practices but also about how schools find, support, and sustain responses to reading difficulties over time. Thus, intervention strategies are put in place to assist learners to develop their reading skills. One of the common interventions is the use of remedial reading programs. This focuses on developing core reading skills including vocabulary development, comprehension, fluency and decoding. However, it is impossible to determine the success and effectiveness of these programs solely by their instructional design as it depends on many factors such as teacher's capacity to teach reading, availability of resources, consistency of implementation and leadership support. Often these other elements are not considered, and even well designed programs may be undermined in their ability to achieve intended outcomes.

It is a problem to research remedial reading programs only in terms of the classroom. Much of the literature is concerned with the implementation of the remedial reading programs and its outcomes after a certain period of time, often less attention is paid to the other factors affecting its success. This narrow focus might limit the ability of educational institutions to develop long-term and sustainable approaches to improving literacy outcomes. Remedial reading programs are, indeed, not isolated classroom activities. These are implemented in complex school settings where the effectiveness and sustainability are greatly affected by policy mandates and administrative decisions. The problems on literacy of learners in the Philippines continue.

Assessments taken at the beginning of the school year (Philippine Informal Reading Inventory [Phil-IRI] for Key Stages 2-3 and Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment [CRLA] for Key Stage 1) revealed that a small percentage of learners are on grade level in reading, which means that many learners are still below the expected reading levels. The findings provide basis in the implementation of remedial reading program. However, there are some reading difficulties at the end of school year. This indicates that, although identifying reading gaps is an important step, challenges remain in translating assessment results into effective and sustained remediation practices.

To address these challenges, the Department of Education has put up several initiatives to improve literacy outcomes. These include the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program, 3B's (Bawat Bata Bumabasa), and other school-based remedial reading programs. These efforts are directed at giving struggling learners a variety of reading activities such as guided reading and differentiated instruction. Studies by Casingal (2022) and Pocaan et al., (2022) reveal that these programs can enhance reading performance among learners if the instruction meets the learners' needs and are contextualized and continuous. However, the gains achieved through these interventions are not always the same and can be difficult to sustain without the presence of strong institutional support, continuous monitoring and a clear commitment to long-term implementation. Moreover, studies on remedial reading programs in the Philippines, especially in the public schools, reveal persistent problems such as teacher preparedness, availability of materials and resources, big class sizes, and lack of time. Teachers who are assigned to serve as reading tutors may have a range of responsibilities that may affect the effectiveness of the program. Some schools implement remedial reading programs but these are only applied in their own respective institutions and not adopted by a wider range of schools.

That is why there is a need to study remedial reading programs in the context of instructional leadership and educational administration. These programs are also affected by support, monitoring and sustainability among

schools. Thus, improving reading outcomes require more than effective practices in the classroom; it needs clear leadership practices, policy alignment and greater coordination at the school level. Classroom strategies remain important, but the effectiveness of these programs also depends on the systems, structures and support around their implementation. In this regard, the review is structured with the following research questions that define the scope and direction of the study: (1) Which of the remedial reading interventions are the most effective to enhance the reading comprehension and fluency of learners? (2) What contextual and instructional factors affect the effectiveness of remedial reading programs? (3) What is the contribution of administrative support and school leadership to the implementation and sustainability of remedial reading programs?

In this review, merely presenting or summarizing the findings of existing literatures is not enough. Instead, the study critically reviews previous studies to better understand how remedial reading programs work in broader educational contexts. Thus, the review seeks to reposition remedial reading as part of the broader discourse of instructional leadership, emphasizing the need for approaches that are research-informed and responsive to local contexts and institutional support. This study adopts a critical narrative literature review as opposed to a strict systematic review methodology, allowing for interpretative synthesis and meaningful engagement with a range of sources.

2. Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

This study is based on an integrated theoretical and conceptual framework that collectively explains the relationship between reading development, intervention design, and educational leadership. These include the Simple View of Reading, Scarborough's Reading Rope, Response to Intervention (RTI), Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), and Instructional Leadership Theory. Together, these frameworks offer a holistic view to understanding how remedial reading programs improve reading comprehension and fluency in school systems.

The Simple View of Reading (Hoover & Gough, 1990) is at the core of reading development. This theory posits that reading comprehension is the product of two necessary components: decoding and linguistic comprehension. In this model, it is assumed that the learners will not be able to understand fully unless the two components are properly developed. This framework is particularly useful for remedial reading programs because it considers the need for focused interventions in word recognition and meaning-making processes for struggling readers. This is the context for understanding why reading interventions include both fluency and comprehension.

Scarborough's Reading Rope goes one step further and offers a more detailed way of thinking about how reading proficiency develops over time. (McCandlish, 2024), explained that it is about word recognition and language understanding. These are developed slowly together to improve reading skills. This framework illustrates that successful remedial programs must include a variety of instructional strategies that address both phonemic awareness and comprehension, a holistic remedial process rather than just fragmented teaching of skills.

Response to Intervention (RTI) is another theory to support the framework. RTI is an instructional method that identifies struggling learners early and provides tiered support. RTI is "the increasing levels of intervention intensity that give educators the power to meet the varied needs of learners through targeted instruction and ongoing progress monitoring" (Bejona, 2025). This framework has direct application to remedial reading programs given that it provides a framework for the organization of the way interventions are presented, assessed, and modified based on the performance of the learner.

MTSS is built on RTI and expands the intervention model to a school-wide framework. The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) MTSS is a group of processes and structures schools use to support all learners to be successful including academic, behavioral, and instructional supports (Brown-Chidsey et al., 2025). In the context of remedial reading, MTSS emphasizes the need for system-wide coordination of implementation, pointing out that interventions are not independent projects but are integrated into a holistic approach to address the needs of varied learners.

Instructional leadership is another significant foundation for this study. Hallinger (2003) defines Instructional Leadership as teacher development through modelling, provision of resources and development of conditions that directly influence student achievement. This is useful for the sustainability and establishment of remedial reading programs in schools.

In support of this study, an integrated conceptual model is developed, incorporating theories of reading development (Simple View and Reading Rope), intervention frameworks (RTI and MTSS), and Instructional Leadership Theory. Theories of reading development help explain the nature of reading difficulties, and intervention frameworks help guide the design and delivery of remedial programs. In addition, Instructional Leadership Theory offers the context needed for program effectiveness and sustainability. This synthesis supports that remedial reading programs are influenced by both pedagogical and organizational factors, and not simply a pedagogical measure.

2.1 Theme 1: Historical Foundations and Early Studies on Remedial Reading Programs

Previous studies on remedial reading established the theoretical basis for present-day intervention practices. It is through the recognition of the sequential process of comprehension and fluency acquisition and the requirement for specific teaching in school settings. Hall et al. (2020) found that teaching direct instruction on making inferences improved comprehension among struggling readers. This is consistent with earlier cognitive views of reading as an active process of meaning construction rather than decoding of text. Furthermore, Miller and Massey (2022) pointed out that reading fluency interventions are vital to improve comprehension, particularly for students with persistent reading difficulties. The results also provide additional support for the long-standing view that fluency and comprehension are closely related aspects of reading development. In general, these studies contribute to the theoretical and practical base of remedial reading, but there are some limitations and gaps that need further investigation.

Maydew's (2025) historical account usefully situates remedial reading in the context of institutional development. However, its emphasis on structural evolution might overlook the significance of variation at the classroom level and the agency of teachers. The study emphasizes that leaders respond to literacy deficiencies through remediation programs, which may outshine the real contribution of quality instruction, expertise of teachers, and other factors or contexts that lead to the success of a program. In this sense the study only gives an overview of the implementation of these institutional frameworks, but does not analyze its details.

Williams et al. (2022) also recognize the importance of remedial reading for some groups, particularly students with special needs. Reported gains in comprehension are positive but the study seems to assume the changes are enough to make them transferable. This may be an over-simplification of the complex nature of differences in language processing in this group, particularly with respect to the role of sign language proficiency, prior literacy exposure and cognitive variation. The study might not, therefore, capture the rich, multiple and multimodal nature of literacy development within the non-hearing population. The study confirms remedial approaches are inclusive.

Juhkam et al. (2023) discusses that even after elementary education, these reading problems are still not solved. Support is only given at the start or a short period of time but lacks consistency, which is an effect of traditional models of remediation. However, the study does not discuss differences between types of reading problems or developmental paths, and appears to suggest that continued intervention is generally necessary.

2.2 Theme 2: Current Debates, Trends, and Innovations in Remedial Reading

Recent research indicates a change from questioning the efficacy of remedial reading programs to more specific questions about the design, implementation and sustainability of these interventions in the school context. Because the short-term gains are insufficient, the sustainability of program implementation remains a major challenge which becomes an area of concern. The consistency of the interventions and the need for a more comprehensive program structure for a successful implementation serve as a difficulty in crafting a well-planned

program framework.

Daniel, Capin, and Steinle (2021) investigate the sustainability of remedial literacy intervention effects. These results suggest substantial short-term effects but also suggest the decrease of the impact over time. The research suggests that although some progress is made, many interventions may not be deep enough to support long-term literacy development, especially for older learners. However, the emphasis on effect reduction may appear too broad, since it does not consider possible differences in program quality, intensity and contextual support. These conditions may have a large effect on the long-term outcomes.

In light of these concerns, in addition to traditional skill-based teaching, the recent intervention models began incorporating motivational and affective elements. Lovett et al. (2021) demonstrate that programs involving explicit reading instruction and motivates learners have a bigger tendency to have longer-lasting gains. This approach contributes to view reading development that involves cognition and emotional process. These findings are promising but including these motivational elements brings out truthfulness of implementation especially in educational settings which have scarcity of resources.

Multi-sensory and technology assisted methods are being noticed as a trend in teaching methods. Differentiated and multimodal approaches have been used for students with dyslexia and persistent reading difficulties over the years. (Kilag et al., 2023). Individual differences are considered, but the success of these innovations depends on teachers' readiness and access to appropriate resources. However, these conditions are not always properly attended to. It holds promise for remedial reading programs, but some further investigation reveals that the results are not consistent across the board and these are conditional. Many studies report short term gains, especially in reading fluency where repeated practice and structured instruction provide measurable gains in the speed and accuracy of decoding. In contrast, gains in reading comprehension tend to develop more slowly and require integrated instructional approaches that incorporate vocabulary, background knowledge, and higher order thinking skills. Interventions with multiple components, such as those that include both cognitive and motivational strategies, are more likely to produce sustained outcomes for comprehension. These programs, however, tend to be more difficult to implement and are dependent upon teacher expertise and institutional support.

In addition, the success of remedial reading programs is influenced by a variety of contextual factors including the intensity of the intervention, the length of time for its implementation, the readiness of the learners, the capacity of the teachers, and the level of support from leadership. Programs with high fidelity, ongoing monitoring, and strong administrative support are more likely to demonstrate immediate gains and long-term impact. The results imply that the effective remedial reading is not a static outcome but a process which is dependent upon instructional and organizational conditions. In conclusion, these studies suggest that research has now focused not on whether remedial reading is effective but considering how they can be improved, maintained, and modified over time. Despite this advancement, there are still existing research gaps particularly in terms of impact, context, and challenges in the implementation of complex and holistic approaches.

2.3 Theme 3: Instructional Leadership and System-Level Implementation of Remedial Reading

Emerging research is increasingly recognising that the success of remedial reading programs is not just a matter of instructional strategies but is heavily influenced by school leadership, organisational capacity, and institutional practices. From this perspective remedial reading is not a classroom intervention but a school-wide instructional leadership effort that requires a coordinated across-the-school planning, implementation and monitoring. There is now a shift in discussion as to the role of school heads and instructional leaders in implementing reading interventions. According to the theory of instructional leadership, the school leaders are directly involved in student outcomes through setting clear instructional goals, developing teachers, and aligning curriculum, assessment, and intervention strategies (Hallinger, 2003). This means, in the area of remedial reading, that priority must be given to literacy on the school agenda, that time must be set aside for intervention programs, and that continuous and structured assistance must be provided for struggling readers.

It is also noted that reading coordinators and literacy leaders play important roles as mediators between policy and classroom practice. Their responsibilities include overseeing reading programs, promoting teacher collaboration and tracking results of reading assessments like Phil-IRI. The available literature suggests however, that the success of these roles is largely dependent on clear role descriptions, professional competencies and administrative support. Without this support, coordination activities may turn to be fragmented and inconsistent. Another dimension identified in the literature is teacher coaching and teacher professional development.

Research indicates that sustained coaching, mentoring and access to evidence-based strategies significantly enhance teachers' capacity to deliver effective remedial instruction. Leadership driven professional development provides teachers training in intervention techniques and support in tailoring instruction for diverse learners. This is consistent with wider evidence that instructional improvement can be sustained when leadership is focused on capacity-building rather than one-off training. The literature also points to the importance of monitoring and data-driven decision making for the sustainability of remedial reading programs. Good school systems use assessment data such as reading inventories and progress monitoring tools as a guide in instruction, to identify students who are in need of scaffolding and to evaluate the effectiveness of programs. Leaders are critical in the development of systems for using data and interpreting assessment results as the basis for action in instruction rather than as stand-alone reports.

Leadership is often a secondary concern, with greater focus on learner outcomes and instructional methods in the literature of remedial reading. This is a significant gap, especially in developing education settings where resource limitations and organizational challenges may be more pronounced for the success of programs. A more integrated view is that instructional quality, teacher capacity and leadership practices are interdependent and sustainable improvement in reading outcomes requires alignment across these domains. Overall, the findings support the argument that remedial reading programs must be crafted as a school-level initiative under the guidance of instructional leadership frameworks. Success depends not only on what is taught but on how schools organize, support and sustain literacy interventions over time.

2.4 Theme 4: Comparative Perspectives Across Contexts, Levels, and Approaches

These programs are not one-size-fits-all interventions because they are not always applicable to elementary, secondary, and special education. A program's success still depends on the learners, the school setting, and implementation of the program. The basic principles of teaching are applicable in numerous countries on the condition that they must be adapted to the specific contexts. Martins, Begeny, and Capellini (2023) made modifications to the HELPS Reading Fluency Program for Brazilian students and reported improvements in their fluency and accuracy. Structured programs can thus work cross-culturally, but only if carefully adapted. Coggins (2023) found that even in schools with no resources, a program based on phonics was effective in improving the reading skills of rural students. It is not only the results from the program but teacher support and student background might be important factors.

The importance of fluency and vocabulary is also highlighted in other researches involving different languages. For Friesen et al., (2022), reading strategies were effective in improving the understanding of text among both bilingual and monolingual learners. Among Chinese learners as stated by Hsu, Chan, and Ho (2023), decoding skills and reading comprehension was found to be associated with reading fluency. Meanwhile, Xie and Yeung (2025) support that having a wide vocabulary supports reading comprehension among bilingual children. Although these studies include fluency and vocabulary, other factors such as language exposure and cultural background that can also influence learning are not put into consideration.

There are also discussions in psychology and neuroscience which are contributory to the depth of this discussion. Even for adult readers, fluency and vocabulary matter, as reported by Gonçalves et al. (2021). For Peters et al. (2019), it was shown that visual attention training can help improve reading for learners with dyslexia. On the other hand, Coburn et al. (2022) found that the same is beneficial for learners with autism. The utilization

of these often require special training or resources, thus, these approaches may be difficult to apply in regular schools.

Technology is also contributing a significant role in remedial reading. Davisson (2021) showed that when digital reading program was implemented among middle school students', their comprehension increased. Jahanaray, Kassirian and Jahanaray (2025) also stated that computer-based programs can also be used to assist in improving reading skills especially for students with dyslexia. More recent work e.g. Caliri (2025) demonstrates how mobile and personalized tools can support learning. However, access to these tools is limited and not all schools have the same capacity to provide these tools, which make it difficult in using technology as a tool in remedial reading programs. How remedial programs are experienced by students is another point for discussion. Researches by Masterson (2022, 2023), Ginsberg (2020), and Donalson and Halsey (2020) shows that programs can vary in their results even if they are well-designed. It still depends on its practical implementation and how learners are treated. This is because some students can feel that they are supported and motivated, while others feel differently, saying that they feel discriminated.

In summary, these studies support that fluency, vocabulary and clear instruction are the keys to solve reading difficulties. Looking at it in a broader view, they also show that that it is not just the program that is taken into consideration to achieve optimum positive results. Context, resources, student identity, etc. need to be taken into account. This means that remedial reading programs need to be evidence-based, but also flexible and sensitive to the needs of different learners.

2.5 Critical Synthesis: Agreements, Contradictions, and Gaps in the Literature

These themes all lead into a few key points. First, most of research indicates that these implemented remedial reading programs can really improve the ability to decode words and understand them but are still dependent on some conditions including way of instruction and various contexts. Fluency is found to improve through constant drills and practice over a short period of time. Comprehension is more difficult to develop because it involves a wider scope of cognitive skills and it needs a longer time for its development. However, a deeper analysis may not be present because many studies are conducted in controlled situations and does not show real classroom settings.

The sustainability of these programs is another important area of concern. Many earlier studies have been largely focused on short-term improvement. For more recent studies, it was shown that maintaining the programs is often difficult to accomplish over time. This suggests that without further instructional support after the initial improvements, particularly in fluency, reading may not be sustained. In contrast, comprehension needs continued exposure, reinforcement and integration into regular classroom instruction. Longitudinal studies are needed to prove the efficacy of such programs. Therefore, researchers put emphasis on the importance of incorporating long-term planning, continuous support, and motivational strategies into the programs that leads into a shift of how reading can be improved through remedial sessions. In doing this, reading remediation shall be acknowledged as a process that takes a longer time, not in a brief intervention. Studies talk about sustainability but lack clear explanation of how schools can realistically sustain these programs, especially when resources are scarce.

Additionally, the success of remedial programs has no clear indications and parameters. Some researchers focus on the quality of instructional materials and teaching strategies. Others say that school leadership, teacher training and coordination within the school are equally important. This discrepancy only shows that there is no single factor for success. If the focus is only on the teaching methods used in remedial reading programs, the complex conditions under which these programs are implemented could be neglected.

Several gaps are noted in this research. There are still inadequate long-term studies of remedial reading from the point of view of a school or system. In addition to this are studies focusing on the influence of leadership, school policy or organizational culture on program outcomes. Masterson (2022), also recognizes issues such as learner identity and equity that are not explored further. This becomes the basis that some major social, economical and emotional factors that influence student success are often overlooked. The literature strongly supports

implementation of remedial reading, but also notes that a function of the program itself is effectiveness. To attain long-term success, there is a need to pay attention to context, support systems and the experiences of learners in such programs.

2.6 Literature Review Matrix

To provide clarity, organization, and transparency in the synthesis of reviewed studies, a literature review matrix that summarizes key information from selected studies is presented below. This includes their context, methodology, findings, limitations, and relevance to reading comprehension and fluency.

Table 1
Literature Review Matrix

Author/Year	Country/Context	Learner Level	Intervention Type	Research Design	Key Findings	Limitations	Relevance to Reading
Hall et al. (2020)	USA	Elementary	Inference instruction	Experimental	Improved comprehension	Skill-specific focus	Comprehension
Miller & Massey (2022)	USA	School-identified readers	Fluency intervention	Review	Fluency improves comprehension	Generalized findings	Fluency & comprehension
Williams et al. (2022)	USA	College (DHH)	Adapted literacy instruction	Experimental	Improved comprehension	Limited population	Comprehension
Juhkam et al. (2023)	Europe	Elementary	Reciprocal teaching	Longitudinal study	Improved fluency/metacognition	Broad categorization	Fluency & comprehension
Daniel et al. (2021)	USA	Adolescent	Reading interventions	Meta-synthesis	Short-term gains decline	Variation not addressed	Sustainability
Lovett et al. (2021)	Canada/USA	Adolescents	Multi-component	Experimental	Sustained gains	Complex implementation	Fluency & comprehension
Kilag et al. (2023)	Philippines	General	Multisensory	Review	Supports struggling readers	Limited empirical data	Fluency
Martins et al. (2023)	Brazil	Elementary	HELPS program	Experimental	Improved fluency	Context adaptation needed	Fluency
Coggins (2023)	USA rural	Elementary	Phonics-based	Experimental	Improved skills	Context-specific	Fluency
Friesen et al. (2022)	International	Children	Strategy use	Comparative	Improved comprehension	Language variables	Comprehension
Hsu et al. (2023)	China	Children	Fluency-focused	Correlational	Fluency links decoding/comprehension	Limited intervention	Fluency
Xie & Yeung (2025)	International	Bilingual	Vocabulary support	Experimental	Improved comprehension	Context variance	Comprehension
Davisson (2021)	USA	Middle School	Digital program	Quasi-experimental	Higher comprehension	Access issues	Comprehension
Pocan et al. (2022)	Philippines	Basic ed	Reading intervention	Action research	Improved performance	Small sample	Fluency & comprehension
Abergos et al. (2024)	Philippines	Grade 7	Remedial reading	Experimental	Improved reading skills	Short duration	Fluency & comprehension

3. Methodology

This study is explicitly a critical narrative literature review, a qualitative method that allows interpretive synthesis, critical comparison and identification of patterns and gaps in existing research without following the rigid protocols of a systematic review. To achieve this design, a critical narrative synthesis was utilized to investigate the impact of remedial reading programs on reading comprehension and fluency, and the instructional and institutional conditions that support their effectiveness.

A structured but flexible search procedure was used to ensure transparency and accuracy in research methods. Peer-reviewed journal articles and credible academic publications published within the last 5–7 years (approximately 2019–2025) were retrieved from Google Scholar and ERIC databases. These capture innovations and emerging discussions in remedial reading. Theories were also integrated to support the study. To search relevant literature, the following combinations of keywords were utilized: remedial reading programs, reading

comprehension, reading fluency, struggling readers, literacy intervention, reading difficulties, and instructional leadership in literacy.

Critical for this evaluation was the need to examine studies that addressed either remedial or intervention programs designed to enhance reading comprehension and/or fluency specifically in basic education schools and among settings with students with special needs. Peer-reviewed empirical and review-based studies presented in English were used. There was an evaluation of the aspects of leadership, implementation of the program and instructional methods. Those studies not targeting reading remediation were excluded (e.g. general literacy). Even those without sufficient methodological clarity and those which were unpublished or non-peer-reviewed works like theses or those which has a similar entry across databases were excluded. This still allowed critical interpretation and the included literature was ensured to be relevant and methodologically credible.

Titles and abstracts of about 30–40 studies were screened for an in-depth examination. The selection criteria were conceptual relevance; range of instructional contexts and contribution to the critical understanding of remedial reading practice. This review of the literature focuses on critical interpretation and contextual analysis, synthesizing these into thematic lenses. Such themes or core dimensions include the effectiveness and sustainability of programs, pedagogical practices, learner experience and institutional support. It is unlike systematic reviews which use a standardized protocol designed to ensure exhaustive search and statistical aggregation. Also discussed were contradictions, methodological limitations and areas that are not fully explored, particularly in the context of educational leadership and administration. Despite limitations for the quantity of available studies, differences in research designs, and the relatively low number of longitudinal and leadership studies in the field, this approach still provides a comprehensive and robust review of the literature.

4. Discussion

The literature synthesis supports the effectiveness of remedial reading programs in addressing reading issues. This is not a universal outcome, though, as there are numerous circumstances that may impact the execution.

In remedial reading programs, the literature also made a distinction between short-term improvements and long-term retention. It is true that many therapies increase fluency immediately, but without ongoing assistance and reinforcement, students cannot completely overcome reading difficulties. Gains from these programs are expected if the intervention consists of controlled practice, phonics instruction, and repeated reading. Conversely, reading comprehension calls for longer-term, multifaceted strategies. Higher order thinking abilities, vocabulary, and prior knowledge are all taken into account.

The literature repeatedly emphasizes administrative and instructional leadership as critical to the success and sustainability of remedial reading programs. In addition to their support of instructional delivery, school leaders have a strategic role to play in shaping the overall literacy environment. The results suggest that remedial reading programs do not always have positive outcomes. It is a context-dependent process. It is determined by both quality of instruction and organizational capacity. If priorities are clear, resources allocated and systems are in place to monitor programs on an ongoing basis, success is not impossible to obtain.

Effective leaders make sure that remedial reading is not a stand-alone intervention but is an integral piece of school-wide improvement efforts. They base their decisions on data. For example, they do systematic analysis of reading assessment results. Furthermore, they have to plan and implement interventions based on the learner's needs. Coaching and mentoring done by leaders can contribute to the success of the remedial reading program. Planning trainings and seminars on teaching reading is of great help. Similarly, they monitor and track progress over time. The presence of reading coordinators or literacy leaders further strengthens program implementation because they connect administrative direction and classroom practice.

This only supports that without strong and sustained leadership, remedial reading programs can be chaotic. The programs may be inconsistent due to limited monitoring and may lack long-term impact. These findings

suggest that improving reading outcomes requires not only effective teaching strategies but also coherent leadership practices. These results suggest that remedial reading should be considered a system-wide project that requires coordinated leadership, alignment of policies, and commitment of every member of the organization. The literature also reveals persistent problems of equality and learner identity. The lack of orientation can marginalize struggling readers; hence the need for inclusive and motivationally responsive programs.

Despite the large amount of research on remedial reading interventions, several gaps are still evident. First, there is not enough longitudinal research on the long-term impact of remedial reading programs at the various levels of education. Second, the role of educational administrators and instructional leaders in program design, implementation, and evaluation are not studied. Third, there are limited context specific research in developing education systems particularly like Philippine public schools. The literature looks at learner performance outcomes as the main indicator of success but only a few look into organizational processes, leadership practices, and policy coherence. If these gaps are addressed, there will be an advancement of both scholarly understanding and practical administration of remedial reading programs. Long-term success, therefore, depends on consistency of implementation, teacher expertise, and system-level support. It is also important to note the importance of leadership involvement and data-driven monitoring.

5. Conclusion

This literature review shows that remedial reading programs and interventions are critical in improving students' reading comprehension and fluency skills. Systematic and evidence-based remediation improves literacy. It will even become better when combined with motivational and multisensory techniques. In addition, educational leadership, teacher competency, and institutional support all have a significant impact on the effectiveness and viability of these programs.

For educational administrators, remedial reading programs should be conceptualized as strategic instructional leadership initiatives. These should not be treated as isolated classroom practices for only a short period of time. Educational administrators must focus on programs that lead to sustainable outcomes which demand coherent policy frameworks, ongoing professional development, data-driven decision-making, and inclusive program designs that prioritize learner equity.

For teachers and tutors, remedial reading programs must be done with commitment to improve the literacy of learners and should not be treated for the sake of compliance. While, for schools and stakeholders, remedial reading programs should be a shared responsibility among the schools and the other members of the of the community. The development of literacy is not a sole responsibility of educational institutions only.

This review has three significant contributions to the field. First, it advances the understanding of literacy intervention. This is attained through demonstrating that improvements in reading comprehension and fluency are conditional, context-dependent, and differentiated in terms of short-term and long-term outcomes. Second, it extends instructional leadership discourse. It highlights the critical role of school heads, literacy coordinators, and teacher support systems in sustaining effective remedial programs. Third, it contributes to educational administration. It reframes remedial reading as a system-level reform initiative, requiring alignment among instructional practices, leadership structures, and institutional support mechanisms.

Taken together, this study emphasizes that meaningful and sustained improvement in reading outcomes is achieved not only through effective instruction, but through coordinated leadership and organizational commitment within schools.

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