

# EXPLORING THE CHALLENGES OF DROP EVERYTHING AND READ PROGRAM OF ELEMENTARY LEARNERS

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## ABSTRACT

*This study explored the challenges encountered by the teachers in the implementation of Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) Program among elementary learners. There were eight participants of this study who were elementary teachers from selected schools in New Bataan District for the school year 2023-2024. It was revealed that learners are struggling with reading, letter identification and overcrowded classrooms, selecting reading materials, and cannot read alone. They were also challenged with learners having dyslexia disorder and those learners who are harder to motivate. According to them, the most challenging strategies in reading were paired reading, individual assessment, multisensory, and round-robin. The reading approaches that were difficult to follow are implementing differentiated instruction, guided reading in DEAR, employing individual attention, encouraging kids to engage in close reading, technology-enhanced reading approach, multisensory and whole language approach. Among these reading approaches, the effective ones were small group instruction and personalized reading plans, integrating variety of literacy skills, peer reading, phonics approach and reading recovery approach, linguistic method, interactive read aloud, and reward system. The reasons found reading approaches effective were, the learners were given proper reading challenges and assistance, become more knowledgeable readers, foster students interests and preferences, and cater learning styles. Employing differentiated instruction, using visual aids and interactive reading activities, using encouraging reading resources, rewarding efforts, doing reading workshops and flexible reading assignments were the effective coping mechanisms employed by the teachers. The insights gained by the teachers in the implementation of DEAR program were patience adaptability, personalized support is important, never shoulder every responsibility, ensuring that learners have access to reading resources, needs to have collaboration and professional growth, encourage reading habits at home, and appreciate the roles of technology. These insights contribute to confronting challenges in reading program by reminding teachers and learners to be flexible, by creating a vibrant reading culture, taking part in developing students reading skills, boosting students' engagement and excitement for reading, focusing on motivation, acquiring reading techniques, enhancing professional growth, and creating more individualized reading plans.*

**Keywords:** *challenges of teachers, Drop Everything and Read Program, phenomenology, basis for school reading program*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) program is believed to be an effective strategy to help students establish a better reading habit and increase their ability to communicate ideas coherently. The proactive stance of the Department of Education clearly manifests itself while operationalizing the DEAR program was presented in response to the specified guidelines in Section 22 of DepEd Memorandum No. 2011. Beginning as a notable practice seen in foreign educational systems, DEAR program is a carefully designed approach geared to firmly establish reading as embedded into the core framework of the learning process (Caga & Soya, 2019). The DEAR program mandates that participants cease all activities such as drop everything and begin reading for a set amount of time. It is undeniable

that developing good reading habits was essential to the students' positive progress in comprehension (Akande & Odeyapo, 2018).

In Indonesia, it is imperative to recognize the need to increase reading literacy. It is hardly unexpected that a lot of teachers are having trouble figuring out how to encourage students to read more (Raslie et al., 2020). Academic requirements for many students include reading many books and articles, but the reality is that some of them are reluctant readers who can read but choose not to. To present a favorable reading experience in this case, the teacher must devise a specific plan of action and the Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) initiative could be a great innovation.

In the national setting, similar issues on DEAR program such as keeping learners motivated, teachers' lack of training in reading program implementation, and integrating variety of reading literacy skills have also arisen in the selected schools of Region XI in the Philippines (Acita et al., 2022). Challenges that beset the reading program are lack of resources, difficulty defining the purpose of reading, unfamiliarity with letters, sounds, words, and accurate pronunciation, and difficulties putting analytical strategies into practice. The implementation of the DEAR program as a reading intervention encountered challenges, most of which stemmed from students' problems with comprehension and teachers' difficulties in breaking down vocabulary because of students' limited word knowledge.

In Batinao Elementary School, reading is really an essential skill that lays the groundwork for academic achievement and lifelong learning. Despite its importance, many pupils struggle with reading, which affects their overall learning. As recorded, 37% of pupils from grades 4 to 6 belong to frustration level in reading. Thus, the reading recovery program in school was designed to assist struggling readers by offering targeted interventions and support. The school introduces the DEAR program as an intervention program in reading. Through guided practice, this program attempts to promote improved exposure, comprehension strategy knowledge, and skill development, fostering more independence in reading. However, there are still challenges to effectively implementing this program.

Thus, this study aims to address the underlying issues that impede the successful implementation of elementary school pupils in DEAR as reading intervention program. It will also help teachers improve their reading outcomes strategies by investigating challenges, difficulties, coping mechanisms and insights gained by the teachers in the DEAR project. Through a thorough examination of the challenges encountered during the reading recovery process, we can gain insights into how to best support struggling readers by designing a school reading program.

### 1.1 Research Questions

1. What are the challenges encountered by the elementary teachers in Drop Everything and Read Program?
2. What are the effective reading approaches employed to elementary learners in dealing with the challenges in the implementation of Drop Everything and Read Program?
3. What coping mechanisms employed by elementary teachers that best cope with the challenges in the implementation of Drop Everything and Read Program?
4. What are the insights gained by elementary learners in dealing with the challenges in the implementation of Drop Everything and Read Program?

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Research Design

This research utilized qualitative study using a phenomenological approach, with data which were collected through in-depth interviews (IDIs). Because the study investigated the challenges that teachers faced in reading recovery as the foundation for developing a school reading program, qualitative research was appropriate. Qualitative research, as an inquiry approach, was used in this study in order to comprehend a social or human problem confronted by the teachers by constructing a comprehensive, holistic picture using words, providing specific informant perspectives, and conducting the research in a natural setting. The outcome of this type of research includes the participants' voices and requires a greater emphasis on the interpretive nature of the inquiry (Creswell, 2013).

The study used a phenomenological approach to explore a specific phenomenon concerning the challenges encountered of teachers in implementing DEAR program in school. Phenomenology was appropriate for this field of study because different perspectives on a specific topic were required. Phenomenological research is a qualitative technique that seeks to grasp the essence of an experience by describing the lived phenomenon (Creswell, 2019).

## 2.2 Research Participants

In this study, the research participants were the selected teachers of Batinao Elementary School, Panag Elementary School, San Isidro Elementary School, and Inopawan Elementary School. To get first-hand experiences of the participants, two (2) teachers were selected from each school as part of the study. All in all, there were eight (8) participants of this study who were determined through purposive sampling technique, a criterion sampling method which is one of the non-probability sampling methods (Creswell, 2013). For the inclusion criteria, only those regular permanent teachers teaching in a public elementary school in New Bataan District were included in the study. Specifically, the selected participants underwent in-depth interview or IDI. The participants who were chosen were ensured to meet the inclusion criteria and exclusion criteria set in this research work. In addition, teachers teaching in private schools and voluntary teachers were not included in this research.

## 2.3. Data Collection Procedure

This study collected data using a specific set of steps. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews.

The interview guide underwent instrument validation to ensure its reliability and validity. To officially begin data collection, an endorsement letter was sent to the Division Office, Division Research Planning, to ask for permission to conduct the study. After that, the manuscript was undergone ethics review process as well. The letter of permission was then sent to the Office of the District Supervisor, and Office of the School Head in order for the researcher to conduct the study.

Moreover, the results of the data collection were transcribed, thematically analyzed, coded, and interpreted. Data collected from participants were processed in strict confidentiality and privacy, with discrete coding. The research study prohibited the use of individual identities in presentations, demonstrations, or publications. All research data and information were securely stored, either in physical files or password-protected folders. The files were accessible only to the researcher.

## 2.3. Data Analysis

Following the data collection procedure, the analysis began. The collected data were examined, synthesized, and recorded to ensure that the research's records were accurate, thorough, and detailed. After gathering enough data through in-depth interviews, thematic analysis was used to further analyze the results and identify disparities and similarities among the responses received. This was when the responses were classified and organized into themes.

## 3. RESULT, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 What are the challenges encountered by the elementary teachers in Drop Everything and Read Program?

**Challenges encountered in Drop Everything and Read Program.** The emerging themes in this structured theme were struggling with reading, cannot read alone, overcrowded classrooms, harder to motivate, learners having dyslexia disorder, lack of comprehensive understanding and learners struggling with letter identification. The results showed that they are facing different challenges while reading under the DEAR Program. They found it difficult to read as they experience these challenges throughout the program.

As stated by Hurry et al. (2022) claimed that teachers may find the DEAR program challenging. Reading exercises should address a variety of reading issues, including dyslexic children and those with low reading motivation, comprehension issues, and incorrect letter and word recognition. Fun narrative exercises, group reading and writing discussions, and one-on-one instruction are all included in the program. Many schools across the nation are using these teaching strategies for early reading intervention, which results in students who are more proficient readers. Furthermore, early reading intervention training is provided to instructors in order to guarantee the program's sustainability—which students can apply to their future endeavors in addition to their studies (Manaois, 2021).

**Most Challenging Reading Strategy.** The emerging themes in this structured theme were paired reading strategies, enhancing reader's critical and deep comprehension, individual assessments, struggling to stay focused, reading comprehension strategies, multisensory strategy, round-robin reading, more engaged seeing big and bright images. The finding revealed that it can be difficult to determine which reading technique is the most difficult. Some readers may find it difficult to focus or read in pairs, while others may have trouble with critical analysis or comprehension techniques. The optimal strategy ultimately depends on demands of the individual.

Early access to early intervention programs is delayed because many struggling readers are not diagnosed until late elementary or middle school (Miciack et al., 2018). The focus that intervention programs have on foundational abilities like decoding presents another difficulty. Although decoding abilities are crucial, many times intervention programs overlook children's diverse literacy skills, missing other vital components of reading, like comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency. Figuring out which reading strategy is the hardest can be challenging. While some readers might struggle with comprehension, others might have problems focusing multisensory strategies. The best course of action ultimately depends on personal preferences (Chapman & Tunmer, 2019).

**Reading Approaches Difficult to Follow.** The emerging themes in this structured theme were guided reading in DEAR, individual attention, encourage kids engage in close reading, technology-enhanced reading approach, multisensory approach and whole language approach. The results showed that teachers were having a hard time implementing reading approaches. Crafting a best choice on the right reading technique might be difficult. Although directed reading in DEAR programs might be beneficial, some learners may find it limiting. Individual attention is exemplary, but it may be limited in huge classrooms.

Making the greatest decision on the appropriate reading approach might be challenging. While some students may find focused reading in DEAR programs to be helpful, others may find it to be restrictive. Although it is excellent, one-on-one time may not always be possible in large classes. Scheduling time for reading recovery programs in a classroom with a diverse student body can be difficult for teachers. Suggate (2018) contends that educational institutions all throughout the world must provide early assistance for pupils. Students' comprehension level is one of the factors that contributes to reading recovery problems that are related to tracking their reading literacy. While certain children read at a high level, others find it difficult to comprehend what they are reading (Slavin, 2018).

**3.2** What are the effective reading approaches employed to elementary learners in dealing with the challenges in the implementation of Drop Everything and Read Program?

**Reading Approaches Found Effective.** The emerging themes were small group instruction and personalized reading plans, integrating a variety of literacy skills, peer reading, differentiated reading activities, phonics approach and reading recovery approach, linguistic method, interactive read-aloud, and reward system. The results revealed that there were many ways to teach reading effectively. Successful practices blend specialized education and inclusive programming. This may be through small group routines with specialized techniques, and activities that integrate numerous literacy skills together, such as phonics or vocabulary development. Interactive features support peer reading and read-aloud.

According to Jesson and Limbrick (2018), a certain factor contributing to the potential slowdown of literacy growth is the increasing complexity of literacy levels, which makes literacy abilities extremely complicated as pupils move up the grade levels. Effective strategies combine inclusive programming and specialized instruction. This could be accomplished by specific small group routines and activities that combine many literacy skills, such as vocabulary development or phonics. Read-aloud and peer reading are supported by interactive features. Furthermore, teachers and teachers have a difficult time helping children improve their reading abilities. The majority of instructors know very little about how to keep ambitious pupils' reading literacy alive (Blachman et al., 2018). The literary literature for students, particularly those in elementary school, is seeing a growth in reading program strategies.

**Reasons Found Reading Approaches Effective.** The emerging themes were works well, learners given proper challenges and assistance, more knowledgeable readers, foster student's interest and preferences, cater learning styles and interest, can help overcome challenges develops critical learning skills, students happy and more challenge learning new words. According to the research findings, the key appears to be offering the appropriate balance of challenge and support. By personalizing lessons to individual learning styles and interests, instructors can create an

environment that encourages student engagement. This, in turn, leads to happy pupils who are more invested in the learning process. Effective approaches typically offer suitable challenges in addition to targeted aid, which not only helps students overcome obstacles but also builds critical thinking abilities and vocabulary. Finally, these tactics result in a more positive and productive learning environment for everyone.

Moreover, learners' comprehension level is another factor contributing to issues with the reading program's monitoring of students' reading proficiency. While some students struggle to understand what they are reading, others exhibit high levels of complexity in their reading proficiency (Holliman et al., 2018).

### 3.3 What coping mechanisms employed by elementary teachers that best cope with the challenges in the implementation of Drop Everything and Read Program?

**Coping Mechanism Employed.** The emerging themes were using visual aids and interactive reading activities, encouraging reading resources, rewarding efforts, integrating activities, peer tutoring and peer reading, keeping an eye to students and giving feedback, differentiated instruction slow down and pay attention, professional development, flexible reading assignments and reading workshops. The study identifies several coping strategies that can help pupils who struggle with reading. It highlights how crucial it is to have interesting exercises that make use of interactive features and visual aids.

This is supported by Torgesen (2016) who said that students can be further motivated by establishing a good learning environment that includes materials that encourage reading and rewards for effort. The results also point to the value of implementing peer support via reading initiatives and tutoring. Additionally, clear feedback, chances for professional growth for teachers, and tailored education that meets each student's requirements can all greatly enhance student achievements. Moreover, students can improve their reading abilities in a structured setting by participating in reading workshops. Encourage pupils to read more by giving them interesting and enjoyable tasks. Assemble a varied library of books to suit a range of reading levels and interests. These components can be included into reading workshops to assist kids gain self-assurance, enhance comprehension, and cultivate a lifelong appreciation of reading (McGeown et al., 2015).

**Coping Mechanisms Effects in Reading Program Challenges Encountered.** The emerging themes were providing structure and clear expectations, crucial to win, somehow effective, encourage students reflect reading habits, improves learning results and lessens frustration, highly effective, reduced likelihood of off-task activity and preserves accountability, enhance teachers' knowledge and skills and vary depending on the specific content. The findings pinpoint various ways pupils dealing with reading difficulties can cope. Central to success are engaging tasks capitalizing on visual and interactive components to hold students' focus. A nurturing setting brimming with inspiring materials and incentives for trying hard further inspires learners. Peer encouragement through shared reading programs and one-on-one tutelage also aids achievement, as does lucid criticism and avenues for instructors' refinement. Yet tailored education tailored to address each learner's distinct circumstances potentially boosts performance most substantially of all means investigated.

As supported by Chall (2015), engaging exercises that leverage interactive and visual elements to maintain students' attention are essential for success. A caring environment full of motivational resources and rewards for effort motivates students even more. Aside from one-on-one tutoring and shared reading programs, peer support in the form of clear criticism and opportunities for teacher development also helps students succeed. However, of all the methods examined, customized instruction that takes into account each learner's unique situation has the potential to significantly improve performance (Bodman & Smith, 2015).

### 3.4 What are the insights gained by elementary learners in dealing with the challenges in the implementation of Drop Everything and Read Program?

**Insights Gained in Dealing with the Challenges Encountered in Program.** The emerging themes were patience adaptability, provides importance of personalized support, never shoulder every responsibility, ensure student has access adequate reading resources, motivation a key to reading success, encourage reading habits at home, collaboration and professional growth, value of community and appreciating the role of technology. The findings highlighted some insightful information shared by the teachers which address obstacles in reading programs. It is

crucial to be flexible and patient while still giving each pupil individualized support. This entails creating a cooperative and encouraging atmosphere, providing an assurance that sufficient resources are available, and realizing the importance of community and technology in inspiring children to read outside of the classroom.

Consequently, it is yet unknown if early literacy advancements may be somewhat maintained despite these ongoing challenges. Fluency and understanding are said to be the desired outcomes of reading, which is said to require quick processing of a variety of currently available information, less simple but consistent with the simple view of reading, including language, orthography, semantics, alphabetic decoding, and syntactic data (Doleman et al., 2015). According to the study, the early years are critical for the development of metacognitive skills including background activation understanding and self-assessment for comprehension in addition to helping with word reading competence (Bodman & Smith, 2015).

**Insights Contribution in Confronting the Challenges of Reading Program.** The emerging themes were reminding to be flexible and persistent, create a vibrant reading culture, take part in developing students reading skills, boost students' engagement and excitement for reading, helps focusing motivation, teachers acquire techniques, enhance professional growth and leads educator create more individualized reading plans. The findings revealed that research-based insights can play a major role in helping reading programs overcome obstacles. It is a good sign that teachers overcame the challenges and provided ways over it. These insights support the development of a dynamic reading culture that stimulates student engagement and interest by reminding educators to be adaptable and persistent. Students become more motivated and focused as a result, while teachers gain useful tools to further their own professional development and design more customized reading programs for each student.

According to Desjardins et al. (2015), his research showed that early intervention for children who struggle with reading is generally accepted as the best way to address the long-term effects of low reading proficiency. This recommendation is supported by evidence of the intervention's immediate effectiveness. The fact that educators overcome obstacles and provide solutions is encouraging. These findings encourage instructors to be flexible and persistent in order to foster a dynamic reading culture that piques students' interest and participation. As a result, teachers are better equipped to improve their own professional development and create more individualized reading programs for each student, and students become more motivated and focused (Clay, 2015).

### 3.5 Implication for Practice

*On Challenges encountered in Drop Everything and Read Program.* The study's findings indicate that were struggling with reading, cannot read alone, overcrowded classrooms, harder to motivate, learners having dyslexia disorder, lack of comprehensive understanding and learners struggling with letter identification were the challenges encountered by students in Drop and Read Program. As they start venturing into reading, they usually face trials when learning. Applying multi-sensory approach is helpful for them to improve their reading skills. A multi-sensory approach has access to all the student's senses in which will be easier for them to excel. It is important for the teachers to invest on designing an effective and meaningful reading resources for the students.

*On Most Challenging Reading Strategy.* Paired reading strategies, enhancing reader's critical and deep comprehension, individual assessments, struggling to stay focused, reading comprehension strategies, multisensory strategy, round-robin reading, more engaged seeing big and bright images were the most challenging reading strategy among all those strategies employed by the teachers in the DEAR Program. Given the challenges indicating that a one-size-fits-all strategy is not sufficient, educators must place a strong emphasis on customizing evaluations and multimodal approaches. Teachers may find it useful to try out various strategies and incorporate more eye-catching visuals to encourage critical thinking skills. For their children to be able to practice reading regularly, parents at home should also allow their kids to learn how to read with their guidance.

*On Reading Approaches Difficult to Follow.* Guided reading in DEAR, individual attention, encourage kids engage in close reading, technology-enhanced reading approach, multisensory approach and whole language approach were the reading approaches difficult to follow. Even though the DEAR program aims to promote a love of reading, putting certain strategies into practice appears to be difficult. The challenges associated with difficulty with guided reading, individual attention, close reading, and technology-based methods imply that these may not be easily available or effectively incorporated into the program's existing framework. It is interesting to note that approaches that are recognized to engage a variety of learners, multisensory and whole language approaches are also included. According to the data, it may be important to review the program's execution to make sure that these potentially useful

techniques are being used correctly and with the required resources. To be useful and worthy of being used in schools, the DEAR Program needs to be modified by educational authorities.

*On Reading Approaches Found Effective.* The emerging themes were small group instruction and personalized reading plans, integrating a variety of literacy skills, peer reading, differentiated reading activities, phonics approach and reading recovery approach, linguistic method, interactive read-aloud, and reward system. Teachers, as reading teachers in the classroom, should create worthwhile activities that would be effective for the students. Revisiting reading approaches applied is also necessary so that the loopholes will be addressed.

*On Reasons Found Reading Approaches Effective.* The reading approaches work well on the students. They were given proper reading challenges and activities that lead to cultivate reading skills and foster reading interest and preferences. It also caters reading styles and interest that can help overcome challenges and develop critical learning skills. Students were happy and more challenge to learning new words. Students were indulged with reading given the opportunity they had during the conduct of the DEAR program. This is a great achievement for the teachers despite the challenges they faced. Teachers must be do it with consistency to achieve more positive outcomes.

*On Coping Mechanism Employed.* Using visual aids and interactive reading activities, encouraging reading resources, rewarding efforts, integrating activities, peer tutoring and peer reading, keeping an eye to students and giving feedback, differentiated instruction slow down and pay attention, professional development, flexible reading assignments and reading workshops were the coping mechanisms the teachers employed in the implementation of the DEAR program. These mechanisms imparted a big help for the students to be active in participating in the class. These can foster love and interest in reading for students, bringing success to the DEAR program. However, some areas of it must be given more attention through offering additional assistance to guarantee sustainable growth of the program as well as its effectiveness.

*On Coping Mechanisms Effects in Reading Program Challenges Encountered.* Provide structure and clear expectations, crucial to win, somehow effective, encourage students reflect reading habits, improves learning results and lessens frustration, highly effective, reduced likelihood of off-task activity and preserves accountability, enhance teachers' knowledge and skills and vary depending on the specific content were the effects of the coping mechanisms with the reading program challenges. Tailoring education to assist individual needs stressed that flexible reading programs which can meet the student's needs is essential. Through encouraging students to reflect reading habits creates a positive reinforcement honing them and creating healthy environment contributes to an excellent learning experience for everyone.

*On Insights Gained in Dealing with the Challenges Encountered in Program.* The emerging themes were patience adaptability, provides importance of personalized support, never shoulder every responsibility, ensure student has access adequate reading resources, motivation a key to reading success, encourage reading habits at home, collaboration and professional growth, value of community and appreciating the role of technology. This creates a supportive learning environment which requires sustainable resources. With the collaboration practiced by the community, a larger support network can exist. By these solutions, the reading program can be more beneficial for everyone in the community.

*On Insights Contribution in Confronting the Challenges of Reading Program.* The emerging themes were reminding to be flexible and persistent, create a vibrant reading culture, take part in developing students reading skills, boost students' engagement and excitement for reading, helps focusing motivation, teachers acquire techniques, enhance professional growth and leads educator create more individualized reading plans. Teachers showing compassion in teaching despite facing hardships is a key to their development. This reminds that adapting techniques and being committed to the profession is vital to produce successful learners. Trainings or workshops related to the program is needed for the teacher to acquire professional growth. Through attending workshops, teachers can be more productive in the class, boosting student and maximize participation for the student's reading experiences.

### 3.6 Implication for Future Research

In as much as the study was limited to the responses of the students in implementation of DEAR program in school, the following implications for future research are considered:

First, future research may be conducted by choosing a mix-methods study to further delve into a more detailed information about the lived experiences of the teachers with the implementation of the Drop Everything and Read Program. Second, another research of the same focus may be conducted in another municipality to determine whether they share similar experiences or not. Thirdly, a re-interview of the same research participants and informants may be conducted to see whether their experiences have improved with regards to integrating the DEAR program in the class. Lastly, it could be used as supporting literature to the related research paper and provide additional information about the

experiences of teachers in the implementation of the DEAR program. In addition, it could be used to help strengthen the program and provide more benefits linked with reading.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Reading is one of the basic skills that a child must acquire as she/he grows. Parents are the ones who teach them with those basic skills first, followed by the teachers in school. As a child started to attend formal classes, the teacher will be the one to continue develop these skills. Unfortunately, there are students coming from a grade school who still have poor reading skills. The Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) Program is conducted to address this concerning issue which pertains to students having problems in reading. Teachers are passionate about ensuring the child's learning. They offered various strategies which the students utilized the said strategies. They encountered problems which affect their way of implementing the program. However, there are challenges encountered by the teacher while implementing it.

The teachers lived experiences with the implementation of Drop Everything and Read Program was highlighted. The comprehensive view about the implementation of the DEAR program were drawn for the teacher's experiences could help the program improved for the betterment of the quality of education. To that effect it would be great any understanding of this study could aid in managing the program properly, making the program more detailed. Furthermore, making the program be part of the daily activities packed with differentiated instructions could bring positive outcome. Under the responsible supervision of the educational authorities and the collaboration with the community leaders, this program could help hundreds of students bring confidence and love in reading.

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**BIOGRAPHIES**

 A portrait of Ismera C. Econg, a woman with dark hair, wearing a green lace-trimmed off-the-shoulder top and a pearl necklace.	<p>Ismera C. Econg is a Teacher I at Batinao Elementary School, Batinao, New Bataan, Davao de Oro. She finished her Master of Arts in Education Major in Elementary Education at Assumption College of Nabunturan.</p>
 A portrait of Roel P. Villocino, a man with short dark hair, wearing a blue button-down shirt.	<p>Roel P. Villocino, PhD. Dean in Graduate School, Assumption College of Nabunturan, Nabunturan, Davao de Oro, Philippines.</p>

