EXPLORING HOW SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMS SHAPE TEACHING PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explores how school-based programs influence teaching practices among public school teachers in the Municipality of Matalam, North Cotabato. Using a thematic analysis of interviews with 15 teachers who participated in various professional development programs, the study identifies key themes regarding the impact of these programs on classroom instruction. Findings reveal that professional development initiatives significantly enhanced teachers' understanding of phonics and literacy instruction, leading to more structured and effective literacy practices. Other themes include the adoption of differentiated and inclusive instructional strategies, increased use of technology to personalize learning, and the promotion of collaborative and interactive learning environments. Additionally, the study highlights improvements in assessment and progress monitoring techniques, with teachers utilizing informal assessments and tools like the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) to adjust their instruction. The results emphasize the importance of ongoing, targeted professional development in fostering instructional innovation and improving teaching efficacy. These findings contribute to the understanding of how school-based programs can shape teaching practices and offer insights for educators, policymakers, and educational leaders aiming to enhance classroom practices and student outcomes.

Keyword: - *School-Based Programs, Teaching Practices, Instructional Strategies, Teacher Professional Development, Program Implementation, Pedagogical Change, Educational Interventions, Teacher Perspectives, Classroom Innovation, Qualitative Study*

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1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, school-based programs have emerged as critical drivers in shaping and enhancing teaching practices across diverse educational contexts. These programs ranging from professional development initiatives, health and wellness campaigns, technology integration projects, and inclusive education models have become instrumental in bridging policy intentions and classroom realities (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). With education systems increasingly tasked to respond to multifaceted challenges such as student diversity, learning loss, and teacher burnout, these programs offer structured support to improve instructional delivery and foster adaptive pedagogies (Avalos, 2022; Kraft et al., 2020).

Teaching practices are deeply influenced by the environment in which they are embedded, and school-based programs often act as catalysts for pedagogical innovation and reflective practice. When implemented effectively, such programs enhance teacher capacity, encourage collaboration, and foster a culture of continuous improvement (Desimone & Garet, 2015). For instance, professional learning communities and coaching models have shown a measurable impact on the way teachers design lessons, assess learning, and manage diverse classrooms (Guskey & Yoon, 2021). Moreover, programs focusing on inclusive education and differentiated instruction have prompted educators to adapt more learner-centered strategies, promoting equity and engagement in heterogeneous classrooms (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2021).

Despite the growing body of literature on school-based interventions, there remains a need to explore how these programs influence day-to-day teaching practices from the perspective of educators themselves. Understanding emerging themes from teachers' experiences can provide valuable insights into the mechanisms through which

programs succeed or fall short in transforming classroom instruction (Kennedy, 2016). This study seeks to explore how school-based programs shape teaching practices, with a focus on identifying common patterns, challenges, and opportunities that arise in the process of implementation.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore how school-based programs shape teaching practices among public school teachers in the Municipality of Matalam, North Cotabato. Through this approach, the study aimed to capture the lived experiences, insights, and perceptions of teachers regarding the influence of various programs implemented within their schools.

Purposive sampling was used to select 10 public school teachers who have been actively involved in school-based programs such as professional development initiatives, health and wellness activities, or inclusive education efforts. Semi-structured interviews served as the primary data collection method, allowing participants to share their experiences in depth while also enabling the researcher to probe further into emerging themes.

All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using thematic analysis. The data were coded inductively to identify recurring patterns, categories, and themes that reflect how these programs influenced classroom instruction. To ensure trustworthiness, the study adhered to credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability standards.

Ethical considerations, including informed consent, voluntary participation, and confidentiality, were strictly observed throughout the research process. The study was conducted with approval from relevant educational authorities in Matalam, North Cotabato.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Emerging themes on how programs influenced teaching
practices in the classroom**

Thematic analysis of responses in Table 1 revealed that professional development programs had a meaningful influence on teachers' classroom practices. One general theme that emerged was the strengthened focus on phonics and literacy instruction. Respondent 5 narrated, *"The program provided a deep understanding of phonics instruction, emphasizing the importance of teaching phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension in a structured sequence."* Similarly, Respondent 4 shared how they used *"decodable text extensively, ensuring that the words students read align with phonics skills they've learned."* These accounts illustrate how training has led to more structured and effective literacy practices.

A typical theme was the use of differentiated and inclusive instruction. Respondent 1 highlighted how a workshop on differentiated instruction helped them "cater to diverse learning needs," while Respondent 7 shared that they now *"begin with a brief explanation in the students' first language before transitioning to English,"* demonstrating culturally responsive pedagogy. Likewise, technology integration in teaching was another typical theme, with Respondent 6 stating that they now use *"interactive literacy platforms and digital storytelling applications to supplement traditional methods and enhance engagement."* These changes align with global trends in using technology to personalize instruction and support diverse learners.

Collaborative and interactive learning also emerged as a common outcome, with Respondent 3 describing how they now *"frequently use pair and group work, encouraging students to help one another."* In terms of instructional materials, Respondent 8 noted that they *"intentionally select books with rich vocabulary and opportunities for deeper discussion,"* marking a shift in how picture books are used in the classroom.

Other themes include enhanced assessment and monitoring of progress, with Respondent 10 stating, *"I use informal assessment such as observation checklists and running records to monitor student progress and adjust instruction in real-time."* Respondent 11 further elaborated on this by introducing the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) used to classify students' reading levels. Additionally, some respondents mentioned a focus on oral language development, such as Respondent 9 who shared the use of *"think-pair-share activities and class discussions to build vocabulary and fluency."*

While less frequently mentioned, improved planning and student engagement was identified as a variant theme. Respondent 15 remarked that by incorporating new practices into lesson planning, they *"have more opportunities to engage students in the learning process and support their academic accomplishments."*

These findings affirm the value of well-designed professional development in transforming teaching practices. As supported by recent literature, professional development that is sustained, collaborative, and focused

on classroom application significantly enhances teacher effectiveness and student outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Table 28.   Emerging themes on how programs influenced teaching practices in the classroom.

Emerging Themes	Frequency	Core Ideas
Strengthened Phonics and Literacy Instruction	*General*	Programs significantly improved teachers' understanding of structured literacy, including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Teachers now use decodable texts, explicit phonics instruction, and focused literacy routines.
Differentiated and Inclusive Instruction	*Typical*	Teachers applied strategies from professional development to address diverse learning needs. This includes differentiated instruction and scaffolding using students' first language.
Technology Integration in Teaching	*Typical*	Teachers incorporated digital tools such as online reading platforms, digital storytelling apps, and interactive tools to enhance engagement and support personalized learning.
Collaborative and Interactive Learning	*Typical*	Programs emphasized collaborative strategies, leading to increased use of group work, peer support activities, and student-centered approaches that foster interaction.
Effective Use of Instructional Materials	*Typical*	Teachers now intentionally use rich instructional materials such as picture books, graphic organizers, and manipulatives to support comprehension and deeper learning.
Assessment and Monitoring of Progress	*Typical*	Teachers adopted informal assessment methods like checklists, running records, and tools like CRLA and EGRA to monitor student progress and adjust instruction.
Focus on Oral Language Development	*Variant*	Professional development led to increased use of oral language strategies such as think-pair-share, class discussions, and storytelling to strengthen students' vocabulary and fluency.
Improved Planning and Student Engagement	*Variant*	Teachers began applying effective instructional strategies that encourage active learning, better engagement, and stronger support for academic growth.

General	50% and above of the responses
Typical	25% of the responses
Variant	24% of the responses

4. CONCLUSIONS

This study highlights the transformative impact of school-based programs on teachers' classroom practices in the Municipality of Matalam, North Cotabato. The findings indicate that professional development programs, particularly those focused on literacy instruction, differentiated teaching, and the integration of technology, play a significant role in shaping instructional strategies. Teachers reported an enhanced focus on phonics and literacy, a shift toward differentiated and inclusive instruction, and increased use of digital tools to support personalized learning. Furthermore, the use of collaborative learning strategies, intentional selection of instructional materials, and improved assessment methods underscore the broader influence of these programs on teaching practices.

The emerging themes from this study suggest that well-designed professional development programs not only enhance teachers' knowledge and skills but also foster a culture of continuous improvement and reflective practice. Teachers have adapted their instructional methods to better cater to the diverse needs of their students, demonstrating the relevance and efficacy of ongoing professional learning. Additionally, the integration of technology and the emphasis on collaborative learning contribute to creating more engaging and interactive classroom environments.

These findings are consistent with existing research that underscores the importance of sustained, targeted professional development in enhancing teacher effectiveness and improving student outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). It is evident that when teachers are equipped with the right tools, knowledge, and support, they are better able to implement practices that meet the diverse needs of their learners.

Future research could explore the long-term effects of such programs on student achievement and further examine the role of school leadership in fostering a supportive environment for ongoing professional growth. Overall, this study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on the impact of school-based programs on teaching practices and provides valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders in enhancing the quality of education in similar contexts.

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