

# Teacher's Perspective on the Implementation of Catch-Up Fridays in Tarangnan District, Division of Samar

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*Abstract* — This study delves into the implementation and reception of the Catch-Up Friday program among elementary teachers in Tarangnan District, Western Samar Division, during the 2024-2025 school year. The study included 165 teachers, who provided valuable insights into the program's effectiveness and areas for improvement. The profile of respondents reveals that mostly involved relatively young who are early in their careers, suggesting a willingness to embrace innovative teaching strategies and digital integration. Their familiarity with current educational techniques has contributed to a positive reception of Catch-Up Fridays, with demographic attributes such as gender, civil status, and subject areas taught showing minimal effect on perceptions about the program's implementation.

The findings demonstrate that most teachers reported desirable findings from the program, emphasizing effective reading resources, engaging in learning activities, and robust monitoring practices. However, challenges persist, particularly in the areas of resource diversity and continuous support for teachers' post-training. Respondents revealed that while they experienced behavioral issues and time constraints, they have adopted coping mechanisms, including differentiated instruction and peer collaboration, to address these challenges.

Overall, the Catch-Up Friday program has demonstrated success in enhancing literacy development among students. Nonetheless, the study emphasizes the need for ongoing refinement, particularly in expanding the range of reading materials and providing sustained support for teachers. By addressing these limitations, the program can further strengthen its impact on student literacy outcomes. This research contributes to the understanding of innovative educational initiatives in the region and underscores the importance of continuous development in teacher support and resource availability.

***Keywords — Catch-Up Friday Program, Literacy Development, Teachers' Perception, Innovative Teaching Practices***

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## I. Introduction

This study explores the perspectives of elementary teachers in the Tarangnan District, Division of Samar, on the implementation of the Catch-Up Fridays program—a nationwide initiative aimed at addressing learning gaps in reading and numeracy. The study examines their experiences, challenges, and recommendations to assess the program's effectiveness and inform future improvements.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, global education systems experienced unprecedented disruptions. Countries such as the United States and members of the European Union have introduced recovery programs focused on foundational learning skills, particularly literacy and numeracy (Open Access Government, 2024; European Education Area, 2022). In the Philippines, persistent low performance in international assessments, such as PISA—where the country ranked near the bottom in both 2018 and 2022—has highlighted the urgent need for educational reforms (Congressional Policy and Budget Department, 2024).

To address these gaps, the Department of Education (DepEd) launched several programs, including the recent Catch-Up Fridays initiative. This program allocates Fridays for remedial instruction and enrichment activities in reading, values education, and life skills. It is designed to enhance teaching effectiveness and student outcomes, especially in literacy and numeracy—areas fundamental to long-term academic success.

Teachers are central to this initiative. Their ability to adapt instruction, implement innovative strategies, and collaborate with peers directly affects the program's success. As Moleta and Yango (2023) emphasized, students' academic growth is a reflection of their teachers' competence and engagement. Similarly, Jindra et al. (2022) noted that teaching proficiency in reading and numeracy is crucial for building other academic skills.

In Eastern Visayas, where literacy setbacks were noted during the pandemic, the Catch-Up Friday program aligns with regional efforts like R8-BULIG to revive and strengthen foundational skills (Amazona, 2022). Despite these efforts, there remain gaps in implementation and

assessment. For instance, current programs lack comparative studies with other interventions, as well as clear parameters for measuring student progress.

This study focuses specifically on the implementation of Catch-Up Fridays in the Tarangnan District. It aims to document teachers' insights on program delivery—resources, training, curriculum support—and identify challenges they face. Insights from this study can serve as a basis for enhancing instructional supervision, designing professional development programs, and strengthening support systems for educators.

By analyzing teacher perspectives, this research contributes to ongoing efforts to improve basic education outcomes in the Philippines. It highlights the critical role of educators in addressing learning recovery and reinforces the need for well-supported, contextually relevant interventions that empower both teachers and students.

### **Literature Review**

Globally, the issue of literacy continues to be a pressing concern. UNESCO (2018) reported that over 258 million children worldwide are not literate, with South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa showing the lowest literacy rates. The English Helper (2022) also indicated that even developed countries like the U.S. and U.K. face similar problems, with 1 in 5 children unable to read by age 11. This underscores the universal nature of the literacy crisis, which calls for targeted, systemic interventions.

UNICEF (2022) added that only a third of 10-year-olds globally can read and understand a simple story. This critical gap prompted the Transforming Education Summit at the UN General Assembly, highlighting the need for governments to act urgently. Such international context situates the Philippines' struggle within a broader global challenge.

In the Philippine context, the World Bank (2022) reported that 90% of Filipino children aged 10 are unable to understand simple text, up from 70% before the pandemic. This data reflects a significant decline in foundational skills. In response, DepEd launched "Catch-Up Fridays" in January 2024. The initiative is structured to allot each Friday to the reinforcement of reading and values education through activities like "Drop Everything and Read (DEAR)," read-alouds, and guest lectures (Magsambol, 2024). These efforts aim to address the national reading crisis and promote holistic development.

However, several studies point to implementation challenges. Sevillano (2024) identified barriers such as insufficient learning materials, unclear scheduling, and inconsistent learner grouping. Likewise, PhilStar Global reported that many teachers lack training in differentiated instruction and effective reading intervention, reinforcing the need for stronger teacher support systems (Chi C., 2024).

The significance of effective monitoring is underscored in Cadiente's (2024) work, which documented the use of strategies such as DEAR, read-a-thons, and choral reading across Region IX. Cadiente emphasized integrative teaching and continuous monitoring as keys to improving reading levels. A similar report from DepEd IV-A highlighted teacher efforts to group students by reading ability to better tailor instruction, which reflects differentiated teaching in practice (Bermudez, 2024).

Teacher voices play a central role in evaluating these programs. For example, Olay (2023) candidly shared the pain of witnessing senior high school students still struggling with basic reading skills. This reality adds urgency to teacher-centered reforms.

Balbin et al. (2024) used a pretest-posttest approach to analyze students' perceptions and engagement in Catch-Up Fridays. They found that while motivation remained steady, engagement dropped post-implementation, suggesting that some activities may not fully sustain student interest. This calls for further refinement of the program design.

Other researchers explored teacher training and experience. Ogetange and Githinji (2018) in Kenya found that demographic factors, such as teaching experience and access to training, significantly influenced students' reading development. Similarly, Rominimbang et al. (2024) emphasized the value of peer tutoring and context-based instruction, but also noted limitations in resources and program structure.

Pacana and Cabaguing (2024) employed a phenomenological lens to document secondary teachers' experiences. They found that while teachers were motivated and fulfilled by student progress, they were hindered by unclear guidelines and limited resources. These findings suggest a disconnect between DepEd's program intentions and ground-level realities.

Meanwhile, novice teachers expressed mixed feelings. Rafanan et al. (2024) described their experience as a "symphony of emotions"—ranging from frustration due to lack of training to hope as they witnessed student improvement. The authors advocated for structured mentoring and clear implementation frameworks to help new teachers adapt.

Learners' perspectives are also crucial. Labad and Alandin (2024) reported that students enjoyed Catch-Up Fridays, particularly the collaborative learning aspects. Their positive responses suggest that student-centered pedagogies are effective when well-facilitated.

Lastly, a narrative report by Capistrano (2024) documented teacher-led reading initiatives that emphasized reflection, fairness, and collaboration. These ground-up efforts showed that when teachers are empowered, they can transform reading instruction into a meaningful, inclusive experience.

## II. Methodology

This section outlines the procedures and research strategies employed in the study. It includes the research design, sampling procedure, respondents, data gathering instruments, validation, and analysis techniques used. Each stage was carefully planned to ensure reliability, validity, and ethical integrity.

### Research Design

This study adopted a **convergent parallel mixed-method design**, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data were gathered through a structured survey to determine the perceived level of Catch-Up Fridays implementation. Simultaneously, qualitative data were collected to explore the challenges and coping mechanisms of teachers involved in the program.

This design allows for the independent collection and analysis of both data types, which are later compared to form a cohesive understanding of the research problem (Dovetail Editorial Team, 2023). Quantitative data measured implementation levels across five areas: resources, activities, monitoring, training, and curriculum. Qualitative data provided deeper insights into teachers' lived experiences.

### Respondents and Sampling Procedure

The participants in this study were elementary school teachers implementing Catch-Up Fridays across the **Tarangnan District, Division of Samar**. A **convenience sampling method** was used due to logistical limitations, such as the difficulty of accessing remote island schools and poor internet connectivity.

A total of **165 teachers** from **33 schools** participated. Respondents were chosen based on their availability and willingness to participate via an online platform. This method allowed the researchers to collect data efficiently while maximizing teacher representation within the district.

### Research Locale

The study was conducted in the Tarangnan District of Western Samar during the **2024–2025 academic year**. Participating schools include Alcazar, Bahay, Balugo, Bangon, Binalayan, Bisistahan, and Tarangnan Central Elementary School, among others.

### Research Instrument

Data were collected using a **four-part researcher-made questionnaire** administered online. The sections included:

1. **Profile of Respondents** – age, gender, civil status, subject taught, position, years in service, educational attainment, and training attended.

2. **Level of Implementation** – measured teachers' perceptions of Catch-Up Fridays in five areas:  
o Resources/Materials

- o Learning Activities
- o Monitoring
- o Teacher Training
- o Curriculum Implementation

3. **Challenges Encountered** – identified key difficulties in implementing the program.

4. **Coping Mechanisms** – explored how teachers addressed these challenges.

The questionnaire was designed to capture both objective data and subjective experiences related to program implementation.

#### **Validation of the Instrument**

To ensure content validity, the instrument was reviewed by a panel of experts, including educators and research advisers. Recommendations were incorporated into the final version. A **pilot test** was also conducted to check for clarity, consistency, and reliability of responses. Necessary revisions were made prior to full deployment.

#### **Data Gathering Procedure**

The researchers followed a systematic approach to data collection:

1. **Approval was obtained** from the Schools Division Superintendent and District Supervisor of Tarangnan.
2. **E-questionnaires** were distributed via an online platform to selected teachers.
3. **Follow-ups** were conducted to ensure a high response rate.
4. **Completed responses** were compiled and submitted for analysis.

Ethical standards were strictly observed, and participation was voluntary.

#### **Ethical Considerations**

- **Informed Consent:** All participants received information on the study's objectives and voluntarily consented before answering the survey.
- **Confidentiality:** Data collected were anonymized. No personal identifiers were used in reporting results.

- **Data Privacy:** Access to the data was limited to the research team and used exclusively for academic purposes.

### Data Processing and Analysis

- **Quantitative Data:** Analyzed using **SPSS**, employing descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics (t-test, ANOVA, correlation, multiple regression).
- **Qualitative Data:** Analyzed through **thematic coding**. Open-ended responses were transcribed, categorized, and interpreted to identify recurring themes regarding challenges and coping strategies.

The **convergent analysis** approach allowed the researchers to compare and interpret both quantitative trends and qualitative insights, ensuring a holistic understanding of the Catch-Up Friday implementation.

## III. Results and Discussion

This section presents and analyzes the results of the study based on the research objectives. Findings are compared with relevant literature to emphasize their significance in the context of current educational practice.

### Profile of the Respondents

The majority of respondents were aged 21–30 (50.90%), female (57.60%), and had less than five years of teaching experience (37.0%). Most held the position of Teacher I (50.30%) and had attained a Master’s degree or were enrolled in graduate studies (83%). These findings suggest that the Catch-Up Friday program in the Tarangnan District is largely carried out by early-career female teachers with strong academic backgrounds.

This demographic trend aligns with the study by Ogetange and Githinji (2018), which emphasized the role of teacher qualifications in improving student reading outcomes. Similarly, Villaber et al. (2024) argued that early-career teachers bring enthusiasm and adaptability to educational innovations, although they may require ongoing mentoring and support.

### Level of Implementation of Catch-Up Fridays

The study assessed the level of implementation in five key areas. All were perceived as **“Highly Implemented”** by teachers:

Domain	Mean	Interpretation
Learning Activities	4.19	Highly Implemented
Reading Resources	4.17	Highly Implemented
Monitoring	4.16	Highly Implemented
Curriculum Implementation	4.14	Highly Implemented
Teachers' Training	4.08	Highly Implemented
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.15</b>	<b>Highly Implemented</b>

These results reflect positive teacher experiences with the program, especially in terms of engaging students in learning activities. However, the slightly lower score for teachers' training suggests the need for more targeted and sustained professional development, consistent with findings by Rafanan et al. (2024), who noted that inadequate training hindered novice teachers' program execution.

The high rating for resource availability supports the work of Saro et al. (2024), which found that contextualized materials under Catch-Up Fridays significantly improved reading proficiency.

### Challenges Encountered

- Teachers identified several challenges, including:
- Inconsistent access to reading materials
- Limited differentiated instruction strategies
- Increased workload and time constraints
- Unclear implementation guidelines

These concerns are echoed in studies by Chi (2024) and Requillo et al. (2024), who documented similar implementation gaps in other divisions. The lack of structured training and uneven program support across regions highlight a need for national standardization and resource equity.

### Coping Mechanisms

In response to these challenges, teachers reported:

- Peer collaboration and strategy-sharing
- Use of improvised and locally available materials
- Self-initiated professional learning (e.g., webinars)

- Flexible planning and adjustment of teaching loads

These mechanisms reflect the principles of **constructivist** and **self-determination theories**, where educators construct solutions based on available resources and intrinsic motivation. As Olivia-Guy Evans (2024) suggests, such autonomy and collaboration foster resilience and innovation in instructional design.

### **Statistical Tests on Relationship and Differences**

Regression and ANOVA results showed **no significant relationship or difference** between teacher demographics (e.g., age, sex, teaching experience) and their perception of the implementation level. This suggests that the success of Catch-Up Fridays does not depend on teacher profiles but rather on system-wide program factors—such as resources, training, and support.

This finding reinforces the relevance of providing **universal support mechanisms**, as emphasized by DepEd's directive and by researchers like Pacana and Cabaguing (2024), who noted that even well-qualified teachers may struggle without clear policy guidance.

### **Summary of Key Findings**

1. Catch-Up Fridays are widely implemented and positively received by teachers.
2. Learning activities and resources are most appreciated; however, training and monitoring need strengthening.
3. Implementation challenges include lack of materials, unclear guidelines, and teacher workload.
4. Teachers rely on collaboration and resourcefulness to manage these challenges.
5. Demographic variables do not significantly influence program perception, indicating broader systemic factors at play.

## **IV. Conclusion**

This study investigated the perspectives of elementary teachers in the Tarangnan District, Division of Samar, on the implementation of the Catch-Up Fridays program, focusing on its execution in terms of resources, learning activities, monitoring, teacher training, and curriculum delivery. The results revealed that the program was **highly implemented** across all key domains, with teachers showing strong engagement and commitment to its goals of improving reading and numeracy skills.

The findings are significant as they affirm the **positive reception** of Catch-Up Fridays among teachers, despite various **implementation challenges** such as limited resources, insufficient training, and unclear guidelines. These results emphasize the resilience and adaptability of educators, who developed coping mechanisms such as peer collaboration, improvisation, and continuous self-improvement.

Importantly, the study found **no significant relationship between teacher demographics and their perceptions** of implementation. This highlights that program success is not dependent on age, sex, or years of service but rather on the **systemic support** provided through clear policies, adequate materials, and relevant professional development.

This research contributes to ongoing efforts in basic education reform by providing grounded insights into how national programs like Catch-Up Fridays are experienced at the grassroots level. It underscores the importance of empowering teachers with the tools, guidance, and collaborative structures they need to meet the learning recovery needs of Filipino students. The study's relevance extends to educational planners, school leaders, and policymakers seeking to enhance the program's implementation and replicate best practices across other districts.

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