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Home Involvement and Reading Achievement on Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) at-Home Activities of Selected Students in a Technical-Vocational School

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Home Involvement and Reading Achievement on Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) At-Home Activities of Selected Students in a Technical-Vocational School

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Abstract: Reading literacy begins at home. Several studies focusing on home involvement showed that the engagement of parents leads to the improvement of their children's reading achievement during primary school age. However, the changing educational and family landscapes in the Philippines pose a considerable shift in family members' roles in assuming responsibility regarding learning facilitation at home. This calls for the participation not only of parents but also of siblings, grandparents, guardians, or other members of the family, who in this paper are tagged as home reading partners (HRPs). Using a case study design, this study explores the role of home involvement in the reading achievement of 12 selected junior high school learners in a technical-vocational school during the school year 2021–2022. Findings from the semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and open-ended survey reveal that the involvement of HRPs influences the students' reading achievement and more importantly assists in the development of their reading interest, reading motivation, and attitude toward reading. This study recommends that school reading programs should be revisited and redesigned from parent-specific participation to the involvement of all HRPs.

Keywords: DEAR at Home, home involvement, home reading partners (HRPs), reading achievement

Introduction

Reading, along with listening, speaking, writing, and viewing, is an essential skill that children need to develop informally at home and formally at schools at an early stage when the critical period of brain development happens. The nature of reading instruction children obtain during the early years of their life could predict the type of readers they are in the time to come. When speaking about the early childhood stage, the home is the strongest partner of the school and teachers in promoting early literacy development.

Home Environment and Reading Literacy Development

Mwangi (2018) discovered that the “poor reading environments and poor reading habits of the family members” affect learners’ reading achievement. It was recommended that the home should be a place that provides children with reading opportunities with the guidance of the parents, guardians, caretakers, and other family members.

Several studies have been conducted to explore the influence of home in varying early literacy skills development contexts. The existing body of knowledge tells that home environment is a good predictor of learning outcomes, especially for children in their foundation years and students at risk in reading (Rasinski & Stevenson, 2005). This is evident in the work of Baker et al. (1997), which shows that home reading experiences of children influence their motivation and achievement. Midraj and Midraj (2011) found out that reading fluency and accuracy are significantly related to the involvement of parents in their children’s literacy activities at home. This is when they are provided with reading resources at home.

Reading at Home as a Shared Responsibility of the Child and HRP

Johnson (1987) reviewed a video entitled *Drop Everything and Read* produced in 1986, which aims at convincing parents of the importance of reading and reading to their children. He pointed out that the 28-minute video focused on the role of home in developing the reading behavior of children. However, he argued that the material solely emphasized the importance of parent reading to a child, missing out on the significance of children reading to their parents for practice (Tizard et al., 1982). With the growing

discussion on whether the reading activities at home should be parent led or child initiated, other researchers contend that the quality of interactions during shared book reading at home contributes to the development of children’s reading skills and reading motivation is crucial (Baker et al., 1997; Baker et al., 2001). The latter stressed that affective interactions are essential in the practice of reading at home, regardless of who assumes the reading responsibility.

In the study of Tatel-Suatengco and Florida (2020), they pointed out that storytelling and reading give opportunities to teach and learn at home. It is therefore recommended that parents should be oriented on strategies that will keep them involved in their children’s education, which will eventually create a collaboration of the family, school, and community for the benefit of the learners (Mayhall-Andrews, 2018). Working together for the sake of the learners is essential to support their literacy skills development.

DEAR as a Literacy Support Initiative

Sugiarsih (2017) employed *Drop Everything and Read* (DEAR) to enhance the reading skills of Indonesian pupils. Pupils were given a chance to select the materials that they want to read and appropriate to their level for 15–30 minutes. It serves as a habit-forming activity that is designed to improve the learners’ reading skills and create a reading culture at school or at home.

The DEAR program is not exclusively implemented in elementary and secondary levels; it also has a place in tertiary schools. Like Sugiarsih (2017), Prasetyaningrum and Ruminar (2020) also stated that DEAR as a regular 30-minute reading activity done for pleasure helps boost the reading habits of university students in Indonesia. In a maritime school in the Philippines, students raised their awareness of the impact of the DEAR program on their academic journey. The students agreed that DEAR, as a program in their academy, improves their communication skills and reading habits.

DEAR, which is sometimes termed as “free voluntary reading, independent reading, or sustained silent reading” (Allred & Cena, 2020), is one of the programs of the Department of Education that aims to promote learners’ reading and literacy as stipulated in Memorandum Order No. 244, s. 2011. DEAR is specified in the said policy as a 15- to 20-minute daily reading activity with any books or materials that

learners can access at the school. The policy also serves as an initiative that supports reading and literacy for the youth. It aims to promote reading as a communal experience that would avert learners' engulfment in cyberspace or online activities. During the annual celebration of National Reading Month in November, a synchronous reading is scheduled to encourage every person in the school to read a book. A DEAR corner is also provided in the school where students can read.

The intensification of literacy initiatives and programs in schools could be associated with the performance of Filipino learners in local and international assessments. The result of the 2018 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) showed that the Philippines placed last in reading with a mean score of 340, which was far lower than 450. In 2019, the results of the National Achievement Test taken by learners in Grade 6, Grade 10, and Grade 12 leaned toward low proficiency levels (Gonzales, 2019).

The Schools Division Office of Pasig City supports projects and programs that promote literacy such as Project EXPERT (Exemplary Program for Elevating Reading and Its Teaching). This project aims to enhance the reading skills of learners. In one of the webinars on Project EXPERT in December 2020, Frederick Perez, one of the resource speakers, emphasized the importance of reading at home by reading aloud and reading along with other family members. He also recommended giving students and parents the tools they need like print and nonprint exposure, which includes digital and audiobooks and training for parents and the community.

Situating DEAR at Home in the School Setting

During in-person classes, DEAR is usually conducted in the classroom where the teacher assists the learners in accomplishing their reading activity. The reading materials may be provided by the teacher or brought by the learners. Moreover, the assessment of the reading activity may be in the form of comprehension test questions or a journal.

The Covid-19 pandemic posed a challenge as to how teachers could continue implementing the DEAR program. It is recalled that classes for two school years were held remotely or virtually, depending on the alternative delivery mode the school adopted to make learning happen. Consequently, DEAR, which is usually conducted at school where teachers facilitate the reading activity, became DEAR at Home. DEAR at

Home led the teacher to encourage the involvement of home reading partners (HRPs) while the learners were doing their reading activities at home.

During the emergency remote teaching, the home reading activities composed of 10 comprehension questions were administered in four sessions via Google Forms or Facebook Messenger, whichever was accessible to the learners. The teachers sent the links or copies of the DEAR at Home activities through learners' FB Messenger classroom. The teachers downloaded the learners' responses and finally recorded their scores.

The study seeks to investigate the role HRPs in the reading achievement in the DEAR at Home activities of 12 junior high school learners in Rizal Experimental Station and Pilot School of Cottage Industries (RESPSCI), a technical-vocational school in SDO Pasig City for the school year 2021–2022. It aims to bridge the gap between the learners' problems with reading and how their family and other people at home can assist them to accomplish their reading activities at home. This study also intends to explore how HRPs could aid in establishing a culture of reading at home to foster learners' appreciation for reading.

There is a bulk of literature correlating home involvement and reading achievement. However, most of them primarily focused on the involvement of parents in children's home-literacy activities. This paper explores the bigger picture of home involvement, not just parental involvement, but the involvement of anyone in the home environment in the reading activities of the learners.

Significance of the Study

Through this investigation, a reading nation will be established as the development of reading habits will be intensified by the involvement of all HRPs. The findings of this research are helpful to policymakers as they will serve as a guide in designing a reading program that will engage not only the parents but also other family members who assume the responsibility of HRPs. The school can intensify its relationship with the families, guardians, and caretakers in supporting the learners, particularly the struggling readers in reading. Teachers, too, will have further knowledge on the type of reading activities that can be given to learners at home with strengthened collaboration between the school, teachers, and HRPs. Through the findings of

the study, the HRP can recognize and appreciate the importance of establishing a home environment that promotes a reading culture.

Theoretical Underpinnings

The interaction hypothesis theory by Long in 1983 posited that “negotiation of meaning through interaction can facilitate the process of language learning” (Ghaemi & Salehi, 2014). Similarly, Vygotsky also theorized that social interaction plays a significant role in cognitive development. Vygotsky’s social development theory emphasizes that the environment greatly influences how children think as well as what they think. This implies that the interaction between the children and their parents or caretaker during reading or study time at home is fundamental to facilitating reading skills development. Through interaction with other people at home, children are provided with the opportunity to ask them about the difficult words that they encounter in a text, leading them to a deeper understanding of the text.

Epstein’s theory of parental involvement emphasized the importance of collaboration between school, home, and community for better academic achievement of students (Smithson, n.d.). It involves six types of involvement, namely, parenting, communication, volunteerism, home learning, decision-making, and working in partnership with the community. The theory presupposed that part of parenting is to establish a home environment that can support learning. Communication line between parents and teachers to check learners’ progress at school and at home is also essential. Parents need voluntary participation in school activities and programs. Providing training for parents to help their children while learning at home is implied in this theory. Involving parents in making decisions at school is recommended. Lastly, collaborating with the community means that the school needs to strengthen its relationship or establish links with stakeholders to gain more support for its programs and activities for the learners.

Statement of the Problem

The study explores how home involvement affects the reading achievement in the DEAR at Home activities of 12 junior high school learners in Rizal Experimental Station and Pilot School of Cottage Industries (RESPSCI) in Maybunga, Pasig City, for the school year 2021–2022.

Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the reading achievement of the participants in the DEAR at Home activities?
2. How does home involvement affect the reading achievement of the selected learners?
3. How involved are the HRP in the learners’ DEAR at Home activities?

Research Design

The study utilized a qualitative design to have an in-depth understanding of the role of home involvement in the reading achievement of junior high school students. It specifically focused on the case study design, which Teegavarapu et al. (2008) specified as a design used when the researcher is interested in analyzing a phenomenon, generating hypotheses, and validating a process. This design is deemed to be appropriate in the present study as the researchers wanted to determine how the involvement of HRP affects the students’ reading achievement in their DEAR at Home activities.

Participants

The participants of the study were 12 students from Grade 7 to Grade 10, purposively selected based on who assisted them in their assigned reading activities at home. Using the Messenger classroom, the researchers created a poll for the class they handle in Grades 7 to 10 to find out who their HRP are. Then, the researchers coordinated with one Grade 7 English teacher for the selection of the three participants in the grade level to complete the 12 students who were included in the study.

Furthermore, the researchers also considered involving the HRP of the 12 students to find out about their involvement in the DEAR at Home activities.

The researchers included the six junior high school teachers in the study to obtain some of their insights on engaging the HRP in the school reading activities and programs.

Data Collection

The researchers sought informed consent from all the participants before the study. Four empirical materials were used to collect data from the participants, which include semi-structured interviews for parents

and students, document analysis, and an open-ended survey questionnaire for teachers.

The interview is the most useful means to collect qualitative data as it helps the researcher to explore, describe, and understand a phenomenon. In the study, the computer-mediated interview was used to obtain insights from the learners and HRP's since the study was conducted during the emergency remote teaching due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The researchers set a schedule for each interview via Zoom and Google Meet. The interview guide for HRP's contained seven questions that were formulated to explore how they perceive reading, how they persuade the learners to read, and how frequently they involve themselves in the learners' DEAR at Home activities. Another interview guide for learners was composed of eight questions revolving around reading—their perception, motivation, and the degree of involvement they receive from their HRP's. The interview guides for the learners and the HRP's were validated by two experts in the field of English. The researchers incorporated the given suggestions of the validators in the instruments. The data obtained from the interviews were audio and video recorded.

Document analysis requires the examination and interpretation of data to obtain meaning, understanding, and empirical data (Bowen, 2009). Document analysis was done by looking into the scores of the 12 learners in their DEAR at Home activities. The researchers asked permission from the head of the English department to allow access to the records of the participants' scores and other DEAR at Home-related activities that the students submitted to their English teachers. The students' scores in the 10-item comprehension check questions regarding reading at home activities became the basis of the learners' reading achievement.

Furthermore, the open-ended survey questionnaire for teachers consisted of three queries that tackled the reading activities they provide and the strategies they employ to motivate learners to read as well as their views on involving the HRP's in school reading activities and programs. The open-ended survey questionnaire was given through Google Forms. The responses of the teachers were downloaded and prepared for data analysis.

Data Analysis

The researchers were guided by the five steps in

analyzing qualitative data by O'Connor and Gibson (2003). First, the researchers organized the data by reviewing the responses of the participants in the interview and identified essential and nonessential responses. Then, they found and organized ideas and concepts by looking into the emerging themes and repeated words or groups of words from the responses. Next, they identified the overarching themes from the responses by putting similar ideas together and grouped them corresponding to themes.

Trustworthiness

To ensure the trustworthiness of the qualitative data, the researchers ensured the credibility of the data. Credibility was established using triangulation and peer debriefing. Triangulation is the use of various methods or sources of data to further understand a phenomenon. The data obtained from the interview and other empirical materials were triangulated to validate the findings of this research. The researchers supported the findings with related literature. Peer debriefing, another technique used in establishing the trustworthiness of the data, is done by inviting colleagues or peers who will check whether the data were correctly transcribed, coded, and interpreted. Through this technique, the researchers' biases were restricted, and the core of the interpretations was clarified (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Ethical Practices

The researchers ensured that the participants were notified about the purpose of the research as well as its benefits and possible risks when they opted to participate in the study. Participation was voluntary, and the target participants were forced when they chose to withdraw their participation in the study. The researchers prepared the informed consent before the conduct of the study and provided a copy to the target interviewees. Any information or data shared by them were treated with confidentiality. Anonymity was considered since no names of the participants were revealed in any part of the paper.

Results and Discussion

This part reports the findings obtained from multiple empirical data on how the involvement of HRP's affects the reading achievement of junior high school students.

Learners' Reading Achievement in the DEAR at Home Activities

The findings show that HRPs' involvement does not always result in high reading achievement among the learners. This is supported by the claim of Baker et al. (2001), which states that parent-child interactions during shared book reading contribute positively to their understanding of the text but do not create an impact on their reading achievement.

There are identified factors that affect reading achievement including poor reading environments and family members' poor reading habits (Mwangi, 2018),

reading at home (Kanyongo et al., 2006), parents' educational attainment, and a variety of reading materials at home (Anglum et al., 1990).

Table 1 shows the reading achievement of the students in their DEAR at Home activities. From the table, it can be noted that most of the learners accomplished the four reading tasks but there were two who were not able to complete the activities as in the case of Student 7 and Student 12. Despite the involvement of the HRPs in the DEAR at Home activities of the learners, there are those who still got low scores in the four reading activities.

Table 1. Learners' Reading Achievement in the DEAR at Home Activities

	Grade Level	Home Reading Partner	Total Score	No. of Accomplished DEAR at Home Activities
Case 1	Grade 7	Sister	15	4
Case 2	Grade 7	Parents	21	4
Case 3	Grade 7	Aunt	31	4
Case 4	Grade 8	Uncle	33	4
Case 5	Grade 8	Sister	30	4
Case 6	Grade 8	Parents	31	4
Case 7	Grade 9	Mother	24	4
Case 8	Grade 9	Mother	30	4
Case 9	Grade 9	Sister	32	4
Case 10	Grade 10	Parents	28	4
Case 11	Grade 10	Mother/Sister	33	4
Case 12	Grade 10	Sister	21	3

The findings of this study show that students' access to reading materials at home is still limited. This is supported by the findings of Anglum et al. (1990) as they identified the variety of reading materials at home as a predictor of reading achievement. This is also manifested in the statement of Student 7: *"I don't have a lot of books, but I read the stories from my Wattpad."* The reading materials that are usually available at the learners' homes include children's books, textbooks, dictionaries, the bible, mythology, magazines, and Wattpad. However, these are not

preferred by the participants as they are more inclined to read sci-fi books, fantasy books, manga series, and documentaries, which are not readily available in their homes. In this case, students go online and access relevant websites to read these materials. While reading online, students can easily look for the meaning of words they are not familiar with as evident in the answer of Student 1: *"I often use my phone when I want to read."* Parents also allow their children to use the internet resources to give their children an opportunity to understand the text that they read as evident in the

statement of HRP 12 saying *“When there’s a word he doesn’t know, I make him research what it means...”* In this matter, the virtual space serves as the students’ “reading corner.”

As helpful as the online platform is for the students, White and Dewitz (1996) reported that the more literacy materials available at home, the more possible it is for learners to achieve a higher proficiency level. Hence, it is important that parents provide their children with print materials that they can read at home.

On the availability of reading materials at home, HRP 1 shared the different materials her children are using at home saying *“To my little children, fairy tales and books with lessons learned. To my eldest, Sci-Fi and I also encourage him to read about history and stories about God.”* HRP 10 said, *“At home, I have textbooks that I used in high school, dictionaries, and Bible stories, those stories that we read in a church.”* She shared that they have textbooks, dictionaries, a bible, and stories that they read in their church. HRP 9 shared that they have educational books, stories, and books that contain important information at home.

Another factor may be linked to the literacy practices that shape the learners’ study or reading habits at home. Learners and HRPs alike admit that they don’t set a reading/study time at home. When Student 1 was asked if his family has study or reading time at home, he answered, “None.” Student 12 replied, “Sometimes.” When asked about how frequently they assist the learners, HRP 1 said, *“Because we have a store, sometimes two to three times a week. There are also weeks that I don’t help them at all,”* while HRP 6 shared, *“Once a week it’s because I’m not always at home and I can’t focus on teaching him, but I know myself that he can do it, even if I can only teach him once,”* while HRP 7 answered, *“three times a week because I have two babies to take care of.”* The activities of the family members as well as their inclinations and nature of work can also be factors affecting the extent of home involvement in their learners’ academic-related activities.

How Home Involvement Affects the Learners’ Reading Achievement

Reading at home has a positive influence on the achievement of learners in school as it helps develop vocabulary skills and increases one’s confidence (Kanyongo et al., 2006). The findings of the study contradict the researchers’ expectation that HRPs’

involvement always results in notable effects on the reading achievement of the learners. The data rather showed that the impact of the involvement of HRPs vary depending on the learners’ home reading environment, motivation, attitude, and interest.

Students’ reading achievement is affected by their relationship with their family, as Teacher 4 opined, *“I think that the involvement of any adult family member is important because the learners will feel that they are not alone in their reading journey.”* Teacher 6 also stated, *“They are more comfortable with them, that’s why they learn more.”*

While Student 11, whose parent and sibling were both involved in the DEAR at Home activities, got a high score, it can be noticed that Student 3, Student 9, and Student 4, who were under the care of their aunt, sister, and uncle, respectively, also scored high. These data support the claim of Kanyongo et al. (2006) that family members’ involvement in the learners’ activities contributes to their reading achievement. Clark and Picton (2012) reported that children receiving family support in reading are possibly reading above their expected level more than those who do not receive encouragement.

Furthermore, the findings also reveal that aside from the parents, who are stereotypically known as the first teachers of children, siblings also serve as major reading guides of most of the participants. When asked about the family member who helps her most in her reading assignments, Student 1 answered, *“My older brother and older sister.”* When parents are not at home to guide the learners, siblings were shown to be more involved in the reading assignments of the learners. Student 9 shared that *“My sisters assist me all the time because my parents are working.”* In addition to assisting the respondents in their reading activities, siblings also have an important role in encouraging the respondents to read to gain more knowledge. As said by the sibling of Student 12, *“I always tell them to have a habit of reading because it gives knowledge.”* Student 9 also articulated, *“My sisters assist me all the time because my parents are working.”*

Motivation is a vital factor in assisting learners with reading comprehension (Ahmadi, 2017). In addition, it will lead to increased performance in learning a language. What motivates learners to read is intrinsically and extrinsically considered. Student 8 reported, *“I like reading, when I read books, I learned something and it improves my reading skills,”* and

Student 4 reported, *“I like reading because you can also learn a lot from it.”* Family, relatives, and friends also encourage them to read. Student 10 shared, *“I was inspired on how she (the aunt) speaks and define unfamiliar words for me. She told me that she gained that knowledge from reading.”* It can be reflected that learners who see that their home environment inculcates reading as part of their family culture will also be motivated to read.

There are various ways on motivating students to read at home. Parents usually tell bedtime stories as one reading activity for their children. They also encourage the learners to do their reading activities independently during the night. One parent said, *“When I have free time, I join them and read (like storytelling).”* HRP 12 also said, *“I remember when I was still a student, my mother also took time to assist me in reading even if she was just sitting right next to me as long as she sees me reading.”* When reading at home becomes part of the family’s literacy practices, children would be able to develop their motivation to read.

Teachers, too, employ various strategies to promote reading at home like giving incentives, such as plus points or extra credits. Teacher 1 and Teacher 6 shared that they give extra points when their students accomplish their assigned home reading tasks.” Siblings also have their way of encouraging the students to read by giving rewards such as snacks. According to the sibling of Student 12, *“What I do is just give them a reward. I tell them, I will give snacks after you read this particular text.”*

The Extent of HRP’s Involvement in the Learners’ DEAR at Home Activities

The presence of parents, siblings, and other family members has a positive impact on developing the students’ love for reading, which in turn helps in the formation of their reading habits in the long term. Students usually consult with them first about the meaning and word pronunciation. This is demonstrated in the statement of Student 11—*“She explains if there is a word that I can’t understand”*—and Student 12—*“When I don’t know how to pronounce the word, I also ask my sister to help me know the right pronunciation of the word.”*

It is also important to note that the home is usually the first place where students are trained to be independent readers. As one of the parents shared, *“I guide them in reading. When I have time, I read stories*

to my two young children. As for (...) I let him read alone.” When students feel that they can accomplish the reading activities independently, they do not ask for the help of their parents or anyone at home. Student 1 shared, *“(…) I like it more when I’m reading independently, without the help of anyone.”*

At home, any family member can guide the students and ensure that they accomplish the assigned reading activities. As reflected on the statement of the HRP 3, *“When they have reading activities like this, I allot time to focus on assisting them. Because sometimes, of course, we know how children are nowadays. Sometimes they would feel sleepy, lazy to read. That’s why I focus on them.”* HRP 9 also stated, *“Scheduling her reading time every day for at least 30 minutes, provide them reading materials, and make them realize that reading is a good habit and not forcing them, because when a child is learning without being forced, they can easily improve themselves.”* Prasetyaningrum and Ruminar (2020) reported that having DEAR for at least 30 minutes a day boosted the students’ habits of reading for pleasure.

In general, there is no specific reading time at home. Parents and siblings usually read in their free time. This is reflected in the reading log of the learners. Often, they do their reading activities with their reading guides in the evening or during their siesta in the afternoon. They spend at least 20 minutes to 1 hour a day to help the learners in their reading activities as manifested in the answer of HRP 2 when she said, *“When I really have time, Ma’am. Suppose it’s Sunday, I make them read for 1 or 2 hours straight, Ma’am, the Bible stories and then their school lessons so that they don’t get too hooked to online games.”* Through this effort, the sister prevents her younger brother from playing online games, especially on weekends. HRP 10 shared, *“If there’s time, I read stories to my two young children.”* She explained that when she has available time, she reads stories to her children. Since working parents barely have time to read with their children, it is important to come up with a strategy to augment this need as Limbrick et al. (1992) showed that the longer time spent reading positively affects reading achievement.

The level of HRP’s involvement differs from one learner to another. When asked if they seek their parents’ help when they read at home, Student 10 answered, *“Rarely, when I encounter unfamiliar words and I don’t have any data to use to browse for its*

definition,” and Student 11 stated, “*My mother always reminding me if there is an activity that I haven’t done. Usually, my sister helps me with my reading activities. She helps me every day and giving time to me about 1 hour on helping if there is a word that is unfamiliar to me.*” When asked how frequently she assists the learner in the home reading activities, HRP 5 said, “*Every day especially during school days,*” while HRP 6 answered, “*Once a week it’s because I’m not always at home and I can’t focus on teaching him, but I know myself that he can do it, even if I can only teach him once.*” The establishment of a reading nation may start with molding families as reading assets.

The involvement of HRPs in learners’ reading activities is valuable as they inspire and motivate them to read. As shared by Student 11, “*They’re very helpful to me because they are always giving time if I have a question in my activities.*” Correspondingly, Teacher 1 shared, “*It gives the learners encouragement to progress*”; Teacher 2 believed, “*Learners will be inspired with their parents.*” Children are encouraged to read when parents and other HRPs allot reading time with their children at home (Morni & Sahari, 2013).

Their presence and guidance while reading is also crucial for students to better understand what they read. HRP 2 pointed out that it is important that everyone or at least someone at home gets involved in guiding the students in their reading activities. She said, “*It’s really important because the children don’t understand some word at once, so there should be guidance from the parents, sisters, or brothers because they would only understand it on their level. But what if they interpreted it wrong? It will not be corrected right away. That’s why there should really be adults present to guide them.*” HRP 6 supported this thought as she stated, “*For me, it is really important that we guide our nephews or siblings so that they can do the right thing and not get confused in the activities they do.*” This points out that it is important for parents, caretakers, guardians, or siblings to be present while the learners doing their reading activities at home.

Furthermore, HRP 10 recognized the significance of getting involved in the learners’ reading activities as she expressed, “*It is also our role to get involved in the reading activities of our children to guide them what to read.*” HRP 8 emphasized the importance of involvement to establish reading habits among learners. She stated, “*I think at an early age it’s very much important so we could help them build a habit*

of reading, also to guide them about proper sourcing of which materials are reliable and how to spot wrong information.” Recognizing home involvement in reading as something that will help develop reading habits and build skills of students is a good point to emphasize among HRPs to promote literacy at the home level.

In the changing mode of learning brought by the current situation, it is important to strengthen home involvement on the students’ reading activities. As HRP 2 highlighted, “*First of all, nowadays, we are more like second teachers to them which is also for their own good. Because if we don’t teach them, they won’t have the drive or motivation to study.*” She conveyed the significance of engaging themselves amidst distance learning. Teacher 5 acknowledged that “*Parents’ guidance is a big help in our current situation.*”

In strengthening the involvement of parents, guardians, siblings, and caretakers, proper orientation about the goal and their role in the school reading activities and programs is necessary. One way of encouraging them to be actively involved in such programs is to capacitate them as HRPs and recognize their efforts. As suggested by Teacher 1, “*Give them recognition at the end of the school year and I guess they should also be trained or at least oriented on how to manage DEAR at home.*” Teacher 2 also expressed her view by saying “*I think it is better if we will try to enlighten the parents about the benefits of reading.*” Ballen and Moles (1994) suggested that schools should devise strategies for family involvement, intensify connection with parents, and organize training on literacy and parenting concerns.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The home is where early literacy development takes place. This study highlights the emerging roles of HRPs in the learners’ DEAR at Home activities. Parents, siblings, family members, and other HRPs have a pertinent role in developing the interest, motivation, and attitude of the learners toward reading. The findings showed that HRPs’ involvement does not always result in high reading achievement. However, this study exposes the more significant role that HRP involvement plays. Beyond the scores obtained from the reading activities are its positive effects on establishing the learners’ reading habits. Based on the findings of the study, it could be inferred that a typical

home environment in the Philippines has limited print materials that children can read. Most learners use web sources when they want to read or when they are tasked to read independently. Reading opportunities are limited as access and availability of print materials and knowledge of online reading resources remain inadequate. The teachers need to provide them with reading materials as an immediate solution to the lack of print materials.

It is therefore recommended that the school reading programs should be revisited and redesigned to include HRP in the picture. Through this, the vision of creating a reading culture at home and a reading nation will be realized. In addition, school reading programs involving HRP must gear toward capacity building of HRP on home reading practices to ensure that reading at home will be as worthwhile as reading at school. Schools should also consider initiating book drives to seek the help of external and internal stakeholders in the reading programs. Through these initiatives, learners can be provided reading resources at school and at home, thus giving them more opportunities to read. Furthermore, the use of reading logs and journals is also suggested to explore how these tools can possibly help teachers in monitoring and assessing the reading progress of their students at home and at school.

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Appendices

Appendix A Interview Guides

Interview Guide (for Students)

1. Do you like reading? Why or why not?
2. What kind of books do you have and read at home? What do you usually read?
3. What/Who motivates you to read?
4. Who among your parents help you more in your reading assignments?
5. How does he/she help you in your reading activities/assignments?
6. Do you have study/reading time with your parents? To what extent do your parents involve themselves in your reading activities?
7. Do you seek your parents' help if you encounter unfamiliar words or if you could not understand what the story means?
8. How helpful is parental involvement in accomplishing your home reading activities?

Interview Guide (for Parents)

1. How do you find reading? What is its importance?
2. Do you encourage your children to read at home? How or in what way?
3. What kind of books do you provide your children at home?
4. What ways can you help improve the reading achievement of your children?
5. How much time do you spend reading with your children?
6. How frequent do you assist your child/sibling/niece/nephew in his/her home reading activities?
7. Why do you think is it important to get yourselves involved in the reading activities of your children?

Open-Ended Survey Questions (for Teachers)

1. What can you say about the reading achievement of your students in their DEAR at Home activity?
2. How do you think would involving parents in the reading activities/program be helpful for the learners?
3. How can we encourage them to get involved in reading activities/program of the school?

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