

Competence among Project-Based Teachers Teaching Reading in Misamis Oriental

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Abstract

Teaching is an important aspect of improving pupils' academic achievement. This study aimed to determine the competence of project-based teachers in teaching reading in select schools of Misamis Oriental during the School Year 2025-2026. Specifically, the study aimed to describe the respondents' characteristics, assess the teachers' level of competence in teaching reading, and determine the significant relationship between the respondents' characteristics and their level of competence in teaching reading. Descriptive-correlational research design was used and data were gathered utilizing a validated researcher-made questionnaire. The study involved 150 reading teachers which were selected through total enumeration sampling technique. The data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient.

Findings revealed that most of the respondents were female, 21–30 years old, single, had earned a bachelor's degree, and had attended trainings/seminars at the district level. Further, the respondents' level of competence in teaching reading was very high, particularly in pedagogical knowledge, and low in communication and collaboration. It is concluded that pedagogical knowledge plays a crucial role in teachers' pedagogical readiness and confidence, which are demanded in the reading classroom, particularly in adapting lessons to cater to the needs of different learners. It is recommended that school heads may provide continuous professional development programs, relevant trainings/seminars, and collaborative activities to further strengthen teachers' competence and improve the delivery of reading instruction.

Keywords: competence, Project-Based , Teaching Reading

1. Introduction

Reading teachers play an important role in developing learners' reading skills and supporting academic success, especially among nonreaders and learners with limited comprehension. Despite literacy programs such as ECARP and the National Reading Program, reading difficulties remain a concern in Misamis Oriental, leading to the use of project-based reading teachers to provide additional instructional support. Previous studies indicate that teacher competence in reading instruction is influenced by teaching approaches, training, specialization, attitudes, cultural awareness, and professional development. Personal and professional characteristics such as age, sex, marital status, educational attainment, specialization, and participation in relevant trainings may also be associated with instructional competence. This study therefore aimed to examine the relationship between selected characteristics of reading teachers and their

level of competence in reading instruction and to determine whether these characteristics are significantly associated with their competence. The findings may provide useful information for professional development planning and the improvement of reading instruction programs in schools in Misamis Oriental.

Research Questions

This study aimed to determine the competence among project-based teachers' teaching reading in select schools of Misamis Oriental during the SY 2025-2026.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the respondents' characteristics in terms of age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, field of specialization, related trainings/seminars attended, and attitude toward teaching reading?
2. What is the respondents' level of competence in teaching reading based on cultural responsiveness, pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, instructional design, and communication and collaboration?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' level of competence in teaching reading and each of their characteristics?

Significance

This study may provide useful information for the provincial government and education policymakers in developing policies, programs, training, and resources that strengthen the competence of project-based teachers. School administrators and district supervisors may use the findings to guide professional development, recruitment, deployment, and support strategies for reading instruction. Project based reading teachers may also use the results for self-reflection and continuous improvement in areas such as educational preparation, training, teaching strategies, communication, and attitude toward reading. Improved teacher competence may contribute to more effective and inclusive reading instruction and better learner outcomes. The study may also serve as a reference for future researchers who wish to examine teacher competence and related factors in other educational settings.

Scope and Limitations

This study focused on determining the competence among project-based teachers' teaching reading in select schools of Misamis Oriental during the SY 2025-2026. The respondents were the one hundred fifty (150) reading teachers in both elementary and secondary schools. The independent variables were limited only to the respondents' characteristics in terms of age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, field of specialization, related trainings/seminars, and attitude toward teaching reading. Moreover, the dependent variables were also limited to the teachers' competence in teaching reading based on cultural responsiveness, pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, instructional design and communication and collaboration. Identified schools across the districts of Magsaysay II, Talisayan, Salay, Sugbongcogon, Balingasag South, Claveria West, Laguindingan, and Naawan were the selected schools for this study.

Literature Review

Respondent Characteristics

Teacher competence in reading instruction is closely associated with their professional preparation, teaching experiences, and personal characteristics. The reviewed literature indicates that age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, field of specialization, participation in relevant training, and attitude toward teaching reading may contribute to differences in how teachers plan, deliver, and assess reading instruction. Age alone may not determine competence, as experience, education, and professional development appear to have greater influence, while younger teachers may demonstrate flexibility in adopting new approaches and benefit from coaching and mentoring (Kraft, Blazar, & Hogan, 2020). Sex may influence teaching approaches, with some studies noting that female teachers tend to use nurturing, collaborative, and engaging strategies, although effective practices are not exclusive to any gender (Alnomasy, 2023). Civil status may affect teachers' availability and work responsibilities, but competence and professional commitment appear to be influenced more by experience and individual circumstances than marital status. Higher educational attainment is generally associated with stronger instructional design, assessment, and literacy teaching practices because advanced studies provide greater exposure to research-based pedagogy (López Martín et al., 2024). Field of specialization also contributes to reading competence, as teachers with focused preparation in reading or language tend to possess deeper knowledge of reading strategies and content than generalists. Participation in reading related training and professional development further strengthens teachers' knowledge, confidence, instructional strategies, and ability to address diverse learner needs. Finally, a positive attitude toward teaching reading is associated with greater instructional engagement, creativity, responsiveness, and supportive classroom practices, suggesting that these characteristics may collectively contribute to teachers' competence in reading instruction.

Teachers Competence in Teaching Reading

Teachers' competence in reading instruction is anchored in professional standards and is reflected in their ability to apply appropriate knowledge and skills in actual classroom practice. The literature identifies cultural responsiveness, pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, instructional design, and communication and collaboration as important dimensions of reading teacher competence. Culturally responsive teachers connect reading instruction with learners' language, culture, experiences, and community, which can strengthen engagement, comprehension, and sense of belonging (Bautista & Cheng, 2023). Pedagogical knowledge enables teachers to differentiate instruction, manage classrooms, integrate technology, and respond to learners with varied literacy needs, while content knowledge supports accurate and meaningful teaching of phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and evidence-based reading strategies (Valerio & Ramirez, 2023). Instructional design competence allows teachers to organize lessons according to learning goals, assess learner progress, and adapt strategies, materials, pacing, and grouping based on learners' needs. Communication and collaboration further strengthen reading instruction through productive relationships among teachers, learners, parents, and other stakeholders, supporting the implementation and monitoring of reading programs (Artillero, 2024). Overall, the reviewed studies indicate that competent reading teachers combine cultural understanding, pedagogical and content knowledge, responsive instructional planning, assessment, adaptability, and collaborative practices to provide effective and learner centered reading instruction.

2. Methodology

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive correlational research design to determine the competence of project-based teachers teaching reading in Misamis Oriental and examine the relationship between their personal and professional characteristics and teaching competence. The study described the teachers' age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, field of specialization, participation in reading related trainings and seminars, and attitude toward teaching reading. It also assessed their competence in cultural responsiveness, pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, instructional design, communication, and collaboration. The correlational aspect determined whether significant relationships existed between the teachers' characteristics and their competence in reading instruction. The findings may provide a clear picture of the current competence of reading teachers and support informed decisions in developing initiatives to improve reading instruction across the province.

Participants

The respondents of the study were 150 project-based reading teachers employed under Job Order status and assigned to public elementary and secondary schools in Misamis Oriental. They were selected from the districts of Magsaysay II, Talisayan, Salay, Sugbongcogon, Balingasag South, Claveria West, Laguindingan, and Naawan, which were identified through official records and coordination with the Local School Board Office. These teachers were part of the provincial literacy initiative and worked in different school settings with varied instructional challenges. Their participation provided relevant information about their competence, professional beliefs, and experiences in teaching reading, while the selected districts offered a broader and more varied view of reading instruction and areas that may require targeted support and professional development.

Data Collection

The study used a researcher made questionnaire as the main data gathering instrument, consisting of two parts. The first part gathered information about the respondents' characteristics, including age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, field of specialization, related trainings and seminars attended, and attitude toward teaching reading. The second part assessed teachers' competence in teaching reading in terms of cultural responsiveness, pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, instructional design, and communication and collaboration. The questionnaire used a Likert scale to measure the frequency or degree of respondents' practices and was developed and modified based on relevant literature and previous studies. Before its administration, the instrument underwent expert validation and pilot testing to establish its validity and reliability.

Data Analysis

The study used appropriate statistical tools to analyze the collected data based on the research questions and types of variables involved. Frequency and percentage were used to describe the respondents' profiles, including age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, field of specialization, trainings and seminars attended, and attitude toward teaching reading. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used for continuous variables, while the Chi Square Test was used for categorical variables to determine the significant relationships between respondents' characteristics and their teaching competence. The data

were analyzed using statistical software at a 0.05 level of significance, with p values less than or equal to 0.05 considered statistically significant.

3. Results and Discussions

Problem 1. What are the respondents' characteristics in terms of age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, field of specialization, related training/seminars attended and attitude towards teaching reading?

Table 1
Distribution of Respondents' Characteristics in terms of Age

Category	Frequency	Percentage
51years old and above	1	0.67
41-50 years old	15	10.00
31-40years old	37	24.67
21-30 years old	95	63.33
20 years old and below	2	1.33
Total	150	100.00

Table 1 shows that most project-based reading teachers were aged 21 to 30 years, with 95 respondents or 63.33 percent, indicating that the reading workforce was largely composed of younger teachers who may be in the early stages of their careers. This may be related to the accessibility of job order positions to young teachers seeking employment and gaining professional experience. Younger teachers may also be more open to new instructional strategies but may benefit from guidance and coaching from more experienced teachers to strengthen their reading instruction. In contrast, only one respondent or 0.67 percent was aged 51 years and above, suggesting that older teachers were minimally represented in project-based positions, possibly because temporary employment arrangements may offer less stability and fewer benefits compared with permanent positions. Overall, the age distribution suggests that the project-based reading program is predominantly staffed by younger teachers, while the limited number of older teachers may still provide valuable experience, mentoring, and support in improving reading instruction.

Table 2
Distribution of Respondents' Characteristics in terms of Sex

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Male	21	14
Female	129	86
Total	150	100

Table 2 presents the respondents' characteristics in terms of sex, showing that 129 or 86 percent were female, while 21 or 14 percent were male. This indicates that project-based reading teachers in the selected schools of Misamis Oriental were predominantly female, reflecting the broader pattern of female

representation in the teaching profession, particularly in elementary education and reading instruction. The smaller number of male teachers may be associated with established career patterns and social expectations surrounding the teaching profession, although this does not imply differences in teaching competence. The representation of both male and female teachers remains important in providing learners with diverse perspectives, teaching approaches, and role models.

Table 3
Distribution of Respondents' Characteristics in terms of Civil Status

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Single	103	68.67
Married	45	30.00
Widowed	2	1.33
Separated	0	0.00
Total	150	100.00

Table 3 presents the respondents' characteristics in terms of civil status, showing that most were single, with 103 respondents or 68.67 percent, while widowed respondents had the lowest frequency at 2 or 1.33 percent. The high proportion of single teachers may reflect the younger age and early career stage of many project-based reading teachers, as well as the possibility that temporary employment provides an entry point for those gaining experience while seeking more permanent opportunities. Single teachers may also have greater flexibility in accepting temporary assignments and adjusting to different work arrangements. However, civil status alone does not determine teaching competence, which should be assessed based on professional knowledge, skills, attitudes, and actual teaching performance. The small number of widowed respondents may reflect differences in age, family circumstances, or employment priorities, but their participation demonstrates that teachers with varied personal circumstances can contribute meaningfully to reading programs.

Table 4
Distribution of Respondents' Characteristics in terms of Highest Educational Attainment

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Doctoral Degree	0	0.00
With Doctoral Units	1	0.67
Master's Degree	2	1.33
With MA units	51	34.00
Bachelor's Degree	96	64.00
Total	150	100.00

Table 4 presents the respondents' characteristics in terms of highest educational attainment, showing that those with a bachelor's degree had the highest frequency at 96 or 64 percent, indicating that most project-based reading teachers had completed a four year undergraduate degree. This provides them with a basic academic foundation for teaching, but continued training, seminars, practical experience, and further education may still be needed to strengthen their specialized skills in reading instruction. In contrast, respondents with doctoral units had the lowest frequency at 1 or 0.67 percent, which may be related to the younger age and early career stage of most respondents and the qualifications generally associated with project-based positions. Overall, the findings show that most teachers had bachelor's or master's level qualifications, while only a small number had pursued doctoral studies, highlighting the importance of continuous professional development and opportunities for advanced education to further enhance competence in teaching reading.

Table 5
Distribution of Respondents' Characteristics in terms of Field of Specialization

Category	Frequency	Percentage
BSed- English	11	7.33
BSed-Filipino	8	5.33
BSed- Math	4	2.67
BSed- AP	3	2.00
General Education/BEED	106	70.67
Special Education (SPED)	0	0.00
BSed-ECE/BPEd	18	12.00
Total	150	100.00

Table 5 reveals that most reading teachers are graduates of General Education or Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED), indicating that their preparation is largely focused on broad elementary teaching competencies rather than specialized literacy instruction. This suggests that BEED graduates are commonly assigned to reading programs because their training provides a strong foundation in language and reading pedagogy, assessment, classroom management, and child development, allowing them to address learners' foundational literacy needs. However, the limited number of teachers from specializations such as BSed Arts and Physical Education indicates that secondary education graduates are less represented in reading instruction roles, as their preparation may not be as closely aligned with elementary literacy demands. The findings highlight the importance of assigning teachers with relevant academic preparation and providing continuous professional development to strengthen their knowledge and skills in effective reading intervention strategies.

Table 6
Distribution of Respondents' Characteristics in terms of Related Training/ Seminars Attended

Category	Frequency	Percentage
International Level	54	34.00

National Level	44	29.33
Regional Level	55	36.67
Division Level	103	68.67
District Level/School Level	136	90.67

Table 6 shows that most reading teachers have attended school or district level training and seminars related to reading, indicating that professional development opportunities are primarily provided through local initiatives that address teachers' immediate instructional needs. These trainings help enhance teachers' knowledge, strategies, and confidence in implementing effective reading practices and responding to diverse learner needs. However, national level training recorded the lowest participation, suggesting that access to broader professional development opportunities remains limited due to factors such as cost, travel requirements, limited slots, workload, and institutional support. The findings imply that while local trainings play an important role in strengthening reading instruction, providing more opportunities for teachers to participate in higher level professional development programs may further improve their competencies and expand their exposure to advanced literacy practices.

Table 7

Distribution of Respondents' Characteristics in terms of Attitude Towards Teaching Reading

Indicator	Mean	SD	Description
As a Teacher...			
I demonstrate genuine concern for the reading I progress of every learner.	3.83	0.61	Strongly Agree
I show consistent excitement and energy in delivering reading lessons	3.71	0.73	Strongly Agree
I value and accommodates differences in learners' reading abilities and learning styles.	3.81	0.64	Strongly Agree
I believe that all learners' can improve their reading skills with effort and support	3.82	0.63	Strongly Agree
I advocate for reading as a foundational skill and promote a love for reading among learners.	3.80	0.65	Strongly Agree
I maintain a positive and encouraging outlook despite challenges in teaching reading.	3.73	0.70	Strongly Agree
I open to constructive feedback and seeks innovative reading strategies or interventions.	3.77	0.67	Strongly Agree
I use motivating language and praises effort to build learners' reading confidence.	3.71	0.73	Strongly Agree
I demonstrate patience, kindness, and sensitivity to ward students with reading difficulties.	3.72	0.71	Strongly Agree
I take ownership of learners' reading outcomes and reflects on teaching practices.	3.70	0.75	Strongly Agree
I actively engage in team teaching, mentoring peers, or sharing effective reading resources and practices.	3.75	0.68	Strongly Agree

I demonstrate integrity, punctuality, and reliability in delivering reading instruction. 3.74 0.69 Strongly Agree

Overall 3.76 0.68 Strongly Agree

Table 7 reveals that reading teachers demonstrate a very positive attitude toward teaching reading, showing strong commitment, motivation, and concern for learners' literacy development. The findings indicate that teachers value students' reading progress, provide support to struggling readers, and apply strategies that address individual learning needs. The highest rated indicator reflects teachers' genuine concern for every learner's reading progress, highlighting their empathy, dedication, and willingness to provide interventions and feedback. Meanwhile, the lowest rated indicator focuses on teachers' ownership of learners' reading outcomes and reflection on teaching practices, suggesting that while teachers show care and responsibility, some may need to further strengthen reflective practices and regularly evaluate the effectiveness of their instructional strategies. Overall, the results emphasize the importance of maintaining positive teacher attitudes while promoting continuous reflection and professional growth to improve reading instruction and learner outcomes.

Problem 2. What is the level of competence of reading teachers in terms of cultural responsiveness, pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, instructional design, and communication and collaboration?

Table 8
Summary Distribution of Respondents' Overall Competence

Variable	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Cultural Responsiveness	3.65	0.69	Very High
Pedagogical Knowledge	3.69	0.70	Very High
Content Knowledge	3.61	0.69	Very High
Instructional Design	3.63	0.74	Very High
Communication and Collaboration	3.59	0.71	Very High
Overall	3.63	0.71	Very High

Table 8 shows that reading teachers possess a very high level of competence in teaching reading, demonstrating strong abilities in instructional design, adaptability, assessment, communication, and collaboration. The findings indicate that teachers are capable of selecting appropriate strategies, modifying instruction based on learners' needs, using assessment results, and creating meaningful reading activities that support literacy development. Among the competence areas, pedagogical knowledge obtained the highest rating, showing that teachers have strong understanding of reading concepts, effective teaching strategies, and the ability to design learner centered instruction. Meanwhile, communication and collaboration received the lowest rating, although still interpreted as very high, suggesting that teachers may need more opportunities to strengthen teamwork, coordination, and professional sharing with colleagues, parents, and stakeholders. Overall, the results emphasize that reading teachers have strong instructional competence, but enhancing collaborative practices may further improve the implementation of reading programs and provide greater support for learners' literacy growth.

Problem 3. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' level of reading competence and each of their characteristics?

Table 9
Result of the Test on Relationship Between the Respondents' Level of Competence in Teaching Reading and each of their characteristics

Respondents' Characteristics	Teachers Competence					Overall
	Cultural responsiveness	Pedagogical knowledge	Content knowledge	Instructional design	Communication & Collaboration	r-value
	r-value p-value interpretation	r-value p-value interpretation	r-value p-value interpretation	r-value p-value interpretation	r-value p-value interpretation	p-value interpretation
Age	r=0.527 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.525 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.534 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.520 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.529 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.527 p=0.001* (Significant)
Sex	r=0.567 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.555 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.561 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.550 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.555 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.558 p=0.001* (Significant)
Civil Status	r=0.459 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.478 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.484 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.473 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.479 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.475 p=0.001* (Significant)
Educational Attainment	r=0.517 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.512 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.516 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.515 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.511 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.514 p=0.001* (Significant)
Field of Specialization	r=0.528 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.558 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.522 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.553 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.517 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.536 p=0.001* (Significant)
Trainings and Seminars	r=0.577 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.579 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.584 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.574 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.579 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.579 p=0.001* (Significant)

Attitude in Teach- ing Read- ing	r=0.567 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.563 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.537 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.558 p=0.001* (Signifi- cant)	r=0.532 p=0.001* (Significant)	r=0.551 p=0.001* (Signifi- cant)
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Table 9 shows that all respondents' characteristics have a significant positive relationship with their competence in teaching reading across cultural responsiveness, pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, instructional design, and communication and collaboration. The findings indicate that factors such as age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, field of specialization, training and seminars attended, and attitude toward teaching reading are associated with teachers' level of competence. Teachers' experiences, educational preparation, professional development, and personal characteristics may influence how they design instruction, respond to learners' needs, apply reading strategies, and collaborate with others. Among these characteristics, participation in trainings and seminars showed a strong relationship with competence, emphasizing the importance of continuous professional development in enhancing teachers' knowledge and skills. Educational attainment and field of specialization also contribute to teachers' preparedness in implementing effective reading instruction. Moreover, a positive attitude toward teaching reading supports teachers' willingness to improve practices, provide learner support, and engage in professional growth. Overall, the results highlight that teacher competence is shaped by a combination of personal characteristics, academic background, professional experiences, and continuous learning opportunities.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

This study concludes that, pedagogical knowledge is very important in building reading teachers' competence. Specially in giving reading instruction and using differentiated instruction. Integrating digital tools to support student learning, teacher with high understanding particularly instructional planning, classroom management and socio emotional responsiveness were more effective in this regard. Teachers provide flexible activities and task to match learners individual reading needs.

Overall, the selection of reading technologies such as multimedia based tools when properly aligned with pedagogical knowledge can enhance the overall effectiveness of reading instruction.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. School administrators and education stakeholders should provide continuous professional development activities focused on enhancing project-based teachers' content knowledge, particularly in the effective use and application of various reading strategies. Trainings, workshop and mentoring programs may help teachers strengthen their knowledge and ability to select appropriate reading strategies based on the diverse needs and reading levels of learners.
2. Project-based teachers should be provided with further training and support in instructional design, particularly in adapting reading instruction and utilizing appropriate assessment strategies. This may help teachers develop flexible and learner-centered reading activities and use assessment results effectively in improving learners' reading performance.

3. School and education stakeholders should strengthen communication and collaboration among project-based teachers, regular teachers, school administrators, parents and other stakeholders. Regular meetings, mentoring, professional learning communities, and collaborative planning sessions may be conducted to promote the sharing of effective practices and provide better support for learners' reading development.

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