

## **DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY PRIMARY GRADE TEACHERS IN ADDRESSING LEARNING GAPS OF LEARNERS**

**Author's Name:** Dianne Jean R. Cabico<sup>1</sup>

**Affiliation:**

1. Cabangan Elementary School, Teacher II, Cabangan, Zambales, 2203, Philippines

**Corresponding Author Name and Email Id:** Dianne Jean R. Cabico,

dianne.cabico@deped.gov.ph

### **ABSTRACT**

*The study determined the difficulties encountered by 133 primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps of learners in Zone III, Schools Division of Zambales for School Year 2021-2022 geared towards the proposed action plan to address the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps of learners. Findings revealed that most of the primary grade teachers belonged to the age bracket of 30-39 years old, a majority of them were female, and most of them had MA units. The primary grade teachers encountered with quite difficulty the learning gaps in terms of instructional materials and teaching time, and with less difficulty in terms of administrative support. The primary grade teachers perceived the learning gaps of learners as quite observed in terms of writing skills, reading skills, and computational skills. There was a significant difference between the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps in terms of instructional materials, teaching time, and administrative support and their profile in terms of sex.*

**Keywords:** Difficulties of Teachers, Addressing Learning Gaps, Writing Skills, Reading Skills, Computational Skills

## **INTRODUCTION**

The implementation of limited face-to-face classes is a great challenge to teachers especially when they start to determine the learning gaps of their learners. The administration of assessments to the learners paves the way in determining their undeveloped skills. Despite all the preparedness and efforts rendered by the teachers, they are still facing different difficulties in addressing the learning gaps of their learners.

Government education agencies in the country implemented alternative learning modes to cope with the situation since the outbreak in 2020. The implementation was far from easy and exacerbated gaps in the country's access to education. Teachers and parents have to deal with internet connectivity issues coupled with socioeconomic vulnerabilities (Abunales, 2022). With every crisis comes deep challenges and opportunities for transformation – past education crises have shown that it is possible to build back better (Winthrop, 2020).

Difficulties are often an unavoidable but important part of the learning process. This seems particularly so for complex conceptual learning. Challenges in the learning process are however, particularly difficult to detect and respond to in educational environments where growing class sizes and the increased use of digital technologies mean that teachers are unable to provide nuanced and personalized feedback and support to help learners overcome their difficulties (Lodge, et. al., 2018). Educators fear that prolonged closure is having negative effects on learners' ability to learn, impacting their futures just at a time when the country needs a young, well-educated workforce to resume the impressive economic growth it was enjoying before the pandemic hit (De Guzman, 2021). In-person education during the COVID-19 pandemic has caused teachers to experience anxiety (Wakui, et. al., 2021). They are also bombarded with the different activities they need to work on to ensure that they address the learning gaps of their learners.

## **RESEARCH PROBLEM**

This study determined the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps of learners in Zone III, Schools Division of Zambales for School Year 2021-2022.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

This study was to determine the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps of learners in Zone III, Schools Division of Zambales for School Year 2021-2022.

This study aimed to answer these questions:

1. How may the profile of primary grade teachers be described in terms of:
  - 1.1. age;
  - 1.2. sex; and
  - 1.3. highest educational attainment?
2. How may the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps be described in terms of:
  - 2.1. instructional materials;
  - 2.2. teaching time; and
  - 2.3. administrative support?
3. How may the learning gaps of learners as perceived by their primary grade teachers be described in terms of:
  - 3.1. writing skills;
  - 3.2. reading skills; and
  - 3.3. computational skills?
4. Is there a significant difference between the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps and their profile when grouped accordingly?
5. Is there a significant difference between the learning gaps of the learners as perceived by their primary grade teachers and their profile when grouped accordingly?
6. Is there a significant correlation between the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps and the learning gaps of their learners?
7. What action plan can be proposed to cope with the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps of learners?

## METHODOLOGY

This study utilized quantitative descriptive research. It was quantitative descriptive research because it quantified and described the profile of the primary grade teachers, their difficulties encountered in addressing learning gaps of learners, and the learning gaps of learners.

A quantitative research method deals with quantifying and analyzing variables to get results. It involves the utilization and analysis of numerical data using specific statistical techniques to answer questions like who, how much, what, where, when, how many, and how (Bhandari, 2021). Qualitative research involves the process of objectively collecting and analyzing numerical data to describe, predict, or control variables of interest. The data are collected through measuring things, and these are analyzed through numerical comparisons and statistical inferences (McLeod, 2019). Qualitative research is the study of the nature of phenomena including their quality, different manifestations, the context in which they appear or the perspectives from which they can be perceived. It is characterized by flexibility, openness, and responsibility to context (Busetto, et. al., 2020).

Since the study determined the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps of learners in Zone III, Schools Division of Zambales for School Year 2021-2022 wherein data were collected, classified, summarized, presented in percentages, and means, the quantitative descriptive research was the most appropriate method used.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the distribution of respondents by zone. As can be seen from the table, there were 133 primary grade teachers coming from different public elementary schools in Cabangan District, San Antonio District, San Felipe District, and San Narciso District, Schools Division of Zambales for School Year 2021-2022. These primary grade teachers were involved in this study as respondents.

Table 1

*Distribution of Primary Grade Teachers by District*

<b>District</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Cabangan District	34	25.56
San Antonio District	33	24.81
San Felipe District	31	23.31
San Narciso District	35	26.32
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The simple random sampling was utilized in this study. Simple random sampling is the most basic and common type of sampling method used in quantitative social science research and in

scientific research generally. The main benefit of the simple random sample is that each member of the population has an equal chance of being chosen for the study. This means that it guarantees that the sample chosen is representative of the population and that the sample is selected in an unbiased way (Crossman, 2020). Simple random sampling refers to the subsets of the population that are chosen to represent the population. If samples are collected properly, precise statements can be made about a population, with a high degree of confidence, from relatively small samples (Frey, 2018). A sample in which every individual has an equal chance of being selected, and every sample of size has an equal chance of being collected is called a simple random sample. In order to take a simple random sample, it proceeds by assigning every individual in a population a number, and then using a random number generator or lottery to select a sample or may proceed by choosing individuals directly by using a random method (Gardner, 2021).

Table 2

*Test of Normality in terms of Difficulties Encountered by Primary Grade Teachers in Addressing Learning Gaps*

Difficulties Encountered	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Instructional Materials	.239	132	.200	.869	132	.183
Teaching Time	.204	132	.200	.868	132	.179
Administrative Support	.184	132	.200	.935	132	.594

Table 2 presents the test of normality in terms of learning gaps of learners as perceived by primary grade teachers by using Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test and Shapiro-ilk Test. As can be seen from the table, the computed significant values in the learning gaps of learners as perceived by primary grade teachers in terms of writing skills (KS = 0.101, SW = 0.052), reading skills (KS = 0.200, SW = 0.146) and computational skills (KS = 0.200, SW = 0.252) were greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Since all tests followed the normal distribution, the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used in testing the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps.

Table 3

*Test of Normality in terms of Learning Gaps of Learners as Perceived by Primary Grade Teachers*

Learning Gaps of Learners	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Writing Skills	.281	132	.101	.774	132	.052
Reading Skills	.228	132	.200	.858	132	.146
Computational Skills	.179	132	.200	.885	132	.252

4. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to determine the significant difference between the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps and learning gaps of primary grade learners as perceived by their teachers when grouped according to their profile.

5. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to determine if there was significant correlation between the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps and the learning gaps of primary grade learners as perceived by their teachers.

**Scoring**

The Likert Scale below was employed in determining the descriptive rating on the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps:

Table 4

*Likert Scale in Describing the Difficulties Encountered by Primary Grade Teachers in Addressing Learning Gaps*

Score	Limits	Descriptive Rating
4	3.25 – 4.00	Very Difficult
3	2.50 – 3.24	Quite Difficult
2	1.75 – 2.49	Less Difficult
1	1.00 – 1.74	Not Difficult

The scale below was utilized to describe the learning gaps of primary grade learners as perceived by their teachers:

Table 5

*Likert Scale in Describing the Learning Gaps of Primary Grade Learners as Perceived by their Teachers*

Score	Limits	Descriptive Rating
4	3.25 – 4.00	Highly Observed
3	2.50 – 3.24	Quite Observed
2	1.75 – 2.49	Partially Observed
1	1.00 – 1.74	Not Observed

Finally, the scale below was used in determining the significant correlation between the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps and the learning gaps of primary grade learners as perceived by their teachers:

Table 6

*Scale in Determining the Significant Correlation between the Difficulties Encountered by Primary Grade Teachers in Addressing Learning Gaps and the Learning Gaps of Primary Grade Learners as Perceived by their Teachers*

r Value	Descriptive Rating
$\pm 1.00$	Positive/Negative Perfect Correlation
$\pm 0.75$ to $\pm 0.99$	Positive/Negative Very High Correlation
$\pm 0.50$ to $\pm 0.74$	Positive/Negative High Correlation
$\pm 0.25$ to $\pm 0.49$	Positive/Negative Low Correlation
$\pm 0.01$ to $\pm 0.24$	Positive/Negative Very Low Correlation
0.00	No Correlation

## Results

This part of the research focuses on the results of the study which consisted of several parts: profile of the primary grade teachers in terms of age, sex, and highest educational attainment; difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps in terms of instructional materials, teaching time, and administrative support; and the learning gaps

of primary grade learners as perceived by their teachers in terms of writing skills, reading skills, and computational skills. The computed mean and interpretations are likewise cited.

### Profile of the Primary Grade Teachers

Table 7 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the profile of the primary grade teachers in terms of age. The table shows that of the observed number of the primary grade teachers, 50 or 37.59% belonged to the age bracket of 30-39 years old, 32 or 24.06% belonged to the age bracket of 40-49 years old, 30 or 22.56% belonged to the age bracket of 20-29 years old, 20 or 15.04% belonged to the age bracket of 50-59 years old, and one (1) or 0.75% belonged to the age bracket of 60 years old and above.

Table 7

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Profile of the Primary Grade Teachers in terms of Age*

Age	Frequency	Percentage
60 years old and above	1	0.75
50-59 years old	20	15.04
40-49 years old	32	24.06
30-39 years old	50	37.59
20-29 years old	30	22.56
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 8 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the profile of the primary grade teachers in terms of sex. The table shows that of the observed number of the primary grade teachers, a majority or 90.23% were male, and 13 or 9.77% were female.

Table 8

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Profile of the Primary Grade Teachers in terms of Sex*

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	13	9.77
Female	120	90.23
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>100.00</b>



Table 9 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of the profile of the primary grade teachers in terms of highest educational attainment. The table shows that of the observed number of the primary grade teachers, 61 or 45.86% had their MA units, 33 or 24.81% were education graduates, 20 or 15.04% were MA graduates, 14 or 10.53% had certificate of professional education, three (3) or 2.26% had EdD/PhD units, and two (2) or 1.50% were EdD/PhD graduates.

Table 9

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Profile of the Primary Grade Teachers in terms of Highest Educational Attainment*

Highest Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage
EdD/PhD Graduate	2	1.50
With EdD/PhD Units	3	2.26
MA Graduate	20	15.04
With MA Units	61	45.86
Education Graduate	33	24.81
Certificate of Professional Education	14	10.53
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>100.00</b>

### Difficulties Encountered by Primary Grade Teachers in Addressing Learning Gaps

Table 10 presents the mean rating and interpretations of the difficulties by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps in terms of instructional materials. As can be seen from the table, the primary grade teachers encountered with *quite difficulty* addressing learning gaps when they had available supplies in preparing instructional materials ( $\mu = 2.62$ ), activity sheets in teaching writing ( $\mu = 2.61$ ), drills in teaching writing ( $\mu = 2.66$ ), supplementary materials in teaching writing ( $\mu = 2.62$ ), activity sheets in teaching reading ( $\mu = 2.56$ ), drills in teaching reading ( $\mu = 2.56$ ), supplementary materials in teaching reading ( $\mu = 2.56$ ), activity sheets in teaching computations ( $\mu = 2.68$ ), drills in teaching computations ( $\mu = 2.68$ ), and supplementary materials in teaching computations ( $\mu = 2.68$ ). In terms of instructional materials, the general mean rating of the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps was 2.62, and it was interpreted as *quite difficult*.

Table 10

*Mean Rating and Interpretations of the Difficulties Encountered by Primary Grade Teachers in Addressing Learning Gaps in terms of Instructional Materials*

Item	Descriptor	Mean Rating	Interpretation
1	I have available supplies in preparing instructional materials.	2.62	Quite Difficult
2	I have available activity sheets in teaching writing.	2.61	Quite Difficult
3	I have available drills in teaching writing.	2.66	Quite Difficult
4	I have available supplementary materials in teaching writing.	2.62	Quite Difficult
5	I have available activity sheets in teaching reading.	2.56	Quite Difficult
6	I have available drills in teaching reading.	2.56	Quite Difficult
7	I have available supplementary materials in teaching reading.	2.56	Quite Difficult
8	I have available activity sheets in teaching computations.	2.68	Quite Difficult
9	I have available drills in teaching computations.	2.68	Quite Difficult
10	I have available supplementary materials in teaching computations.	2.68	Quite Difficult
<b>General Mean Rating</b>		<b>2.62</b>	<b>Quite Difficult</b>

Table 11 presents the mean rating and interpretations of the difficulties by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps in terms of teaching time. As can be seen from the table, the primary grade teachers encountered with *quite difficulty* addressing learning gaps when they had enough time to teach the lessons ( $\mu = 2.71$ ), to teach writing ( $\mu = 2.71$ ), address the writing difficulties ( $\mu = 2.77$ ), assess the writing progress ( $\mu = 2.74$ ), teach reading ( $\mu = 2.74$ ), address the reading difficulties ( $\mu = 2.76$ ), assess the reading progress ( $\mu = 2.72$ ), teach computations ( $\mu$

= 2.74), address the computational difficulties ( $\mu = 2.76$ ), and assess the computational progress ( $\mu = 2.78$ ) of their learners. In terms of teaching time, the general mean rating of the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps was 2.74, and it was interpreted as *quite difficult*.

Table 11

*Mean Rating and Interpretations of the Difficulties Encountered by Primary Grade Teachers in Addressing Learning Gaps in terms of Teaching Time*

Item	Descriptor	Mean Rating	Interpretation
1	I have enough time to teach the lessons of my learners.	2.71	Quite Difficult
2	I have enough time to teach writing to my learners.	2.71	Quite Difficult
3	I have enough time in addressing the writing difficulties of my learners.	2.77	Quite Difficult
4	I have enough time in assessing the writing progress of my learners.	2.74	Quite Difficult
5	I have enough time to teach reading to my learners.	2.74	Quite Difficult
6	I have enough time in addressing the reading difficulties of my learners.	2.76	Quite Difficult
7	I have enough time in assessing the reading progress of my learners.	2.72	Quite Difficult
8	I have enough time in teaching computations to my learners.	2.74	Quite Difficult
9	I have enough time in addressing the computational difficulties of my learners.	2.76	Quite Difficult
10	I have enough time in assessing the computational progress of my learners.	2.78	Quite Difficult
<b>General Mean Rating</b>		<b>2.74</b>	<b>Quite Difficult</b>

Table 12 presents the mean rating and interpretations of the difficulties by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps in terms of instructional materials. As can be seen from the table, the primary grade teachers encountered with *quite difficulty* addressing learning gaps

when they received administrative support from their school heads ( $\mu = 2.42$ ), teaching writing ( $\mu = 2.47$ ), preparing materials in teaching writing ( $\mu = 2.51$ ), assessing the writing skills of the learners ( $\mu = 2.47$ ), teaching reading ( $\mu = 2.47$ ), preparing materials in teaching reading ( $\mu = 2.52$ ), assessing the reading skills of the learners ( $\mu = 2.49$ ), teaching computations ( $\mu = 2.50$ ), preparing materials in teaching computations ( $\mu = 2.50$ ), and assessing the computational skills of the learners ( $\mu = 2.47$ ). In terms of administrative support, the general mean rating of the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps in terms of administrative support was 2.48, and it was interpreted as *less difficult*.

Table 12

*Mean Rating and Interpretations of the Difficulties Encountered by Primary Grade Teachers in Addressing Learning Gaps in terms of Administrative Support*

Item	Descriptor	Mean Rating	Interpretation
1	I receive administrative support from my school head.	2.42	Less Difficult
2	I receive administrative support in teaching writing.	2.47	Less Difficult
3	I receive administrative support in preparing materials in teaching writing.	2.51	Quite Difficult
4	I receive administrative support in assessing the writing skills of my learners.	2.47	Less Difficult
5	I receive administrative support in teaching reading.	2.47	Less Difficult
6	I receive administrative support in preparing materials in teaching reading.	2.52	Quite Difficult
7	I receive administrative support in assessing the reading skills of my learners.	2.49	Less Difficult
8	I receive administrative support in teaching computations.	2.50	Quite Difficult

9	I receive administrative support in preparing materials in teaching computations.	2.50	Quite Difficult
10	I receive administrative support in assessing the computational skills of the learners.	2.47	Less Difficult
<b>General Mean Rating</b>		<b>2.48</b>	<b>Less Difficult</b>

### Learning Gaps of Learners as Perceived by Primary Grade Teachers

Table 13 presents the mean rating and interpretations of the learning gaps of learners as perceived by teachers in terms of writing skills. As can be seen from the table, the primary grade teachers perceived the learning gaps of learners as *highly observed* when their learners can write lowercase letters ( $\mu = 3.35$ ), upper case letters ( $\mu = 3.35$ ), and how to write in a blue-red-blue pattern ( $\mu = 3.23$ ). However, the primary grade teachers perceived the learning gaps of learners as *quite observed* when their learners knew how to write syllables ( $\mu = 3.19$ ), words ( $\mu = 3.08$ ), phrases ( $\mu = 2.95$ ), sentences ( $\mu = 2.83$ ), paragraph ( $\mu = 2.73$ ), copy lectures on the board ( $\mu = 3.15$ ), and write in cursive form ( $\mu = 2.77$ ). In terms of the learning gaps of learners as perceived by primary grade teachers was 3.06, and it was interpreted as *quite observed*.

Table 13

*Mean Rating and Interpretations of the Learning Gaps of Learners as Perceived by Primary Grade Teachers in terms of Writing Skills*

Item	Descriptor	Mean Rating	Interpretation
1	My learners can write lowercase letters.	3.35	Highly Observed
2	My learners can write uppercase letters.	3.35	Highly Observed
3	My learners know how to write syllables.	3.19	Quite Observed
4	My learners know how to write words.	3.08	Quite Observed
5	My learners know how to write phrases.	2.95	Quite Observed

6	My learners know how to write sentences.	2.83	Quite Observed
7	My learners know how to write a paragraph.	2.73	Quite Observed
8	My learners know how to write in a blue-red-blue pattern.	3.23	Highly Observed
9	My learners know how to copy lectures on the board.	3.15	Quite Observed
10	My learners know how to write in cursive form.	2.77	Quite Observed
<b>General Mean Rating</b>		<b>3.06</b>	<b>Quite Observed</b>

Table 14 presents the mean rating and interpretations of the learning gaps of learners as perceived by teachers in terms of reading skills. As can be seen from the table, the primary grade teachers perceived the learning gaps of learners as *highly observed* when their learners knew the letters of the alphabet ( $\mu = 3.36$ ) and sounds of the letters of the alphabet ( $\mu = 3.39$ ). However, the primary grade teachers perceived the learning gaps of learners as *quite observed* when their learners knew how to read words ( $\mu = 3.23$ ), phrases ( $\mu = 3.08$ ), sentences ( $\mu = 3.06$ ), paragraphs ( $\mu = 2.99$ ), with accuracy ( $\mu = 2.93$ ), with appropriate speed ( $\mu = 2.95$ ), read with fluency ( $\mu = 2.89$ ), and with comprehension ( $\mu = 2.89$ ). In terms of reading skills, the general mean rating of the learning gaps of learners was 3.08, and it was interpreted as quite observed.

Table 14

*Mean Rating and Interpretations of the Learning Gaps of Learners as Perceived by Primary Grade Teachers in terms of Reading Skills*

Item	Descriptor	Mean Rating	Interpretation
1	My learners know the letters of the alphabet.	3.36	Highly Observed
2	My learners know the sounds of the letters of the alphabet.	3.39	Highly Observed
3	My learners know how to read words.	3.23	Quite Observed

4	My learners know how to read phrases.	3.08	Quite Observed
5	My learners know how to read sentences.	3.06	Quite Observed
6	My learners know how to read paragraphs.	2.99	Quite Observed
7	My learners know how to read with accuracy.	2.93	Quite Observed
8	My learners know how to read with appropriate speed.	2.95	Quite Observed
9	My learners know how to read with fluency.	2.89	Quite Observed
10	My learners know how to read with comprehension.	2.89	Quite Observed
<b>General Mean Rating</b>		<b>3.08</b>	<b>Quite Observed</b>

Table 15 presents the mean rating and interpretations of the learning gaps of learners as perceived by teachers in terms of computational skills. As can be seen from the table, the primary grade teachers perceived the learning gaps of learners as *quite observed* when their learners knew how to add numbers without regrouping ( $\mu = 3.20$ ), add numbers with regrouping ( $\mu = 2.98$ ), subtract numbers without regrouping ( $\mu = 3.11$ ), subtract numbers with regrouping ( $\mu = 2.92$ ), multiply numbers without regrouping ( $\mu = 2.78$ ), multiply number with regrouping ( $\mu = 2.73$ ), divide numbers without remainder ( $\mu = 2.74$ ), divide numbers with remainder ( $\mu = 2.68$ ), solve problems involving a single operation ( $\mu = 2.79$ ), and solve problems involving two mathematical operations ( $\mu = 2.68$ ). The general mean rating of the learning gaps of learners as perceived by primary grade teachers was 2.86, which was interpreted as *quite observed*.

## CONCLUSION

1. Most of the primary grade teachers belonged to the age bracket of 30-39 years old, a majority of them were female, and most of them had MA units.
2. The primary grade teachers encountered with *quite difficulty* addressing learning gaps in terms of instructional materials and teaching time, and with *less difficulty* in terms of administrative support.

3. The primary grade teachers perceived that the learning gaps of learners were *quite observed* in terms of writing skills, reading skills, and computational skills.

4. There was *no significant difference* between the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps in terms of instructional materials, teaching time, and administrative support and their profile in terms of age. There was *no significant difference* between the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps in terms of instructional materials and administrative support and their profile in terms of highest educational attainment. The computed values were greater than the level of significance which is 0.05; thus, the null hypothesis was *accepted*. There was a *significant difference* between the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps in terms of instructional materials, teaching time, and administrative support and their profile in terms of sex. There was a *significant difference* between the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps in terms of teaching time and their profile in terms of highest educational attainment. The computed values were less than the level of significance which is 0.05; thus, the null hypothesis was *rejected*.

5. There was *no significant difference* between the learning gaps of the learners as perceived by their primary grade teachers in terms of writing skills, reading skills, and computational skills and their profile in terms of age. There was *no significant difference* between the learning gaps of the learners as perceived by their primary grade teachers in terms of writing skills and computational skills and their profile in terms of highest educational attainment. The computed values were greater than the level of significance which is 0.05; thus, the null hypothesis was *accepted*. There was a *significant difference* between the learning gaps of the learners as perceived by their primary grade teachers in terms of writing skills, reading skills, and computational skills and their profile in terms of sex. There was a *significant difference* between the learning gaps of the learners as perceived by their primary grade teachers in terms of reading skills and their profile in terms of highest educational attainment. The computed values were less than the level of significance which is 0.05; thus, the null hypothesis was *rejected*.

6. There was a *positively high significant correlation* between the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps in terms of instructional materials, teaching time, and administrative support and the learning gaps of the learners in terms of writing skills, reading skills, and computational skills. The computed significant values were *significant* at 5% level; thus, the null hypothesis was *rejected*.



7. The proposed action plan to cope with the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps of learners was developed.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The primary grade teachers must finish their MA degree for more opportunities on rankings, reclassifications, promotions, and professional growth.

2. The primary grade teachers must address the learning gaps they encountered in terms of instructional materials, teaching time, and administrative support.

3. The primary grade teachers must address the learning gaps of their learners in terms of writing skills, reading skills, and computational skills.

4. The primary grade teachers must be informed that their differences in their profile in terms of sex and highest educational attainment paved the way to encounter different difficulties in addressing learning gaps.

5. The primary grade teachers must be informed that their differences in their profile in terms of sex and highest educational attainment paved the way to establish differences in perceiving the learning gaps of the learners.

6. The primary grade teachers must address the difficulties they encounter in addressing the learning gaps of their learners.

7. The proposed action plan to cope with the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers in addressing learning gaps of learners must be implemented.

8. Further studies involving other contributory factors affecting the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers must be conducted to address the learning gaps of the learners.

9. Other related studies must be conducted by other researchers to determine other variables that can contribute in addressing the difficulties encountered by primary grade teachers and the learning gaps of the learners.

## REFERENCES

1. Abunales, D. (2022, February 17). Limited connectivity and other obstacles: Two years of school in rural Philippines. Retrieved from Limited Connectivity and Other Obstacles: Two Years of School in Rural Philippines | Heinrich Böll Foundation | Southeast Asia Regional Office (boell.org)
2. Bhandari, P. (2021, December 8). What is quantitative research? Definition, uses, and methods. Retrieved from What Is Quantitative Research? | Definition, Uses and Methods (scribbr.com)
3. Busetto, L., Wick, W., & Gumbinger, C. (2020, May 27). How to use and assess qualitative research methods? Retrieved from How to use and assess qualitative research methods | Neurological Research and Practice | Full Text (biomedcentral.com)
4. Crossman, A. (2020, January 29). Simple random sampling. Retrieved from What Simple Random Sampling Is and How to Do It (thoughtco.com)
5. De Guzman, C. (2021, December 1). The Philippines still hasn't fully reopened its schools because of COVID-19. What is this doing to children? Retrieved from COVID-19 and the Crisis Facing Philippine Schoolchildren | Time
6. Frey, B.B. (2018). Simple random sampling. Retrieved from Simple Random Sampling - SAGE Research Methods (sagepub.com)
7. Gardner, K. (2021, October 1). Simple random sampling in statistics. Retrieved from Simple Random Sampling in Statistics | Overview & Examples - Video & Lesson Transcript | Study.com
8. Lodge, J.M., Kennedy, G., Lockyer, L., Arguel, A., & Pachman, M. (2018, June 28). Understanding difficulties and resulting confusion in learning: An integrative review. Retrieved from Frontiers | Understanding Difficulties and Resulting Confusion in Learning: An Integrative Review | Education (frontiersin.org)



9. McLeod, S. (2019). What's the difference between qualitative and quantitative research? Retrieved from Qualitative vs Quantitative Research | Simply Psychology
10. Wakui, N., Abe, S., Shirozu, S., Yamamoto, Y., Ymamura, M., Abe, Y., Murata, S., Ozawa, M., Igarashi, T., Yanagiya, T., Machida, Y., & Kikuchi, M. (2021, June 2). Causes of anxiety among teachers giving face-to-face lessons after the reopening of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic: A cross-sectional study. Retrieved from Causes of anxiety among teachers giving face-to-face lessons after the reopening of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic: a cross-sectional study | BMC Public Health | Full Text (biomedcentral.com)
11. Winthrop, R. (2020, April 10). Top 10 risks and opportunities for education in the face of COVID-19. Retrieved from Top 10 risks and opportunities for education in the face of COVID-19 (brookings.edu)