



Exploring the level of reading skills of primary students with reading disabilities.

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Abstract:

The aims of this research are to explore and enhance the reading skills of students who are facing difficulties in reading at Noakhali Bangla Bazar Government Primary School. The research focuses on identifying the challenges faced by the learners and recommend targeted initiatives to enhance their reading skills. Mixed-method research was conducted to had a comprehensive understanding of the students' needs and progress. This study explored the levels of reading and understanding also declared that the participant was frustrated in the fifth, fourth, and third grade readings, and instructive in the second-grade book. Students, teachers & parents were selected as sample through random and purposive sampling. Classroom observations were conducted to examine the initial level of students reading skill. Survey & questionnaires were used to collect data from students and interviews were taken to teachers & parents. Assessments revealed significant reading challenges, including poor phonemic awareness, limited vocabulary, and lack of comprehension skills. A series of structured instructional strategies were designed and implemented over a six-month period. Interventions included phonics-based instruction, vocabulary enrichment activities, and reading comprehension exercises, supported by continuous teacher training and parental involvement. The results indicated a marked improvement in the reading abilities of the participating students. Quantitative data showed a significant increase in reading fluency and comprehension scores, while qualitative feedback from teachers and parents highlighted enhanced student engagement and confidence in reading. The study concludes that targeted, systematic interventions can effectively address reading difficulties and recommends ongoing support and monitoring to sustain these improvements.

Keywords: Reading skills, Primary students, Reading disabilities.



Introduction:

Human beings have been in the act of reading in order to understand the rapidly changing structure of society and to adapt to this structure, since the invention of writing to the present. Reading can be defined as the process of making sense in a regular environment in line with an appropriate method and purpose, based on effective communication between the author and the reader, with the cooperation of cognitive behaviour and psychomotor skills (Akyol, M., & Baştuğ, M.,2015). When the definitions are examined, we can define reading as the process of making sense in the mind by exposing the text and symbols to cognitive processes.

For reading, which is defined as the process of making sense from texts and symbols, to be effective, it must be handled as a fluent, sense-making, strategic, motivation-based, and lifelong process. The skills involved in this process constitute five basic principles of reading (Akyol, 2015). To be able to read effectively and at the expected level, individuals need to gain fluent reading skill, which is one of the fundamentals of reading skill (Gedik, O. and Akyol, H., 2022).Fluent reading is the ability of the student to read the text at an appropriate speed, without pausing when he/she sees the sound, syllable, and word, as if he/she speaks in his/her daily life in an emotional and harmonious way (Akyol, 2016; Young & Rasinski, 2009).

Reading is a fundamental skill that is crucial for academic success and lifelong learning. Despite its importance, many students face significant challenges in developing proficient reading skills. At Noakhali Bangla Bazar Government Primary School, a substantial number of students have been identified with reading difficulties, which hinder their overall academic performance and confidence.

Research shows that not only in primary level even on secondary level students are facing troubles in basic language skills, the students of secondary school, who have been studying English for 6 years, are encountering hundreds of problems and challenges to speak in English inside and outside of the classroom (Hasan et al., 2024)

The purpose of this research is to explore the nature of these reading difficulties and to implement effective strategies to improve the reading skills of affected students.

By conducting this study, we aim to provide evidence-based interventions that can be replicated in similar educational settings, thereby contributing to the broader educational community's understanding of how to support students with reading challenges.

The significance of this research lies in its potential to improve the educational outcomes of students with reading difficulties, providing them with the skills necessary to succeed academically and beyond. Additionally, the findings of this study will offer valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers seeking to enhance reading instruction and support for struggling readers in diverse educational contexts.

By focusing on Noakhali Bangla Bazar Government Primary School, this research highlights the importance of context-specific solutions and the need for ongoing support and collaboration among teachers, parents, and the broader community to ensure sustainable improvements in reading skills.

Research Objectives:



The objective of this research is to identify, implement, and evaluate effective strategies and interventions aimed at improving the reading skills of students with reading difficulties at Noakhali Bangla Bazar Government Primary School. The specific objectives of the study will be as followings,

- To identify the specific difficulties faced by the learners.
- To design and implement the dynamic and sustainable interventions to address the challenges.
- To provide professional development and support for teachers to equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively support students with reading difficulties.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented interventions and strategies.

Statement of the problem:

Reading ability is crucial for a learner to understand the insight meaning of the topics. In primary level a lot of students faced challenges that affect significantly on their academic success and overall development. At Noakhali Bangla Bazar Government Primary School, a large number of students struggle with reading, which adversely affects their performance across various subjects and diminishes their confidence and motivation to learn. Despite the school's efforts to provide a supportive learning environment, many students continue to fall behind in reading, highlighting the need for targeted interventions.

The problem is multi-faceted, involving several interrelated issues:

Limited Phonemic Awareness: Many students lack the foundational skill of phonemic awareness, which is crucial for decoding words and developing reading fluency.

Insufficient Vocabulary: A limited vocabulary hampers students' ability to understand texts and express themselves effectively, further complicating their reading development.

Poor Reading Comprehension: Even when students can decode words, they often struggle to grasp the meaning of the text, indicating a need for improved comprehension strategies.

Instructional Methods: Traditional teaching methods may not adequately address the diverse needs of students with reading difficulties, necessitating more personalized and effective instructional strategies.

Regarding this challenges there needed to explore and develop effective innovations tailored to the specific needs of these students. The objective is to develop a comprehensive approach that not only improves their reading skills but also fosters a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. This action research aims to address these issues by identifying the root causes of reading difficulties and testing targeted strategies to enhance reading proficiency among students at Noakhali Bangla Bazar Government Primary School.

Literature Review:

Reading is one of the four skills which need to be learned besides listening, speaking and writing. Reading difficulties among students can significantly hinder academic achievement and overall educational development. Action research aimed at improving the reading skills of students facing these challenges is crucial. This literature review explores various strategies and interventions that have been effective in enhancing reading skills among students with reading difficulties. The



review covers theoretical perspectives, evidence-based practices, and successful case studies. Reading difficulties among primary school students can manifest in various forms, including dyslexia, decoding issues, and comprehension problems (Shaywitz, 2003). These difficulties often hinder academic progress and self-esteem, necessitating targeted interventions (Snowling & Hulme, 2005).

Reading acquisition is a complex process involving multiple cognitive and linguistic skills. Ehri, L. C. (2005) emphasizes the importance of phonemic awareness, while Adams (1990) highlights the role of vocabulary and text comprehension in reading proficiency.

Intervention strategies such as phonics instruction, guided reading, and one-on-one tutoring have shown to be effective (Allington, 2006). The National Reading Panel (2000) provides a comprehensive review of evidence-based practices that improve reading skills.

Bangladesh faces unique challenges in implementing effective reading interventions, including limited resources and teacher training (Alam & Jahan, 2014). Rural areas, in particular, struggle with maintaining consistent educational quality (Begum & Farooqui, 2008).

Vocabulary has an important place among the factors that affect reading and writing, which are the basic language skills of comprehension and expression, and even the sub-language skills of listening and speaking (Karadağ, 2019; Karatay, 2007). Instead of vocabulary knowledge, other terms such as vocabulary repertoire, word level, word proficiency have been used in studies and definitions focused on vocabulary. Vocabulary knowledge is defined as the accumulation of words that the individual learns, understands, uses, and stores in memory as a result of his or her experiences (Akyol & Temur, 2007; Karadağ, 2019; Özbay & Melanlioğlu, 2008).

Theoretical Framework:

This research based on important educational ideas and concepts, such as behaviorist theory, socio-cultural theory, constructivist theory, and motivational theory, that guide effective reading instruction and intervention. These ideas serve as the foundation for our knowledge of how kids pick up reading skills and the teaching methods that assist them.

The theory of Constructivism: According to constructivist philosophy (Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky) students build their knowledge via their interactions and experiences with the outside world. This idea highlights the value of pupils actively engaging with texts and making connections between new material and prior knowledge when it comes to reading. By offering scaffolding and encouraging students to deduce meaning from what they read, teachers can help students with reading comprehension.

Proximal Development Zone (ZPD): This theory helps us understand how to help children develop reading skills that are just a little bit above their existing capabilities, Vygotsky's ZPD notion is essential. Teachers can facilitate students' progress more successfully by offering appropriate amounts of support and progressively lowering aid as the student gains proficiency.

The Behaviorist Theory: According to the (B.F skinner), The main themes of behaviorist theory are practice and reinforcement's roles in learning. When it comes to reading, this can include using positive reinforcement, repeated reading, and systematic phonics instruction to assist kids improve their fluency and decoding abilities.

Theory of Information Processing: According to this idea (Richard Atkinson, George Miller, and Richard Shiffrin) learning is the act of taking in, analyzing, storing, and retrieving information.



It emphasizes how crucial it is to support kids in creating effective decoding, comprehension, and memory retention methods when it comes to reading education. Particularly useful strategies include chunking, using graphic organizers, and using mnemonic devices.

Theories of Motivation: Improving reading abilities may depend on knowing what inspires pupils. Reading development is controlled by both extrinsic motivation—which is influenced by outside rewards—and intrinsic motivation, which is motivated by interest and enjoyment. One way to boost motivation could be to provide options for reading materials, make goals that are doable, and give prizes and positive reinforcement. By grounding the action research in these theoretical frameworks, the project can systematically address the various dimensions of reading difficulties and work towards meaningful, sustainable improvements in students' reading skills.

Description	Components	Key Dimensions
Improvement in Reading skill this includes various aspects such as reading fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, and accuracy.	Teaching Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● phonics-based education ● whole-language methodology ● sessions of guided reading ● Peer instruction
	Reading Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Level of difficulty of the reading materials ● Variety of genres (fiction, non-fiction, poetry) ● Use of multimedia resources (audio books, interactive e-books)
	Frequency and Duration of Reading Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Daily reading sessions vs. weekly sessions ● Length of each reading session (e.g., 20 minutes, 30 minutes, 1 hour)
	Parental Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reading at home with parents ● Parents attending reading workshops or training sessions
	Classroom Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Quiet reading corners ● Availability of a school library or reading nook
	Teacher Training and Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specific training programs or workshops for teachers focused on reading instruction and intervention strategies.



	<p>Student Motivation and Engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies to increase student motivation (e.g., reward systems, reading challenges, and competitions). • Activities designed to make reading more engaging (e.g., interactive reading activities, games).
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Table 1: Support to enhance students reading skills.

Research Methodology:

The purpose of this study is to better understand and assess the reading abilities of Noakhali Bangla Bazar Government Primary School students who struggle with reading. Developing reading proficiency can have a significant impact on kids' overall educational results since it is a necessary ability for both academic success and lifetime learning. The research will adopt an action research methodology, which involves a cyclical process of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Mixed-method approach will be conducted as the research design. This approach is particularly suitable for educational settings as it allows for continuous improvement based on real-time feedback and outcomes. Students at the Noakhali Bangla Bazar Government Primary School who have been diagnosed with reading impairments. Teachers involved in teaching reading skills. Parents and guardians of the pupils also counted in to collect data. 40 students from grade 3,4 & 5, 7 teachers and 30 parents will be selected randomly and purposively as sample. As for primary data, we collected data through reading assessment, survey & questionnaires from students, interviews with teachers & guardians. Classroom observations will be used to assess reading behaviors and the implementation of interventions. Standardized reading tests will be used to measure students' reading proficiency before and after the interventions. Surveys and questionnaires will be administered to students, teachers, and parents in order to gather quantitative and qualitative data on reading difficulties and perceptions of interventions. Interviews conducted with teachers and selected students to gain deeper insights into reading challenges and the effectiveness of interventions.

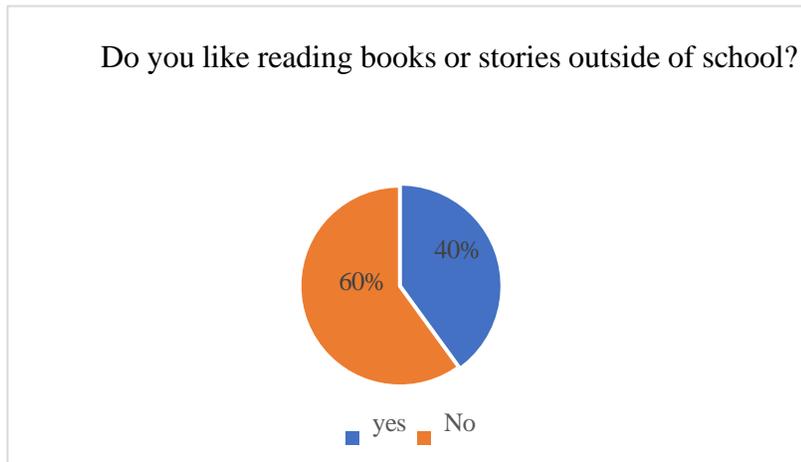
Ethical Consideration:

This study was conducted within ethical standards for studies involving human subjects. Authors ensured that all participants provided informed consent. Privacy, confidentiality and participants rights were secured throughout the data collection and data analysis process following the ethical guidelines relevant to education research in Bangladesh.

Findings & Data Analysis:

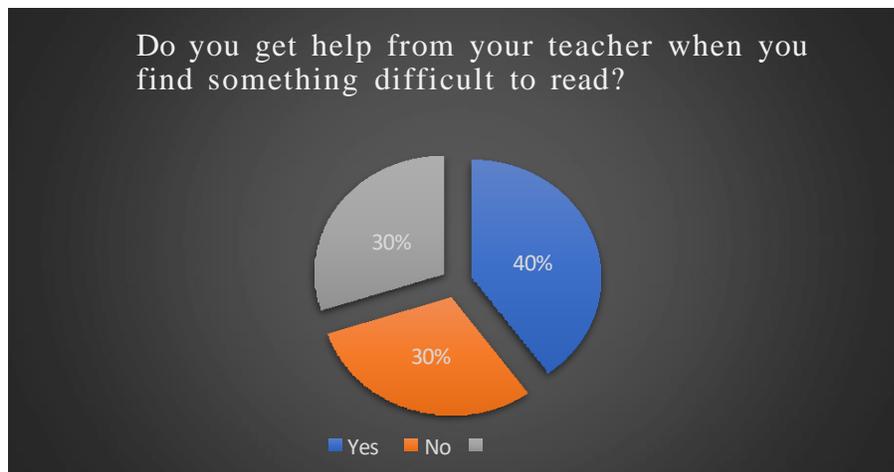
Findings from students:

Q-1: Do you like reading books or stories outside of school?



In this research, we asked student that they like reading book or stories outside of school or not. The pie graph shows that 60% students answered “no” and 40% students answered “yes”. That means maximum students don’t like to read outside schools. It might be a great barrier to achieve the fluency in reading. Even they don’t have the shortage of reading materials to practice moreover they are not interested to engage in reading outside the schools. Here, students should be motivated and engaged in making habit to read.

Q-2: Do you get help from your teacher when you find something difficult to read?

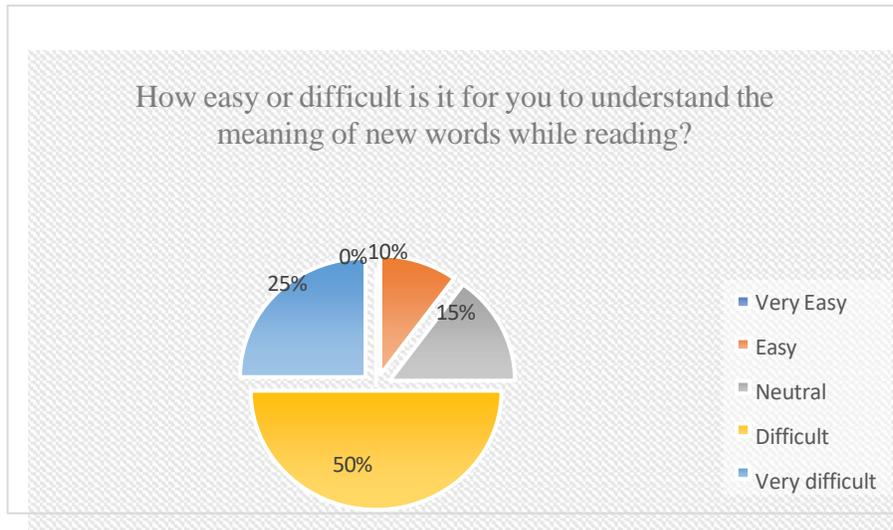


The 40% who answered "yes" indicate that a substantial portion of students do receive help from teachers when they find something difficult to read. The 30% who answered "no" and the 30%



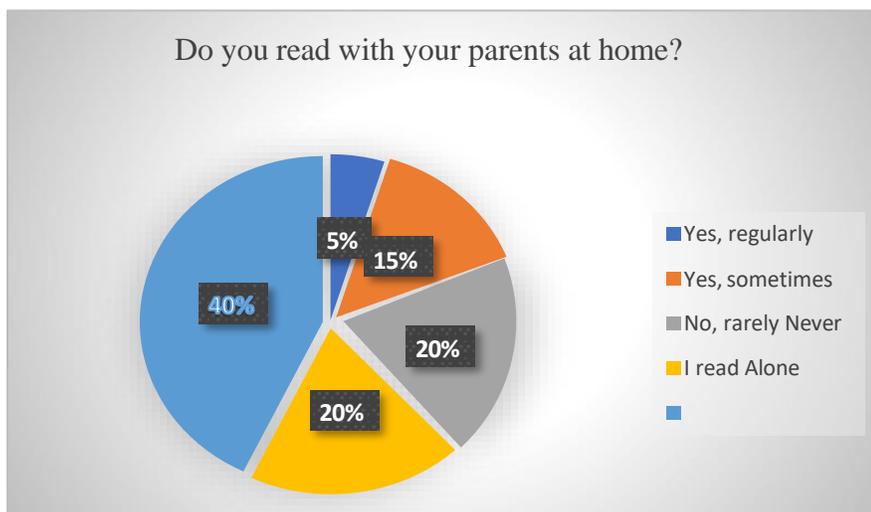
who answered "sometimes" highlight areas where improvements can be made. For those who answered "no," it may be important to investigate why they do not seek help or why they do not receive it when needed. According to the analysis, most of the student answered, there teachers don't help on any reading difficulties.

Q-3: How easy or difficult is it for you to understand the meaning of new words while reading?



The majority of students (50%) finding it difficult and 25% finding it very difficult to understand new words suggests a significant challenge with vocabulary comprehension. The 15% who are neutral might indicate a mixed experience or varying levels of difficulty depending on the text or the specific words encountered. The 10% who find it easy and 0% who find it very easy suggest that there are some students who do have a relatively easier time grasping new vocabulary, which could be attributed to stronger language skills or extensive reading habits. According to the analysis, most of the student' answered they do not understand meaning oof new word while they reading.

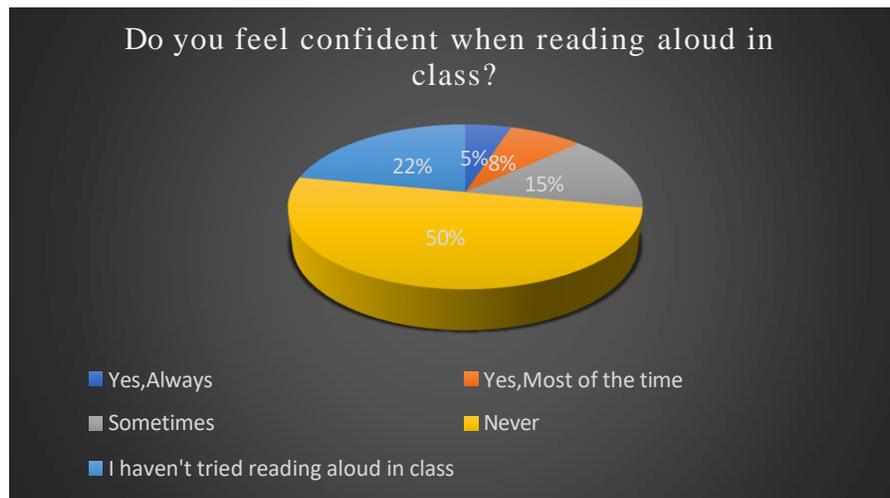
Q-4: Do you read with your parents at home?





The largest group, comprising 40%, reads alone. This suggests that a significant portion of students don't engage with parental involvement. The 15% who read with their parents sometimes indicate that there is some level of parental engagement in reading activities at home, albeit not consistently. The 20% who answered "no" and the 20% who never read with their parents suggest that a significant portion of students do not engage in reading activities with their parents at all. The smallest group, 5%, who read with their parents regularly highlights a positive practice where parental involvement in reading is consistent.

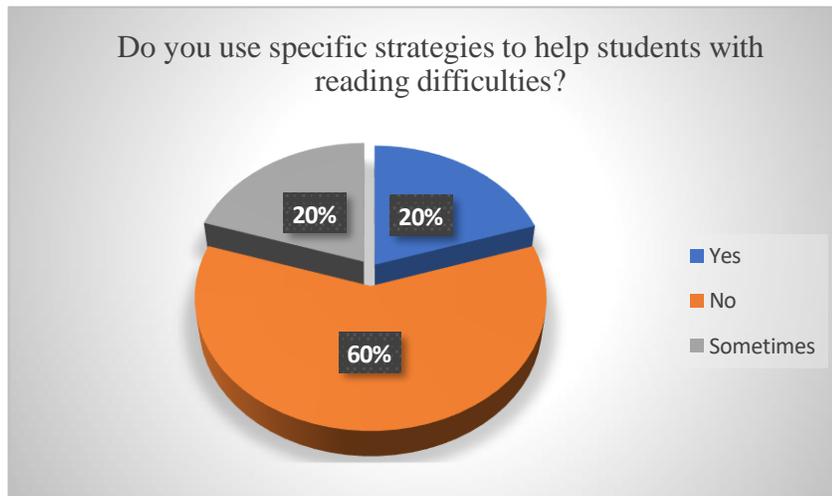
Q-5: Do you feel confident when reading aloud in class?



The 5% who answered "yes, always" and the 8% who answered "yes, most of the time" indicate that a small but notable percentage of students feel consistently confident when reading aloud in class. The 15% who answered "sometimes" indicate variability in confidence, suggesting that some students may feel more confident depending on the context or the specific reading material. The 50% who answered "never" suggest that a significant portion of students do not feel confident when reading aloud in class. The 22% who haven't tried reading aloud in class may indicate a lack of opportunity or participation in such activities. According to the analysis, we found most of the student have lack of confidence.

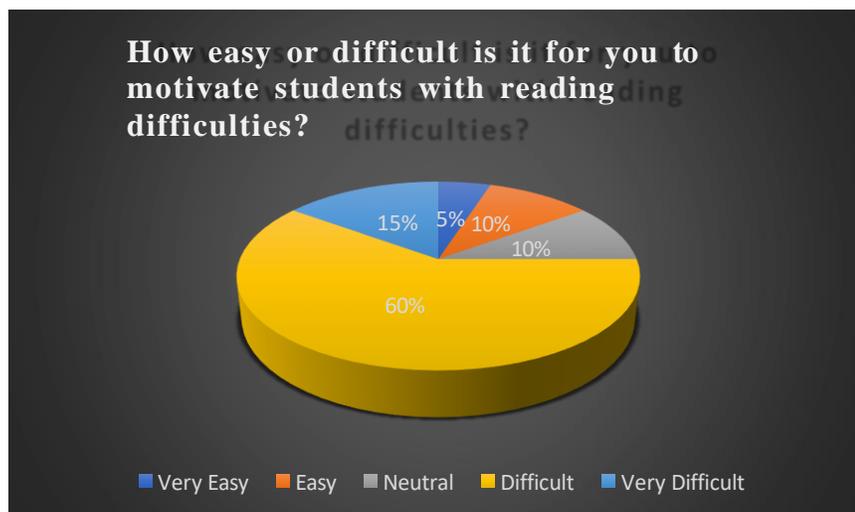
Findings from teachers:

Q-1: Do you use specific strategies to help student with Reading difficulties?



The majority, 60%, who answered "no" suggests that a significant number of teachers do not employ specific strategies to assist students with reading difficulties. The 20% who answered "yes" indicate that a portion of teachers consistently apply specific strategies to support students with reading difficulties. The 20% who answered "sometimes" suggest variability in the application of strategies. According to the analysis, we see that most of the teachers do not use any specific strategies for improve reading skill of student.

Q-2: How easy or difficult is it for you to motivate students with reading difficulties?

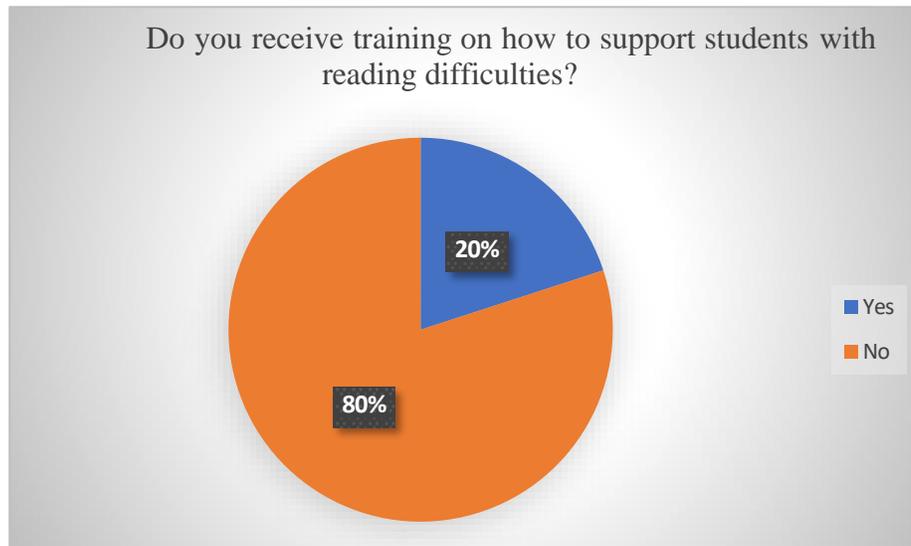


The majority of teachers (60%) find it difficult and 15% find it very difficult to motivate students with reading difficulties. This suggests that engaging these students in reading activities poses substantial challenges, potentially due to factors such as lack of interest, frustration with reading difficulties, or competing priorities. The 10% who find it easy and 5% who find it very easy indicate that some educators have found effective strategies or approaches to motivate students



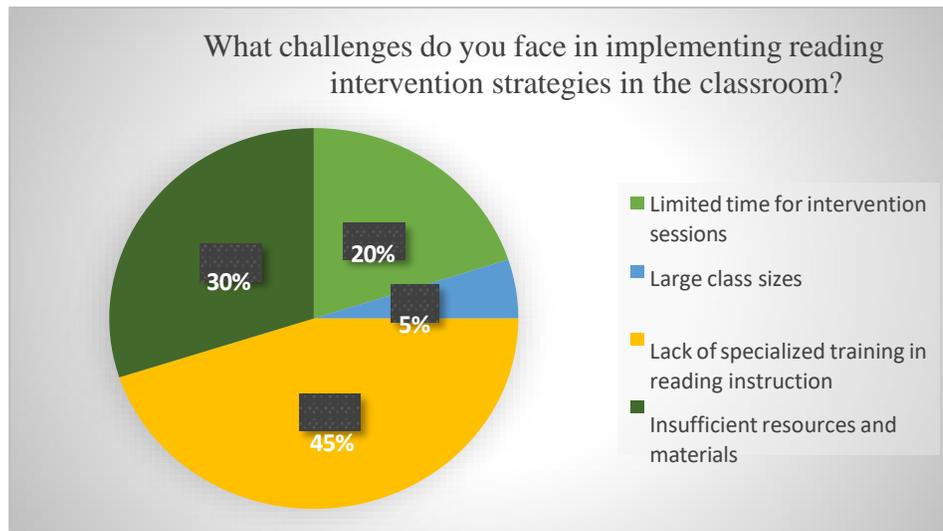
with reading difficulties. The 10% who are neutral suggest a mixed experience or variability in how teachers perceive their ability to motivate students with reading difficulties.

Q-3: Do you receive training on how to support students with reading difficulties?



The majority of teachers, 80%, do not receive specific training on how to support students with reading difficulties. This suggests a potential gap in professional development opportunities related to literacy instruction and interventions for struggling readers. The 20% who do receive training indicate that some educators have access to resources and professional development opportunities that equip them with strategies and skills to effectively support students with reading difficulties.

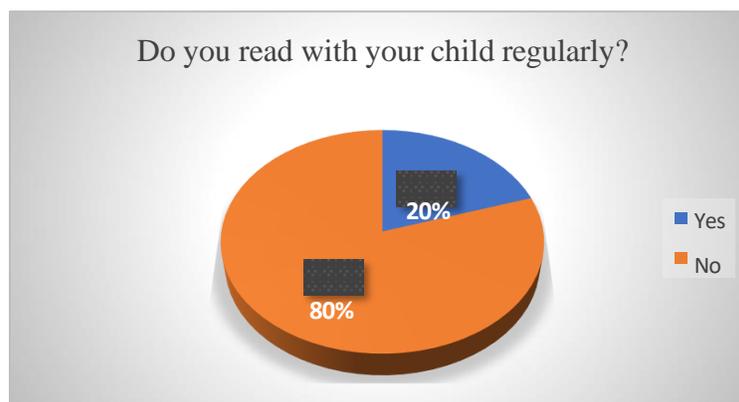
Q-4: What challenges do you face in implementing reading intervention strategies in the classroom?



In this research, the pie graphs represent that, teachers face challenges limited time intervention session is 20%. educators may struggle to find adequate time within their schedules to provide focused intervention sessions for students with reading difficulties. Teacher’s face challenges due to a lack of specialized training in reading instruction. This suggests that many teachers may not have received sufficient professional development or ongoing support in evidence-based reading strategies and interventions. 30% Teachers challenge highlights the importance of access to appropriate resources and materials necessary for implementing effective reading interventions. Without adequate resources, such as leveled reading materials, literacy tools, and assistive technologies, educators may struggle to provide differentiated instruction and support for students with varying reading abilities.

Findings from parents:

Q-1: Do you read with your child Regularly?

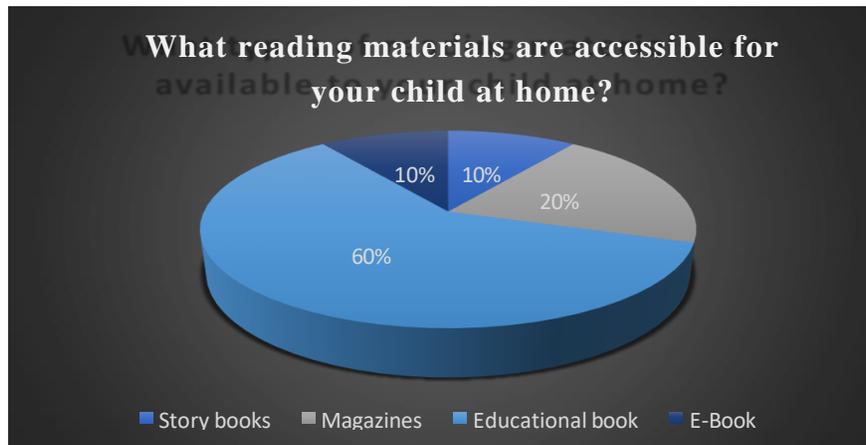


The majority of parents, 80%, do not read regularly with their children. This significant lack of regular parental engagement in reading activities could have various implications for children's



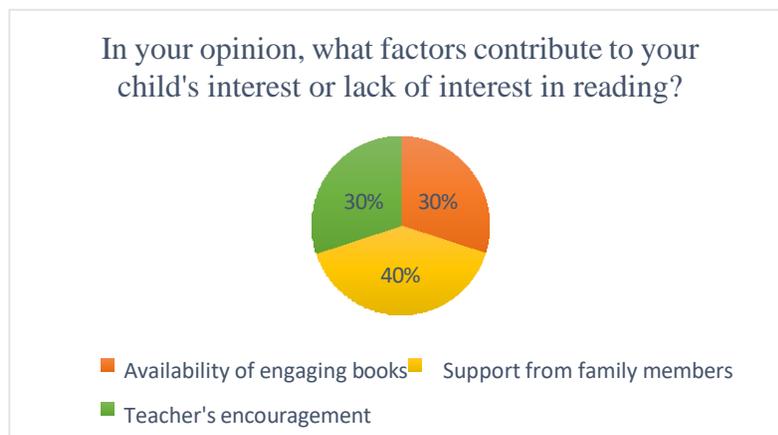
literacy development and overall reading motivation. The 20% of parents who do read regularly with their children represent a positive segment of the population that actively engages in supporting their child's reading habits. This engagement can have beneficial effects on children's reading skills, comprehension, and fostering a love for reading.

Q-2: What types of reading materials are available to your child at home?



The majority of parents (60%) provide educational books at home. The focus on educational resources can help with academic learning and skill improvement. Just 10% of parents give their children books. Storybooks are essential for developing from a young age imagination, creativity, and a love of reading. Children may have fewer opportunities to interact with stories that pique their interest and encourage reading for pleasure if they have restricted access to storybooks. Magazines make up 20% of the reading materials available at home. Children may find a variety of themes and visually stimulating content in magazines, which might promote reading habits. E-books are available to 10% of children. E-books can be a versatile resource, offering interactive features and accessibility.

Q-3: In your opinion, what factors contribute to your child's interest or lack of interest in reading?



The pie graph represents that-the highest percentage (40%) suggests that a child's interest in



reading is greatly influenced by parental support. Family support can take the form of making a household that is conducive to reading, reading aloud, and having book discussions. 30% parents name the availability of interesting books as a major factor. A child's curiosity and desire to read can be piqued by having access to a wide selection of engaging and age-appropriate books. Another important component mentioned by 30% of parents is teacher encouragement. A child's attitude toward reading can be greatly influenced by their teacher if they actively support reading, make book recommendations, and foster a positive reading culture in the classroom.

Q-4: How do you communicate with your child's teacher about their reading progress and challenges?



The majority of parents (50%) say that their preferred way of getting in touch with teachers is over the phone. Direct, in-the-moment communications are made possible by phone calls, which provide thorough progress discussions and rapid resolution of any issues. A significant portion of parents (45%) rely on parent-teacher conferences. These meetings provide a dedicated time for in-depth discussions about a child's reading progress and challenges. Only 2% of parents use email communication. A small percentage (3%) use written notes in the student agenda.

Results & Discussion:

Here this Research, we observed that maximum student's at Noakhali Bangla Bazar govt. Primary school faces reading difficulties. For the purpose of educational development, it is essential to comprehend the effectiveness of interventions meant to improve reading abilities in students who struggle with reading. The goal of this action research is to determine which tactics are used at Noakhali Bangla Bazar Govt Primary School that work well. The influence of these interventions and its ramifications for educational practices are shown through the examination of the data that was gathered. This analysis result collect data from students, teachers and parents through the survey, open-ended question, interview and classroom observation.

In this research result, first of all student engagement with reading, A large percentage of kids (60%) do not read for pleasure outside of the classroom, underscoring the importance of promoting reading at home and in the classroom. 50% of students report having trouble understanding new words, which highlights the need for specialized vocabulary teaching and assistance. With 22%



never having tried and 50% never feeling secure while reading aloud, a lot of pupils lack the confidence to do so, indicating the need for encouraging environments where oral reading practice can take place. Also, most of the student do not understand the meaning of the word while they reading.

Secondly, the teachers support and teacher training for improve reading skill where, 80% of teachers lack the necessary training to educate students who struggle with reading, and 60% of teachers do not employ specialized tactics to assist these students. This emphasizes how important it is for professionals to have training and growth in literacy interventions.

When implementing reading interventions, teachers face obstacles such time constraints (20%), a lack of specialized training (45%), and a lack of resources (30%). These issues need to be addressed with better resource allocation and training.

Finally, parents involvement with their children for improve reading skill, It is evident that there is a need to empower and encourage parents to participate in reading activities with their children, as just 20% of parents read to their children on a regular basis and 80% do not. There is a need to diversify reading materials to include more interesting and recreational options, as the majority of books (60%), magazines (20%), and storybooks (10%) that are available at home are instructional in nature.

Parents emphasize the significance of family engagement and access to interesting reading materials by identifying the availability of engaging books (30%) and support from family members (40%) as important elements in influencing their child's interest in reading.

Parent-teacher conferences and phone conversations account for 50% of the communication between teachers and parents. (45%), showing the necessity of preserving and advancing these useful channels while looking into ways to strengthen written and digital communication. I believe, student can improve their reading skill very soon. Students, teachers and parents should take proper step to improve the reading skill with reading difficulties.

Conclusion:

The research conducted at Noakhali Bangla Bazar primary School, which aimed to help kids who struggled with reading. Though over the time students were facing challenges in reading their improvement had shown as a result of the implementation of targeted intervention such as phonics-based education, customized reading sessions, and the use of technology. Individualized education tactics to each student's unique needs required frequent assessments and feedback sessions. Teachers, parents, peers and community should work together to ensure a welcoming classroom environment that enhance students motivation and active participation. This study focuses the value of treating reading difficulties holistically and shows how comparable strategy could be used to improve literacy outcomes in different educational contexts. The findings explore that kids with reading difficulties can make significant progress toward academic success and lifelong learning with consistent support and adaptive teaching strategies.

Recommendations:

Improving reading abilities in students who struggle usually requires a diversified strategy. Here



are some recommendations for teachers, students and parents for improving reading skill with reading difficulties.

Individualized Reading Plans: Motivate students through active participations to create personalized reading goals and plans based on their specific needs and interests.

Interactive Reading Activities: Involve students in hands-on, interactive reading exercises like group discussions, read-aloud, and storytelling.

Improving Resources and Teacher Training: Offer extensive professional development courses with an emphasis on literacy teaching and helping students who struggle with reading. Make sure everyone has access to plenty and a variety of reading materials, including books that are entertaining and instructive.

Creating a Reading Environment That Is Supportive: To increase confidence and fluency, provide students with regular opportunity to practice reading aloud and alone in a supportive school environment. Use techniques to make reading stress-free and pleasurable, like involving students' hobbies and interactive exercises.

Encouragement of Parental Involvement: Encourage parents to read to their kids on a regular basis by offering them tools, advice, and support. Increase the variety of reading materials you have at home by adding extra storybooks and leisure reading choices.

Parent-Teacher Communication: Stay in constant contact with parents to talk about their children's development, to exchange reading strategies, and to give them resources for at-home help.

Home Reading Programs: Encourage daily reading routines at home and provide parents with guidance on how to support their child's reading development.

Workshops on Literacy: Provide parents with workshops or instructional sessions on how to assist their children's literacy development and comprehension at home.

Access to Resources: Give parents the means to enhance their child's education by giving them access to books, libraries, and internet resources.

Reading Together: Spend time reading with your child, showing interest and enthusiasm for the stories, and discussing them afterward.

Positive Classroom Environment: Teacher Establish a culture in the classroom that encourages effort and growth while lowering students' anxiety about making mistakes.

Reading Together: parents should spend time reading with your child, showing interest and enthusiasm for the stories, and discussing them afterward.

Conflict of Interest:

The authors declare that there is no potential conflict of interest regarding the publication of this study. The study was conducted independently, without any financial support or personal relationships that could influence the outcomes.

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