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Readiness, practices, and competencies of teacher-tutors in implementing the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) program in secondary schools in Aklan, Philippines

John Lowell R. Perlas
Capiz State University, College of Education, Graduate School, Burias Campus, Philippines
Corresponding Author e-mail: *nhojlowell17@gmail.com*

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Abstract

Aim: This study evaluated teachers' readiness, practices, and competencies in implementing the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program in the Schools Division of Aklan, Philippines. It also examined differences across personal and school-related characteristics, determined relationships among the three implementation dimensions, and used the findings to develop Project LOWELL as a proposed teacher-support mechanism for educational recovery.

Methodology: A quantitative descriptive-correlational survey design was employed. Using Cochran's finite-population sample-size formula, 79 ARAL teacher-tutors were selected from a population of 99 across ten secondary schools. A researcher-made questionnaire was reviewed by three expert validators - a Doctor of Education in English, the Division ARAL Focal Person, and an ARAL Coordinator - and was then pilot-tested with 30 teachers. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .903 for readiness, .927 for practices, and .923 for competencies. Descriptive statistics and rank-based nonparametric analyses were applied.

Results: Teachers reported high levels of readiness (M = 4.37, SD = 0.43), practices (M = 4.42, SD = 0.41), and competencies (M = 4.43, SD = 0.38). Readiness differed significantly by sex ($p = .037$) and school category ($p = .016$), while practices and competencies did not significantly differ across the examined characteristics. Significant positive relationships were found between readiness and practices (rho = .792, $p < .001$), practices and competencies (rho = .847, $p < .001$), and readiness and competencies (rho = .653, $p < .001$).

Conclusion: Teachers reported high readiness, practices, and competencies, with significant positive associations among the three self-reported implementation dimensions. Lower ratings in learning-resource utilization, stakeholder collaboration, instructional adaptability, and content-pedagogy mastery identified priorities for professional development and school support. Project LOWELL translates these findings into a proposed data-informed, differentiated, and job-embedded teacher-support model; its effectiveness requires future implementation and evaluation.

Keywords: *Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning Program, teacher readiness, instructional practices, teacher competencies, educational recovery, professional development, Project LOWELL*

INTRODUCTION

Educational systems continue to address learning deficits that persisted after the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) disruption. A systematic review and meta-analysis of 42 studies across 15 countries found a persistent overall learning deficit, with larger losses among learners from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and variation across subjects and national contexts (Betthäuser et al., 2023). This international pattern shifted educational recovery away from simply restoring instructional time toward identifying learning needs, prioritizing foundational competencies, and matching instruction to learners' actual levels.

Cross-system evidence further shows that recovery depends on the quality of implementation. A review of recovery efforts across more than 60 education systems documented the use of regular assessment, curriculum

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prioritization, targeted instruction, structured pedagogy, supplemental remediation, and teacher training, while also showing uneven implementation and management capacity across countries (Sánchez et al., 2023). At the classroom level, effective differentiation requires deliberate teacher preparation and development (Langelaan et al., 2024), and job-embedded professional learning with ongoing coaching can support sustained implementation of evidence-based practices (Balta et al., 2023; Saunders et al., 2024). These findings position teacher readiness, enacted instructional practices, professional competency, assessment use, and leadership support as interrelated concerns in educational recovery across diverse systems.

In the Philippines, Republic Act No. 12028 established the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program as a national intervention to support learners who require additional help in reading, mathematics, science, and other foundational competencies (Republic Act No. 12028, 2024). The policy places learning recovery within the Department of Education (DepEd) system and reinforces the national commitment to inclusive and quality education under Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4). Philippine studies nevertheless document continuing concerns involving learner engagement, instructional adjustment, resource access, and teacher preparation in post-pandemic recovery settings (Balbin et al., 2024; Bantugan et al., 2025; Esteban et al., 2024).

The quality of ARAL implementation depended substantially on the teachers who diagnosed learning gaps, delivered intervention lessons, monitored progress, adapted materials, motivated learners, and coordinated with families and school leaders. Readiness referred to the extent to which teachers were pedagogically prepared, supported by usable learning resources, equipped with classroom-management and instructional strategies, and provided with relevant professional development. Practices referred to the observable instructional, assessment, engagement, and collaboration activities used during implementation. Competencies referred to the knowledge, adaptability, content and pedagogical mastery, and reflective commitment required to sustain effective remediation (Baniqued & Bautista, 2024; Mpuangnan, 2024; Villamor & Arante, 2022).

In the participating secondary schools in Aklan, ARAL teacher-tutors directly implemented intervention activities involving learner diagnosis, targeted instruction, assessment, and progress monitoring, raising practical questions about their capacity to interpret program guides, use instructional resources, manage intervention classes, differentiate learning tasks, assess progress, and collaborate with stakeholders. These concerns were educationally significant because inconsistency in these areas can weaken the connection between recovery goals and the instruction experienced by learners (Alonzo et al., 2021; Langelaan et al., 2024).

Previous studies addressed important but often separate parts of the implementation problem. Readiness studies examined preparedness, support, and challenges associated with new instructional approaches (Baniqued & Bautista, 2024; Gueco et al., 2025); competency studies focused on content, pedagogy, and learning needs (Manigbas et al., 2024; Villamor & Arante, 2022); professional-development research emphasized job-embedded learning and coaching (Balta et al., 2023; Saunders et al., 2024); and Philippine recovery studies documented learner engagement, instructional adjustment, and recovery conditions (Balbin et al., 2024; Bantugan et al., 2025; Esteban et al., 2024). Taken together, these strands did not explain how readiness, enacted practices, and competencies operated together among ARAL teacher-tutors, whether starting conditions differed across teacher and school groups, or which measured gaps should guide a locally responsive support mechanism. No identified study in the reviewed literature integrated these three dimensions within ARAL implementation in Aklan and translated the findings into a structured professional-support model.

The present study addressed this gap by examining the levels, group differences, and relationships among teachers' readiness, practices, and competencies in selected Aklan secondary schools. Its scholarly contribution lies in integrating implementation readiness, enacted pedagogical practice, and professional competency within one teacher-level analytical model and providing empirical evidence on their associations in a newly institutionalized learning-recovery program. Its practical contribution is Project LOWELL—Learning Opportunities for Workforce Enhancement and Lifelong Learning—a proposed data-informed framework for readiness mapping, resource support, coaching, peer learning, stakeholder collaboration, and sustainability review. Unlike conventional one-time training, the model links empirical diagnosis with differentiated, job-embedded, and cyclical support. The study therefore contributes to educational scholarship on program implementation while offering school leaders and program managers a structured basis for professional support during academic recovery.

Review of Related Literature and Studies

Educational Recovery and Targeted Instruction

International literature shows broad convergence on assessment-informed, targeted recovery. Betthäuser et al. (2023) found that learning deficits persisted across diverse national settings but varied by socioeconomic

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background, subject, and country context, indicating that uniform remediation is unlikely to address unequal needs. Similarly, Sánchez et al. (2023) documented recovery strategies across more than 60 education systems that combined assessment, prioritization of foundational learning, targeted instruction, structured pedagogy, supplemental remediation, and teacher capacity building. Philippine studies report related concerns around engagement, motivation, instructional adjustment, and resource access (Balbin et al., 2024; Bantugan et al., 2025; Esteban et al., 2024). Across these contexts, the common implication is that recovery requires both well-designed interventions and sufficient teacher capacity to interpret evidence and adapt instruction.

Reading and remediation research also emphasizes explicit instruction, appropriate pacing, scaffolding, feedback, and strategic use of available resources. Differentiation is most effective when teachers can vary content, task complexity, pacing, and support in response to learner evidence (Langelaan et al., 2024), while assessment reform literature stresses the use of learner data for instructional decision-making rather than as a separate administrative activity (Alonzo et al., 2021). Recent Philippine evidence also demonstrates the potential of structured, technology-supported learning modules to facilitate instruction and learning, as shown by the use of a JAMOVI-based module in teaching Statistics among Senior High School students (Petallo & Robles, 2026). Evidence further illustrates the value of targeted instructional interventions, with Salvatera et al. (2026) reporting the effectiveness of Vocab Voyage in developing students' vocabulary mastery and writing skills. This supports the broader principle that learning-recovery efforts may benefit from focused, appropriately designed instructional resources that address specific learner needs. Esteban et al. (2024) likewise argued for curriculum and resource adaptation, teacher training, community engagement, and empirical evaluation in reading improvement. In ARAL implementation, these principles are reflected in diagnosing gaps, selecting materials, providing targeted activities, and adjusting instruction from progress evidence.

Teacher Readiness for Program Implementation

Teacher readiness is shaped by individual capability and institutional conditions. Recent studies show that preparedness and confidence are influenced by access to training, clear guidance, mentoring, time, resources, and opportunities to practice new approaches (Baniqued & Bautista, 2024; Mpuangnan, 2024). Scherer et al. (2023) similarly showed that self-reported readiness can vary with experience and contextual conditions. Readiness therefore should not be interpreted solely as a personal trait; it also reflects whether school systems provide the conditions needed to translate preparation into practice.

Research on the implementation of thematic teaching further demonstrated that teachers could report high readiness while still experiencing difficulties in cross-subject integration, collaborative planning, and resource alignment (Gueco et al., 2025). This distinction was relevant to ARAL because initial orientation did not automatically guarantee consistent classroom implementation. Readiness assessment had to identify both teacher-level needs and contextual barriers before support activities were planned.

Instructional Practices in Learning Recovery

Instructional practices represented the enacted component of program implementation. Differentiated instruction required teachers to prepare multiple pathways, adjust content and pacing, and respond to evidence of learner progress. Langelaan et al. (2024) emphasized that successful differentiation depended on deliberate teacher preparation and development. Assessment literacy was equally essential because teachers had to interpret learner data, provide feedback, and revise instruction rather than treat assessment as a separate administrative task (Alonzo et al., 2021).

Effective recovery practices also involved learner engagement and stakeholder collaboration. Teachers needed to motivate learners who had experienced repeated difficulty and establish communication with parents, learning facilitators, school heads, and community partners. Motshusi et al. (2024) showed that limited parental participation could constrain educational support, while Esteban et al. (2024) highlighted the value of community engagement in improving access and instructional continuity. Thus, collaboration was not peripheral to remediation; it supported attendance, practice, resource mobilization, and learner follow-through.

Teacher Competencies and Professional Learning

Teacher competency included knowledge of learning-recovery principles, mastery of content and pedagogy, assessment skill, instructional adaptability, and commitment to improvement. Manigbas et al. (2024) found that teachers generally perceived themselves as competent in content and pedagogy but still required development in the use of research-based knowledge. Villamor and Arante (2022) likewise identified specific learning needs among teachers addressing literacy and numeracy gaps. Ochoa (2026) further showed that teachers assigned to teach beyond their areas of specialization experienced the need to adapt their instructional approaches to meet demands that

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extended beyond their formal specialization. This is relevant to ARAL implementation because teacher-tutors may need to respond flexibly to learners with varied and potentially cross-disciplinary learning gaps. These findings suggested that broad competency ratings should be examined at the dimension level to reveal priority areas for professional learning.

Professional competence develops most consistently when teachers can apply new knowledge, receive feedback, collaborate with peers, and reflect on results. AbdulRab (2023) conceptualized teacher professional development as a continuing process, while Balta et al. (2023) found positive effects of job-embedded professional development on teacher and student outcomes. Saunders et al. (2024) likewise emphasized ongoing coaching to strengthen implementation of evidence-based practices. These findings converge on the view that one-time training is unlikely to sustain ARAL implementation without follow-through, observation, mentoring, and organizational support.

Synthesis and Research Gap

Across international and Philippine literature, findings converge on the importance of teacher preparation, assessment-informed differentiation, adequate resources, learner engagement, stakeholder collaboration, and continuing professional learning. The literature differs, however, in level of analysis: international recovery research commonly examines system-wide learning loss and policy responses (Betthäuser et al., 2023; Sánchez et al., 2023), whereas many Philippine studies focus on localized readiness, engagement, instructional practice, or competency. Methodologically, much of the relevant evidence is cross-sectional, self-reported, or focused on a single implementation dimension, which limits conclusions about how preparation, practice, and competency operate together. ARAL represents a distinct and newly institutionalized national recovery context in which teacher-tutors must simultaneously diagnose gaps, deliver targeted instruction, assess progress, adapt materials, and coordinate support. Limited evidence has examined the combined pattern of readiness, practices, and competencies among ARAL teacher-tutors in Aklan or the group differences and associations that could inform integrated support. The present study addresses this contextual and analytical gap and uses the measured implementation needs as the basis for the proposed Project LOWELL framework.

Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory and teacher-efficacy perspective, Hall's Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM), and Competency-Based Education Theory. The three perspectives address complementary levels of implementation: perceived capability and personal agency, the developmental process of adopting and refining a program, and the demonstrable knowledge and skills required for sustained professional performance.

Taken together, the framework proposes a developmental logic in which personal capability influences engagement with implementation, implementation experiences create opportunities for learning and adaptation, and professional competency is demonstrated through increasingly informed practice. This integration provides the theoretical basis for examining readiness, practices, and competencies as distinct but related dimensions rather than as interchangeable constructs.

Bandura (1997) posited that perceived capability influences effort, persistence, strategy use, and responses to difficult tasks. Applied to ARAL, teacher self-efficacy informs perceived capability; perceived capability influences effort, persistence, and strategic adaptation; and these processes are expressed in implementation behaviors such as classroom management, differentiation, assessment use, and commitment to improvement. Social Cognitive Theory therefore primarily explains the readiness-related personal mechanism through which preparation may be translated into enacted practice, without implying a causal relationship in the present correlational study.

Hall's (1979) Concerns-Based Adoption Model treats implementation as a developmental process in which educators' concerns and use of an innovation may shift from awareness and personal concerns toward management, consequence, collaboration, and refinement. The model supports the study's attention to professional development, resource availability, stakeholder collaboration, and school support because different implementation stages can require different forms of assistance. Its contemporary relevance is supported by recent applications to educational reform: Magallanes et al. (2022) used CBAM to examine teachers' concerns about K-12 reform in the Philippines, while Ohlemann et al. (2023) applied the model to large-scale teacher-education reform in Germany.

Competency-Based Education Theory emphasizes the demonstration of observable knowledge and skills rather than participation in training alone (Açıkgöz & Babadoğan, 2021). In this study, competency refers to the professional capability teachers can demonstrate through knowledge of learning-recovery principles, instructional adaptability and innovation, mastery of content and pedagogy, and commitment to continuous improvement. It is conceptually distinct from readiness, which concerns preparedness and enabling conditions, and from practice, which concerns the

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instructional and collaborative actions teachers report enacting. The theory therefore supports measuring competency as a separate construct while recognizing its empirical association with readiness and practice.

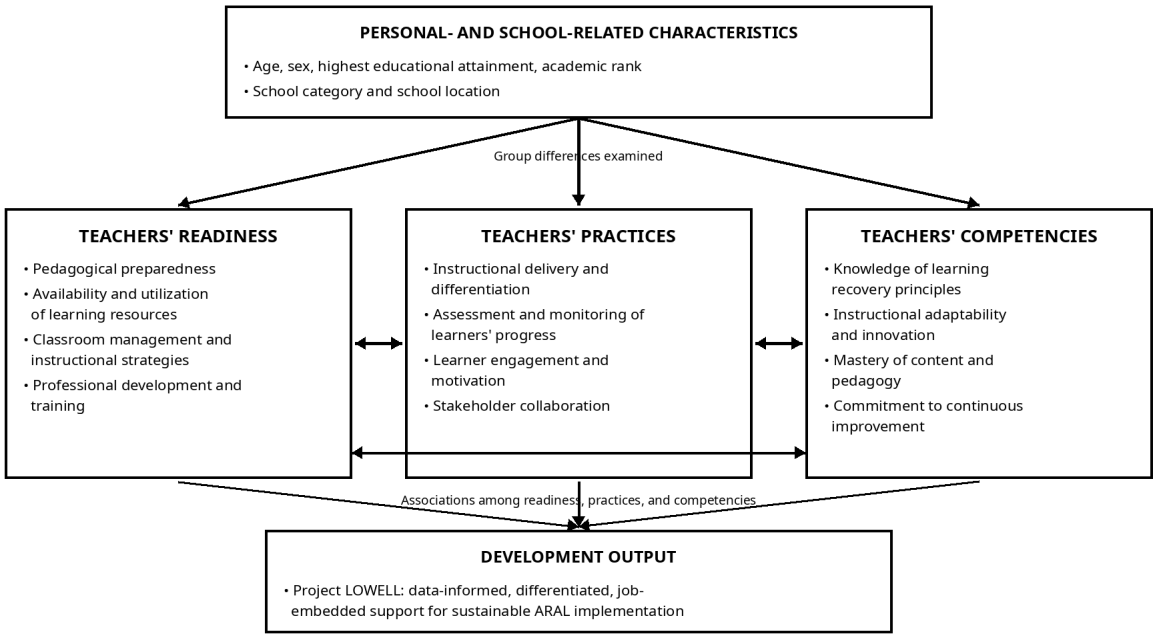
Collectively, the framework can be summarized as a progression from perceived capability and enabling conditions (Social Cognitive Theory), through adoption and implementation processes (CBAM), to demonstrable professional capability (Competency-Based Education). These perspectives informed the questionnaire dimensions, the analysis of relationships among readiness, practices, and competencies, and the interpretation of Project LOWELL as a proposed developmental support mechanism rather than a one-time training activity.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework treated teachers' readiness, practices, and competencies as distinct but related implementation dimensions. Personal characteristics (age, sex, highest educational attainment, and academic rank) and school characteristics (school category and location) were examined as grouping variables that could be associated with differences in the three dimensions. The study then tested the associations among readiness, practices, and competencies without assuming causal direction because the design was correlational.

Figure 1

Conceptual framework of the study



The framework also identified Project LOWELL as the proposed development output. Its components were derived from the lower-rated dimensions, statistically significant readiness differences, and observed associations among the implementation variables. In this way, the framework connects empirical diagnosis with an actionable plan for teacher development, instructional leadership, and sustainability monitoring. Project LOWELL is treated as a proposed support model; its effectiveness was not tested by the present descriptive-correlational study.

Statement of the Problem

The implementation of the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning Program required teachers to deliver targeted remediation, monitor learner progress, adapt instruction, use appropriate resources, and collaborate with stakeholders. However, the effectiveness of these responsibilities could be constrained when teachers entered implementation with unequal preparation, limited materials, inconsistent professional support, or gaps in content and pedagogical competence.

In the Schools Division of Aklan, there was insufficient empirical evidence describing whether ARAL teacher-tutors were equally ready to implement the program, whether their classroom practices reflected key recovery

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principles, and whether they possessed the competencies needed to sustain targeted intervention. The absence of such evidence limited the ability of school and division leaders to provide differentiated professional support.

The study therefore addressed the absence of an integrated assessment of readiness, practices, and competencies among secondary-school ARAL implementers. The academic problem was that readiness, enacted practice, and competency had generally been examined as separate implementation dimensions; the practical problem was the lack of a locally grounded basis for organizing teacher support. By examining levels, group differences, and associations among the three dimensions, the study sought to generate evidence for a proposed teacher-support mechanism without claiming causal effects or program effectiveness.

General Objective

To evaluate teachers' readiness, practices, and competencies in implementing the ARAL Program and use the findings as the basis for a proposed data-informed teacher-support mechanism for educational recovery.

Specific Objectives

1. To determine the levels of teachers' readiness, practices, and competencies in implementing the ARAL Program.
2. To examine whether teachers' readiness, practices, and competencies significantly differ when respondents are grouped according to age, sex, highest educational attainment, academic rank, school category, and school location.
3. To determine the significant relationships among teachers' readiness, practices, and competencies.
4. To develop a proposed data-informed teacher-support model based on the identified implementation strengths, gaps, and contextual differences.

Research Questions

1. What are the levels of teachers' readiness, practices, and competencies in implementing the ARAL Program?
2. Are there significant differences in teachers' readiness, practices, and competencies when respondents are grouped according to age, sex, highest educational attainment, academic rank, school category, and school location?
3. Are there significant relationships among teachers' readiness, practices, and competencies?
4. What proposed data-informed teacher-support model can be developed from the findings to strengthen ARAL implementation and educational recovery?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance:

H0 1: There are no significant differences in teachers' readiness, practices, and competencies when respondents are grouped according to age, sex, highest educational attainment, academic rank, school category, and school location.

H0 2: There are no significant relationships among teachers' readiness, practices, and competencies.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational survey design. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize respondents' characteristics and the levels of readiness, practices, and competencies; nonparametric group-comparison tests were used to examine differences across personal and school-related characteristics; and Spearman's rho was used to determine the strength and direction of associations among the three implementation dimensions. The design was appropriate because it described existing conditions and relationships without manipulating the school environment, assigning participants to treatment conditions, or assuming causal direction (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Population and Sampling

The study was conducted during the third quarter of School Year 2025-2026 in ten selected secondary schools in the Schools Division of Aklan, Philippines, with five schools representing the First District and five representing the Second District. The population consisted of 99 ARAL teacher-tutors. Sample size was determined using the finite-population form of Cochran's formula, n = n0/[1 + (n0 - 1)/N], where n0 = t^2PQ/d^2. With t = 1.96, P = .50, Q = .50, d = .05, and N = 99, the computed sample was approximately 79. All 17 municipalities in Aklan were included in the site-selection frame; five municipalities from each district and their main secondary schools were selected by drawing lots, producing ten study schools. Eligible ARAL teacher-tutors in the selected schools were then chosen

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through simple random sampling by drawing lots. Teachers who participated in the pilot test were excluded from the main sample.

Research Instrument

The study used a researcher-made questionnaire organized into five parts. Part I gathered personal characteristics, including age, sex, highest educational attainment, and academic rank. Part II gathered school-related characteristics, including school category and school location. Part III contained 20 items measuring readiness across pedagogical preparedness, availability and utilization of learning resources, classroom management and instructional strategies, and professional development and training. Part IV contained 20 items measuring practices across instructional delivery and differentiation, assessment and monitoring of learner progress, learner engagement and motivation, and stakeholder collaboration. Part V contained 20 items measuring competencies across knowledge of learning-recovery principles, instructional adaptability and innovation, mastery of content and pedagogy, and commitment to continuous improvement. The item domains were aligned with the study's theoretical and conceptual framework, research objectives, and the ARAL implementation context so that the questionnaire operationalized the readiness, practices, and competencies examined in the study.

The questionnaire used distinct five-point response anchors. For the readiness and competencies items, responses were scored as 5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 2 = Disagree, and 1 = Strongly Disagree. For the practices items, responses were scored as 5 = Always, 4 = Often, 3 = Sometimes, 2 = Rarely, and 1 = Never. Composite means were interpreted using the following ranges: 4.50-5.00 = Very High, 3.50-4.49 = High, 2.50-3.49 = Moderate, 1.50-2.49 = Low, and 1.00-1.49 = Very Low, with construct-specific labels such as Very Highly Ready, Very Highly Practiced, and Very Highly Competent.

Content Validation

Before data collection, the researcher-made questionnaire was reviewed by three expert validators: a Doctor of Education in English, the Division ARAL Focal Person, and an ARAL Coordinator. The validators examined the instrument for content relevance, clarity and language, alignment with the study objectives and ARAL implementation, and appropriateness for the intended respondents. Their comments and recommendations were incorporated before pilot testing and final administration. The validators were selected to provide complementary expertise in academic language, ARAL program implementation, and school-level coordination.

Reliability Testing

Pilot testing involved 30 teachers who were not part of the actual study. Cronbach's alpha was used to estimate internal consistency. The pilot case-processing summary reported 30 valid responses and no excluded cases. The readiness, practices, and competencies scales produced Cronbach's alpha coefficients of .903, .927, and .923, respectively, indicating very high internal consistency for the three major scales used in the main data collection.

Data Collection Procedure

Before the survey was administered, the researcher obtained administrative authorization from the Schools Division Office of Aklan to conduct the study in the participating public secondary schools. The authorization, dated February 16, 2026, required coordination with the Public Schools District Supervisors and school principals, compliance with the applicable no-disruption-of-classes policy and the Data Privacy Act of 2012, and observance of high ethical standards in data gathering and management. District supervisors and principals or school heads assisted in facilitating administration in the selected schools. Teacher-tutors received a brief orientation on the study's objectives, background, and procedures and then gave informed consent before participating. The researcher personally administered and retrieved the questionnaires, then tallied and coded the responses for analysis. All 79 questionnaires were completely answered and were usable for statistical analysis; consequently, there were no missing responses requiring imputation, case deletion, or other missing-data treatment.

Data Analysis

Frequency and percentage described the respondents' personal and school-related characteristics, while mean and standard deviation summarized the levels of readiness, practices, and competencies. Mann-Whitney U was used for profile variables with two groups, and Kruskal-Wallis H was used for variables with three or more groups. These rank-based procedures compared the composite scale scores across the relevant profile categories. Spearman's rho determined the strength and direction of relationships among readiness, practices, and competencies. All inferential tests used a .05 level of significance, and the data were encoded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the

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Social Sciences (SPSS). The tests were used as rank-based procedures for independent-group comparisons without relying on the normality assumption of parametric group-comparison tests; neither the Likert-type response format nor unequal group sizes alone was treated as sufficient justification for their use.

Ethical Considerations

Separate institutional ethics-review clearance was not obtained for this study. Before data collection, the researcher obtained administrative authorization from the Schools Division Office of Aklan and coordinated with the concerned district supervisors and school heads. The authorization required compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 and the observance of high ethical standards in data gathering and management. The questionnaire cover letter informed respondents that information collected would be treated confidentially and used solely for academic purposes, and the respondent-name field was optional. Participants were oriented about the study, provided informed consent, and participated voluntarily without coercion or inducement. No individual participant is identified in the manuscript, and results are reported in aggregate. The study documentation states that research records and data were deleted after the research report was completed. During analysis, access to the raw survey records was restricted to the researcher.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and discusses the results of the study based on the research questions. Because the measures were self-reported, the findings represent teachers' perceptions of their readiness, practices, and competencies rather than direct observations of classroom behavior. Interpretations are therefore linked to the data, relevant theory, and empirical literature without treating associations as causal effects.

Table 1

Personal and school-related characteristics of respondents

Characteristic	Dominant category / statistic	f	%
Age	31-40 years old	37	46.84
Mean age	38.84 years (SD = 8.84)	-	-
Sex	Female	67	84.81
Highest educational attainment	With master's units	46	58.23
Academic rank	Teacher III	36	45.57
School category	Large	61	77.22
School location	Off-town	46	58.23

The respondents had a mean age of 38.84 years (SD = 8.84). The dominant categories were 31–40 years old (46.84%), female (84.81%), with master's units (58.23%), Teacher III (45.57%), assigned to large schools (77.22%), and assigned to off-town schools (58.23%). These profile indicators describe the composition of the sample but do not establish respondents' years of teaching experience or the schools' resource conditions. Because the profile categories were unevenly distributed, inferential findings were interpreted cautiously and were not treated as evidence of inherent differences in capability.

Table 2

Levels of teachers' readiness, practices, and competencies by dimension

Variable	Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Readiness	Pedagogical preparedness	4.41	0.44	High
Readiness	Availability and utilization of learning resources	4.26	0.55	High
Readiness	Classroom management and instructional strategies	4.44	0.49	High
Readiness	Professional development and training	4.35	0.53	High

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Variable	Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Readiness	**Overall**	**4.37**	**0.43**	**High**
Practices	Instructional delivery and differentiation strategies	4.39	0.52	High
Practices	Assessment and monitoring of learners' progress	4.44	0.46	High
Practices	Learner engagement and motivational techniques	4.61	0.42	Very High
Practices	Collaboration with stakeholders	4.25	0.50	High
Practices	**Overall**	**4.42**	**0.41**	**High**
Competencies	Knowledge of learning recovery principles	4.43	0.43	High
Competencies	Instructional adaptability and innovation	4.39	0.41	High
Competencies	Mastery of content and pedagogy	4.39	0.47	High
Competencies	Commitment to continuous improvement	4.50	0.46	Very High
Competencies	**Overall**	**4.43**	**0.38**	**High**

All three implementation variables were rated high. Readiness obtained an overall mean of 4.37 (SD = 0.43), practices obtained 4.42 (SD = 0.41), and competencies obtained 4.43 (SD = 0.38). The strongest readiness dimension was classroom management and instructional strategies (M = 4.44), while availability and utilization of learning resources received the lowest readiness mean (M = 4.26). The learner engagement and motivational techniques dimension was the only practice dimension rated very high (M = 4.61), whereas stakeholder collaboration received the lowest practice mean (M = 4.25). Commitment to continuous improvement was rated very high (M = 4.50), while instructional adaptability and innovation and mastery of content and pedagogy shared the lowest competency mean (M = 4.39).

The high self-reported ratings indicated that respondents perceived themselves as having a strong foundation of preparation, active classroom practice, and professional commitment. The comparatively lower rating for learning-resource utilization, however, pointed to an implementation area in which teacher readiness may depend on both access to usable materials and the capacity to adapt them to learners' needs. This consideration is consistent with Esteves (2026), who examined the frequency of learning-material use in relation to syntactic competence among Grade 10 students, highlighting the relevance of learning-material utilization to the development of specific student competencies. Recent evidence on simulation tools and electronic trainers likewise illustrates how appropriately selected learning technologies can bridge learning environments and support the development of applied skills (Balancio & Accad, 2026). International recovery evidence similarly emphasizes alignment among curriculum priorities, instructional materials, assessment, and teacher support (Sánchez et al., 2023). For school leaders, the finding suggests that resource provision may be paired with demonstration, coaching, and review of how ARAL materials are adapted and used in actual intervention lessons.

The very high learner-engagement rating suggested that teachers prioritized motivation and participation during intervention classes. Nevertheless, stakeholder collaboration remained the weakest practice dimension, indicating that classroom effort may benefit from stronger coordination with families, learning facilitators, school leaders, and community partners. Motshusi et al. (2024) similarly identified limited parental involvement as a constraint on learner support. The lower ratings for adaptability and content-pedagogy mastery also suggest that continuing professional learning may prioritize differentiated remediation, diagnostic assessment, subject-specific teaching, and guided adaptation of instructional resources (Langelaan et al., 2024; Manigbas et al., 2024).

From a curriculum and instructional-design perspective, the pattern of lower scores in resource utilization, adaptability, and content-pedagogy mastery suggests that recovery support may address not only what materials are available but how teachers select, pace, differentiate, and align them with learner-progress evidence. School heads and ARAL coordinators may therefore connect resource provision with demonstration lessons, collaborative planning, assessment review, and coaching. This approach links professional learning directly to the enacted recovery curriculum and to instructional decisions made for learners at different levels of need (Alonzo et al., 2021; Langelaan et al., 2024; Sánchez et al., 2023).

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Table 3

Tests of differences in readiness, practices, and competencies

Profile variable	Readiness test	p	Practices test	p	Competencies test	p
Age	H = 1.909	.592	H = 3.823	.281	H = 6.891	.075
Sex	U = 249.50	.037*	U = 336.50	.370	U = 371.00	.671
Educational attainment	H = 3.838	.428	H = 2.807	.591	H = 4.401	.354
Academic rank	H = 3.405	.333	H = 6.179	.103	H = 2.594	.459
School category	H = 8.325	.016*	H = 4.736	.094	H = 1.224	.542
School location	U = 700.00	.557	U = 744.00	.881	U = 717.00	.676

Note. H = Kruskal-Wallis H; U = Mann-Whitney U; *p < .05.

Readiness significantly differed according to sex (U = 249.50, p = .037) and school category (H = 8.325, p = .016). Age, educational attainment, academic rank, and school location did not produce significant readiness differences. Practices and competencies did not significantly differ across any of the examined profile variables. Because Table 3 reports the inferential test statistics and p values but does not present group-specific mean ranks or medians, the findings are interpreted as evidence that group differences existed without assigning a directional ordering to the categories.

These significant readiness differences indicate unequal reported starting conditions but should not be interpreted as inherent differences in teacher capability. Prior experience, access to training, role expectations, confidence, organizational support, resource access, peer support, and technical assistance are plausible contextual factors identified in related literature, but these factors were not directly measured in the present study (Alieto et al., 2024; Mpuangnan, 2024; Scherer et al., 2023).

Operationally, the findings support readiness mapping and differentiated assistance rather than uniform assumptions about individual teachers. Support decisions may be guided by local diagnostic evidence and verified needs, while future studies may report group-specific descriptive or rank statistics to clarify the pattern of significant differences.

Table 4

Relationships among teachers' readiness, practices, and competencies

Variable pair	Test	rho	p
Readiness and practices	Spearman rho	.792**	< .001
Practices and competencies	Spearman rho	.847**	< .001
Readiness and competencies	Spearman rho	.653**	< .001

Note. **p < .01.

All three variable pairs were positively and significantly related. The strongest association was between practices and competencies (rho = .847, p < .001), followed by readiness and practices (rho = .792, p < .001) and readiness and competencies (rho = .653, p < .001). Teachers who reported stronger preparation also tended to report stronger implementation practices, and teachers who reported more consistent practices tended to report stronger professional competencies.

The strong positive associations indicate that the three self-reported implementation dimensions were statistically related. Teachers reporting greater readiness also tended to report stronger practices, while those reporting more consistent practices tended to report stronger competencies. Literature on job-embedded professional learning and coaching offers a plausible explanation for why practice and competency may develop together through application, feedback, reflection, and improvement (Balta et al., 2023; Saunders et al., 2024), but these developmental mechanisms were not directly tested by the present study.

The associations did not establish causality because the design was correlational and relied on self-reported data. Nevertheless, the observed pattern suggests that professional support may benefit from considering readiness,

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practices, and competencies together rather than treating them as isolated concerns. An integrated response may connect readiness assessment with resource support, classroom coaching, peer collaboration, and competency monitoring, while future evaluation determines whether such support leads to measurable improvements in classroom practice and learner outcomes.

Proposed Project LOWELL

Project LOWELL—Learning Opportunities for Workforce Enhancement and Lifelong Learning—was developed as a proposed pedagogical and organizational support model. Its innovative feature is not the use of training alone but the direct alignment of professional support with empirical diagnosis: resource utilization and stakeholder collaboration received the lowest means, adaptability and content-pedagogy mastery required strengthening, readiness differed across selected groups, and the three implementation dimensions were strongly associated. The model is therefore data-informed, differentiated, job-embedded, and cyclical. Because Project LOWELL was developed from the study findings but was not implemented or evaluated in this research, its effectiveness should not be inferred from the present results.

Table 5

Components of Project LOWELL

Component	Primary purpose / activities	Suggested schedule
Localized Teacher Readiness Mapping	Administer a baseline readiness survey and resource inventory; disaggregate results by relevant teacher and school groups; prepare a school-level readiness map.	Beginning of the school year and before major program changes
Sustained Professional Support and Capacity Building	Provide focused training, mentoring, technical assistance, and demonstrations on ARAL resources, diagnostic assessment, differentiation, and content pedagogy.	Quarterly, based on readiness-map priorities
Workplace Learning Circles and Peer Mentoring	Conduct lesson study, peer observation, collaborative planning, and reflection using actual ARAL learner needs and progress evidence.	Monthly
Data-Informed Coaching and Instructional Feedback	Use classroom observation, post-conference feedback, and individual coaching plans to strengthen implementation practices and competencies.	Monthly or quarterly, according to need
Stakeholder Collaboration and Teacher Support Linkages	Establish regular parent consultation, learner-follow-up protocols, and coordination with school and community partners for attendance, resources, and practice support.	Quarterly and as needed
Leadership Support, Resource Mobilization, and Differentiated Assistance	Prioritize materials, technology, time, mentoring, and technical support for schools and teacher groups with verified readiness or resource gaps.	Reviewed every quarter
Learning Improvement and Sustainability Review	Review readiness, classroom-practice evidence, competency indicators, coaching results, stakeholder participation, and learner-progress data; revise support actions.	End of every quarter

The proposed project uses a cyclical implementation logic: diagnose readiness and resource conditions, provide differentiated support, observe classroom enactment, strengthen collaboration, and review evidence for the next improvement cycle. This structure is intended to link professional learning to teachers' actual instructional work and to the needs of ARAL learners. Recurring schedules and review points are designed to support sustainability, but pilot implementation and evaluation are necessary to determine feasibility, fidelity, and effects on teacher practice and learner progress.

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Conclusions

1. Teachers in the sampled secondary schools reported high readiness, practices, and competencies in implementing the ARAL Program. Their strongest areas were classroom management and instructional strategies, learner engagement and motivation, and commitment to continuous improvement. The comparatively lower areas—learning-resource utilization, stakeholder collaboration, instructional adaptability, and mastery of content and pedagogy—identified concrete priorities for professional development and school support.
2. Readiness differed by sex and school category, indicating that teachers did not necessarily report the same starting conditions. Practices and competencies were comparatively consistent across groups; shared program experiences may be one possible explanation, but this mechanism was not directly measured. The strong positive associations among readiness, practices, and competencies indicate that the three self-reported dimensions were statistically interrelated, although the correlational design does not establish causal direction or prove that change in one dimension produces change in another.
3. The study contributes to educational research by integrating preparation, enacted pedagogy, and professional competency within the context of a national learning-recovery program and by showing how their measured patterns can inform a professional-support framework. It contributes to practice through the proposed Project LOWELL model, which translates the results into data-informed, differentiated, job-embedded, and sustainability-oriented support actions. This integrated implementation lens may also inform research on other newly institutionalized recovery programs, although contextual validation is necessary. Because the evidence was self-reported and limited to 79 teachers from ten secondary schools in one division, the findings should be interpreted within this context and complemented by classroom observations, documentary evidence, and learner-outcome data in future evaluations.

Recommendations

1. The Schools Division may conduct an annual ARAL readiness assessment and resource inventory before implementation, disaggregate the findings by relevant teacher and school groups, and use the results to guide the allocation of materials, mentoring, and technical assistance.
2. School heads and ARAL coordinators may provide job-embedded professional development on diagnostic assessment, differentiated remediation, resource utilization, content pedagogy, and instructional adaptability through learning circles, peer observation, collaborative planning, and coaching scheduled according to verified needs.
3. Participating schools may establish structured stakeholder-collaboration protocols, including scheduled parent consultations, learner attendance and follow-up mechanisms, and defined roles for school and community partners.
4. Project LOWELL may be piloted at school and division levels with clear indicators for readiness, resource use, coaching completion, classroom-practice improvement, stakeholder participation, and learner progress. Quarterly sustainability reviews may be used to refine support actions before any broader adoption.
5. Future program evaluation may combine teacher self-reports with classroom observations, instructional artifacts, learner-assessment results, and qualitative feedback to determine whether changes in teacher capacity are accompanied by stronger classroom implementation and learner outcomes.
6. Future studies may include other school divisions, grade levels, and learning areas; compare elementary and secondary implementation; examine administrative support, teacher workload, resource adequacy, and parental involvement; and test whether ARAL practices and Project LOWELL support activities are associated with measurable changes in learner achievement.

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