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*“Sustainability through restoring Culture and Heritage:
Re- visiting Professor Senake Dias Bandaranayake.”*

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Need Analysis to identify the need for Module-Based Teaching: Intervention to Children with Reading Difficulties in Sri Lanka.

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Introduction

Reading, a cognitively intricate process rooted in the human brain, serves as a conduit for deriving meaning from written text (Grabe and Stoller, 2019). Reading is an acquired skill, a craft that necessitates both instruction and acquisition, a milestone often reached during primary school (Lachmann, 2018). However, it's imperative to acknowledge that certain children grapple with the art of reading. Timely identification and targeted intervention, grounded in empirical insights, are indispensable for nurturing the reading capabilities of children confronting these challenges. The objective of this need analysis is to discern the specific requirements essential for enhancing reading fluency among junior secondary students dealing with reading difficulties in Sri Lanka.

Literature review

Reading is a multifaceted cognitive process that holds a central place in our educational, professional, recreational, and social lives. Early identification and intervention play a pivotal role in the reading development of children grappling with these issues. Specifically, reading intervention programs provide a crucial foundation for the academic success of students, particularly those categorized as struggling readers (Auletto and Sableski, 2018). Educational interventions are instrumental in assisting dyslexic students in overcoming these difficulties, preventing the persistence of these challenges into adulthood (Franklin, 2018).

Efficient assessment techniques are vital to pinpoint existing gaps in learners' reading abilities, assess the costs involved in addressing these gaps, and determine which gaps warrant immediate attention. To delve deeper into these areas, needs analysis becomes a pivotal tool. A needs analysis helps analyze the disparities identified

during the needs assessment, outlining the groundwork for effective interventions (Matusky, 2018). Needs assessment essentially documents the research gaps between current outcomes and desired results, offering professionals the insights required to enhance their organization's performance and deliver measurable value (Kaufman and Christensen, 2019). In language teaching, the identification of learners' needs is indispensable for designing courses using a learner-centered approach (Ozdemir, 2018). Thus, a needs analysis is the initial step in ascertaining the necessity for module-based interventions, as demonstrated by our research focus on grade six children with reading difficulties in Sri Lanka.

This need analysis is aimed identify the module needs in reading fluency for junior secondary children with reading difficulties in Sri Lanka. Three objective were used to find out the teachers' awareness of children with reading difficulties, to find out the teachers' perception of module needs for teaching reading to children with reading difficulties, and to find out the teachers' agreement on the need for Smart Reading Module (SRM) development

Methodology

The study utilized a need analysis questionnaire to identify the specific needs for teaching interventions. This questionnaire, adapted and validated from Peries et al. (2021), was translated into Tamil and implemented through a Google Form with clear instructions. The questionnaire comprised four parts: Part 1 collected biographical information, Part 2 focused on general knowledge about reading difficulties, and Parts 3 and 4 examined teachers' perceptions of module needs and their agreement on module development.

The survey was distributed among 164 randomly selected junior secondary school teachers in Tamil medium schools within the Puttalam South Educational Division. The questionnaire was shared via WhatsApp and email, with respondents confirming their participation through WhatsApp. They willingly filled out the online survey, saved it with their contact numbers, and were incentivized with mobile top-up credit. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS version 29. Survey part 1 and

part 2 were analyzed with descriptive statistical methods and part 3 and part 4 were analyzed with cross tabulation.

Results

Background Information

In this study, 164 teachers, with 59.8% being female and 40.2% male junior secondary educators in crowded Sri Lankan classrooms, participated. Primary respondents were Tamil language teachers, while social sciences and other subject teachers also contributed. About one-third held university degrees, and the rest had received training. Furthermore, 39.9% of the teachers had 1-5 years of teaching experience, and 40.1% had 11 years or more.

Teachers' General Knowledge of Children with Reading Difficulties

Part 2 of the need analysis questionnaire is about the teachers' general knowledge of reading difficulties which is also analyzed with descriptive statistical methods. Table 1 shows the teachers' general knowledge about reading difficulties.

Table 1. The teachers' general knowledge about reading difficulties.

		Frequency	Percent
Teachers' Knowledge of Children with Reading Difficulties	Disagree	2	1.2
	Neutral	33	20.1
	Agree	112	68.3
	Strongly Agree	17	10.4
	Total	164	100.0
Teachers' Awareness of Children with Reading Difficulties	Disagree	1	.6
	Neutral	9	5.5
	Agree	98	59.8
	Strongly Agree	56	34.1
	Total	164	100.0

According to Table 1, in the first assessment concerning teachers' knowledge of children with reading difficulties, the majority of respondents expressed agreement, with 68.3% of teachers indicating they "Agree," and 10.4% "Strongly Agree." Only a small proportion, 1.2%, expressed disagreement, and 20.1% remained neutral. In the second assessment regarding teachers' awareness of children with reading difficulties, the responses also predominantly leaned towards agreement. A total of 93.9% of teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that they were aware of children with reading difficulties. Only a small portion, 6.1%, expressed neutrality or disagreement. These results demonstrate that the majority of teachers possess knowledge about and are aware of students facing reading difficulties, highlighting the relevance of addressing this issue.

Teachers' Perception of Teaching Reading

Teachers' views on teaching reading, challenges, systematic modules, and reading skill development were analyzed in relation to gender preferences. Table 2 presents the results of this cross-tabulation. Table 2 Teachers' perception of teaching reading

		Gender		Total
		Female	Male	
Teachers' perception of teaching reading	Disagree	1	0	1
	Neutral	7	2	9
	Agree	58	40	98
	Strongly Agree	32	24	56
Total		98	66	164
Teachers' perception of challenges in teaching reading	Disagree	1	0	1
	Neutral	13	9	22
	Agree	57	34	91
	Strongly Agree	27	23	50
Total		98	66	164
Teachers' perception of	Disagree	3	0	3

teaching reading skills	Neutral	10	16	26
	Agree	71	43	114
	Strongly	14	7	21
	Agree			
Total		98	66	164

According to Table 2, it is evident that female teachers significantly agree more on teaching reading, with 58 out of 98 (59.2%) agreeing, while male teachers show less agreement at 40 out of 66 (60.6%). In terms of challenges, male teachers exhibit higher agreement (34 out of 66, 51.5%) compared to female teachers (57 out of 98, 58.2%). For teaching reading skills, female teachers show greater agreement (71 out of 114, 62.3%), while male teachers exhibit less agreement (43 out of 66, 65.2%). These results highlight gender-based variations in teachers' perceptions of teaching reading and its related aspects.

Need for Module Development

The teachers' agreement on the need for module development was analyzed with measures of variability to describe the diversity in the distribution of the skills, strategies, and need for teachers' guides and student exercise books in module development. Table 3 shows the Need for module development.

Table 3 Need for module development

		Frequency	Percent
Skills to be considered in Module development	Disagree	1	.6
	Neutral	12	7.3
	Agree	126	76.8
	Strongly	25	15.2
	Agree		
Total		164	100.0
Strategies to be Considered in Module Development	Disagree	1	.6
	Neutral	18	11.0

	Agree	110	67.1
	Strongly Agree	35	21.3
	Total	164	100.0
Needs for Teacher Guide and Students' Exercise Book in Module Development	Disagree	1	.6
	Neutral	14	8.2
	Agree	99	58.2
	Strongly Agree	50	29.4
	Total	164	96.5

Table 3 highlights the need for module development among teachers. A significant 76.8% of teachers agree that skills should be considered in module development, with 15.2% strongly agreeing. In terms of strategies, 67.1% agree that they should be included in module development, and 21.3% strongly agree. For teacher guides and students' exercise books in module development, 58.2% agree, and 29.4% strongly agree, with only 8.2% neutral or disagreeing. These results underscore the importance of incorporating skills, strategies, and materials in module development to support teaching reading effectively.

Conclusion

The results of this study provide valuable insights into the state of reading education among junior secondary teachers in Sri Lanka. The majority of participating teachers demonstrated a good level of knowledge about children with reading difficulties, as well as awareness of the challenges these students face. However, gender differences were evident in teachers' perceptions of teaching reading, challenges, and reading skills. Female teachers tended to express slightly higher agreement in teaching reading and reading skills, while male teachers displayed more agreement with challenges in teaching reading.

Furthermore, the study highlighted a significant need for module development in the context of teaching reading. A substantial proportion of teachers agreed that skills and strategies should be incorporated into

module development, emphasizing their importance. This finding underscores the relevance of addressing reading difficulties and the necessity of providing teachers with the appropriate tools and materials to support effective reading instruction.

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