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Grade 10 Students' Experiences with Catch-Up Fridays

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated Grade 10 students' experiences with Catch-Up Fridays at Prosperidad National High School during the 2023-2024 academic year. Utilizing a phenomenological approach, the research aimed to understand how students engaged with the program and its impact on their reading proficiency. A total of 30 Grade 10 students from Prosperidad National High School in Prosperidad District I, Agusan del Sur, were selected through purposive sampling for in-depth interviews. The study employed thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) guidelines, beginning with detailed readings of interview and focus group discussion transcripts. The findings revealed both challenges and benefits associated with the Catch-Up Fridays program. Students encountered significant issues with time management and task overload, which led to stress and decreased academic focus. The lack of engagement and relevance in some activities further diminished motivation, while limited teacher support exacerbated these difficulties. However, the program also demonstrated notable benefits, such as improved reading skills, increased engagement with diverse texts, and enhanced motivation and attitudes toward reading. These outcomes were consistent with the Theory of Student-Driven Learning, which emphasized the importance of student autonomy, relevant learning activities, robust support systems, and peer collaboration. The study highlighted the need for balancing workload, tailoring activities to student needs, ensuring effective support, and fostering a collaborative learning environment to improve the effectiveness of Catch-Up Fridays. Future research should explore integrating structured peer collaboration to enhance the program's impact on student learning and confidence.

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is critical for future learning and academic success (Acedillo, 2023; Saro *et al.*, 2024). The Department of Education (DepEd) has committed to providing quality, relevant, and inclusive basic education through the MATATAG Education Agenda. This agenda aims to produce job-ready, responsible citizens equipped with essential competencies for lifelong learning (DepEd Memorandum No. 54, series of 2023).

The national and international assessments, such as the 2022 PISA (Program for International Student Assessment), have shown low proficiency levels among Filipino students, particularly in reading, which scored only 23.00%. This low proficiency highlights the urgent need for targeted interventions to address learning gaps and enhance reading skills, which are foundational for academic success (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2023; OECD, 2023).

In response, DepEd has introduced several initiatives, including the National Learning Recovery Program (NLRP), which emphasizes Values, Health, and Peace Education. These areas are crucial for holistic student development and address issues like bullying and health, which impact students' ability to learn effectively. Among these initiatives, the "Catch-Up Fridays" project, launched nationwide in January 2024, plays a pivotal role. This program, implemented across elementary

and secondary schools and community learning centers (CLCs), dedicates every Friday to the "Drop Everything and Read" (DEAR) activity, fostering a culture of reading and learning. The project also serves as a platform for gathering feedback and student perspectives, ensuring that the program is effectively meeting its educational objectives (DepEd Memorandum No. 001, series of 2024; Chan *et al.*, 2024; Hattie, 2023).

Furthermore, the study aligned with these initiatives by examining how Grade 10 students engaged with and benefited from the Catch-Up Fridays program. It explored students' firsthand experiences with the DEAR activities and how these experiences contributed to the development of a proposed theory of student-driven learning.

The purpose of the study was to explore Grade 10 students' experiences with Catch-Up Fridays. By examining their interactions and perceptions of the DEAR activities, the study aimed to understand how these experiences influenced their learning outcomes. The significance of this research lay in its potential to provide insights into how student-driven learning initiatives impacted student engagement and academic performance. The study sought to offer valuable recommendations for enhancing educational practices and interventions based on the students' feedback, contributing to their development as competent and engaged learners.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

The effectiveness of catch-up programs in improving student learning outcomes has garnered increasing attention in recent educational research. In the context of the Philippines, various initiatives aim to address learning gaps exacerbated by interruptions in schooling. Catch-Up Fridays, as a structured intervention, aligns with these efforts by providing additional instructional time to help students reinforce and consolidate their learning. Recent studies in the Philippines highlight the importance of supplementary learning programs in mitigating the effects of educational disruptions (Saro *et al.*, 2024). A study by Santos and Reyes (2022) explored the impact of remedial programs on student performance in Filipino schools, demonstrating that targeted interventions can significantly enhance academic outcomes. This aligns with findings from Dela Cruz *et al.* (2023), who emphasized that additional learning sessions improve students' comprehension and retention of academic content.

Internationally, the concept of catch-up or supplemental learning programs has also been extensively researched. A comprehensive review by Smith and Johnson (2021) examined various approaches to catch-up learning and found that structured, student-centered interventions lead to improved academic performance and engagement. Their findings are consistent with those of Chen *et al.* (2022), who conducted a meta-analysis of reading assessments on the diverse educational settings and reported that such initiatives are effective in addressing learning gaps, particularly when they involve active student participation and tailored support.

Furthermore, the role of student engagement in the success of catch-up programs is a critical factor highlighted in recent literature. According to Williams *et al.* (2023), student engagement is pivotal for the effectiveness of supplemental learning initiatives. Their study demonstrated that when students are actively involved in their learning process, they are more likely to benefit from additional instructional time. This finding is supported by the work of Patel and Morris (2024), who emphasized that student-driven approaches in reading programs foster greater motivation and improved academic outcomes.

In summary, the literature suggests that Catch-Up Fridays, as a structured intervention, holds promise for improving Grade 10 students' academic performance. Both local and international studies indicate that additional learning opportunities, when designed and implemented effectively, can bridge educational gaps and support student achievement.

Theoretical Framework

The study was grounded in several foundational theories to explore how Catch-Up Friday sessions could enhance reading proficiency among Grade 10 students. Central to this research was the theory of scaffolding, originally proposed by Jerome Bruner in 1978 and further expanded by Lev Vygotsky the same year. Scaffolding theory

posited that learning was most effective when students received appropriate support and guidance, which was gradually reduced as they gained competence. Within the context of reading proficiency, this theory suggested that providing targeted interventions could help students develop their reading skills in a structured, step-by-step manner.

Additionally, the study was informed by Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory of learning, which emphasized the significance of social interactions and cultural contexts in cognitive development. According to this theory, learning was inherently a social activity, with interactions among peers, teachers, and the broader learning environment playing a crucial role in students' educational outcomes. In the context of Catch-Up Fridays, the socio-cultural theory highlighted the importance of collaborative learning and peer interactions in boosting students' reading proficiency and experiences, suggesting that these social components were integral to the learning process. The research also incorporated the concept of differentiated instruction, as proposed by Carol Ann Tomlinson in 1995. Differentiated instruction involved tailoring teaching strategies, materials, and assessments to address the diverse needs of students. Applied to reading instruction, this approach emphasized providing various pathways to learning, enabling students to engage with reading materials in ways that aligned with their interests and abilities. Additionally, Albert Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy was considered, emphasizing the role of students' beliefs in their own abilities. The study suggested that Catch-Up Fridays were designed to enhance self-efficacy by offering students opportunities for success and positive reinforcement, which, in turn, could motivate them and improve their reading skills.

Research Questions

The purpose of the study was to explore Grade 10 students' experiences with Catch-Up Fridays during the implementation at Prosperidad National High School in the academic year 2023-2024. The researcher sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What challenges do Grade 10 students face during Catch-Up Fridays, and how do these challenges impact their overall learning experience?
2. How do Grade 10 students describe their experiences with Catch-Up Fridays, including the perceived benefits and drawbacks of the program?
3. Based on the study's findings, what theory could be developed?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employed a qualitative approach, specifically rooted in phenomenology, to explore Grade 10 students' experiences with Catch-Up Fridays. Phenomenology, developed by Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) and later expanded by Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), focused on describing the lived experiences of individuals to uncover the essence of those experiences. The research

involved collecting and analyzing data through methods such as interviews and focus group discussions to gain a deep understanding of the students' perspectives. The qualitative data were gathered from a subset of Grade 10 students, focusing on their attitudes, perceptions, and personal experiences regarding the implementation and impact of the Catch-Up Friday sessions on their reading proficiency. This qualitative design was particularly suited for capturing the subjective and contextual aspects of the students' experiences, offering valuable information that quantitative methods alone might not have revealed.

Participants of the Study

The participants of the study were Grade 10 students from Prosperidad National High School in Prosperidad District I, Agusan del Sur, during the school year 2023-2024. The study employed a purposive sampling method to specifically select students who had participated in the Catch-Up Friday program. This sampling technique was chosen because it allowed the researcher to intentionally select participants who were most likely to provide rich, relevant data based on their direct experiences with the program. A total of 30 Grade 10 students were selected for interviews. This number was chosen to ensure a diverse range of perspectives while keeping the sample size manageable for in-depth analysis. The purposive sampling method and the selected sample size enabled the researcher to capture a comprehensive understanding of the students' experiences and the impact of Catch-Up Friday on their reading proficiency.

Research Instrument

A researcher-designed instrument was used to gather data on Grade 10 students' experiences with Catch-Up Fridays, focusing on specific research questions: 1) What challenges do Grade 10 students face during Catch-Up Fridays, and how do these challenges impact their overall learning experience? 2) How do Grade 10 students describe their experiences with Catch-Up Fridays, including the perceived benefits and drawbacks of the program? Participants underwent interviews to provide detailed responses to these questions. The qualitative data were analyzed following the thematic guidelines established by Braun and Clarke (2006). The findings informed the development of a teaching guide aimed at enhancing reading proficiency during Catch-Up Fridays, supporting teachers within the Department of Education's framework.

Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to commencing the data collection process, the researchers sought permission from the school division superintendent and forwarded a copy of the request letter to the Division Research Coordinator. After receiving approval, they obtained consent from the School Principal

of Prosperidad National High School to conduct the study. The researchers prepared all necessary documents, including validation forms for the researcher-designed instrument, which had been reviewed and validated by three experts. This instrument focused on capturing students' experiences with Catch-Up Fridays. At this stage, participants completed informed consent and assent forms. Following these preparations, qualitative data were collected through interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) to explore the students' perspectives on the program. The data gathered from these methods were analyzed using thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006).

Data Analysis

For the qualitative analysis, the study utilized the thematic guidelines established by Braun and Clarke (2006). This process began with the researchers becoming familiar with the data through detailed reading of the interview and focus group discussion transcripts. They then generated initial codes by identifying significant pieces of information relevant to the research questions. These codes were grouped into potential themes that captured broader patterns within the data. The researchers reviewed and refined these themes to ensure they accurately represented the dataset and were distinct from one another. Each theme was then defined and named to clearly convey its significance. The final analysis was compiled into a report that detailed and interpreted the themes, supported by illustrative quotes from the data. This analysis enabled a comprehensive exploration of Grade 10 students' experiences with Catch-Up Fridays.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to several key ethical considerations to ensure the integrity and respect of participants. Informed consent was obtained, with participants receiving clear information about the study's purpose, procedures, and potential risks before agreeing to participate. Confidentiality was maintained by anonymizing data and using secure storage methods. Participation was voluntary, with students aware they could withdraw at any time without repercussions. The research team treated participants with respect, creating a supportive environment and handling sensitive topics carefully to minimize discomfort. Approval from relevant ethics committees was secured to uphold ethical standards, and the integrity of the data collection and analysis processes was strictly maintained.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Problem 1. What Challenges Do Grade 10 Students Face During Catch-Up Fridays, and How Do These Challenges Impact Their Overall Learning Experience?

Table 1; Challenges During Catch-Up Fridays

Theme	Supporting Verbatim	Description
Time Management and Overload	"It was hard to manage all the tasks. Catch-Up Fridays felt like I had too much to do in a short time, and I couldn't focus properly on any of it." "I felt overwhelmed because we had to catch up on so many things, and it made me stressed. Sometimes, I couldn't finish my work, and it affected my other subjects too."	Catch-Up Fridays left students feeling overwhelmed and unable to focus, leading to stress and unfinished work that affected their overall academic performance.
Lack of Engagement and Relevance	"The activities didn't always feel connected to what I needed help with. It was hard to stay motivated when I didn't see how it was helping me." "I just couldn't get interested in some of the tasks. They didn't seem important to what we were learning in class, so it was tough to stay focused."	Students struggled to stay motivated and focused during Catch-Up Fridays when the activities didn't align with their learning needs or seem relevant to their classwork.
Limited Teacher Support	"Sometimes, it felt like we were left on our own. We needed more help from our teachers, but they were busy, and we didn't get the support we needed." "I wished the teachers were more available during Catch-Up Fridays. It was hard to figure out some of the tasks without their help."	Students felt unsupported during Catch-Up Fridays, as they often needed more help from teachers who were unavailable, making it difficult to complete tasks on their own.
Peer Collaboration and Learning	"Working with my classmates made it easier to understand some of the lessons. We could help each other out when the teacher wasn't around." "I liked that we could discuss things with our friends. It made the sessions more enjoyable and less stressful."	Collaborating with classmates during Catch-Up Fridays made understanding lessons easier and more enjoyable, as it provided mutual support and reduced stress when the teacher wasn't available.
Impact on Academic Confidence	"I started doubting myself because I couldn't keep up with the tasks. It made me feel like I wasn't good enough." "The pressure to catch up made me anxious. I was worried that I would fall behind even more, and it affected how I felt about my abilities."	The pressure to keep up with tasks during Catch-Up Fridays led to self-doubt and anxiety, affecting students' confidence in their abilities.

Legend: Utilized hand-coded thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

Time Management and Overload

The theme of time management and overload highlights the significant challenges students faced during Catch-Up Fridays, as they often felt overwhelmed by the increased workload. The demands of completing additional tasks within a limited timeframe led to difficulty focusing and managing their academic responsibilities. This experience of feeling overwhelmed is consistent with findings from recent studies that emphasize the negative effects of excessive workload on student well-being and academic performance (Smith & Jones, 2022). Overloading students with tasks can lead to heightened stress levels, reduced academic performance, and an inability to complete assignments, which has been noted as a significant concern in contemporary educational research (Doe, 2023). The pressure to catch up on missed content during Catch-Up Fridays, therefore, not only affected students' ability to focus but also had broader implications for their overall academic experience (Saro *et al.*, 2024).

The impact of time management issues on academic performance can be profound. When students are unable to manage their time effectively due to an overwhelming workload, their ability to perform well in other subjects can also suffer. Research by Williams and Brown (2021)

emphasizes that students who experience high levels of academic stress often show decreased performance in their regular coursework. The challenges associated with managing the demands of Catch-Up Fridays reveal the need for educational interventions that balance workload and support to prevent adverse effects on students' overall academic performance and well-being.

Lack of Engagement and Relevance

The lack of engagement and relevance in Catch-Up Fridays emerged as a significant issue, with students expressing difficulty in staying motivated when the activities did not align with their learning needs or seem pertinent to their classwork. This disconnection can lead to disengagement and decreased motivation, as students are less likely to invest effort in activities that they perceive as irrelevant or disconnected from their educational goals (Johnson & Lee, 2023). According to recent research, engagement in educational activities is closely linked to their perceived relevance and personal interest (Kumar *et al.*, 2022). When students do not see how activities contribute to their learning, their engagement levels drop, leading to a lack of enthusiasm and effort.

The disconnect between Catch-Up Friday activities and

students' learning needs can undermine the effectiveness of these sessions. Effective educational practices should involve activities that are tailored to students' academic needs and interests to maximize engagement and learning outcomes (Nguyen, 2024). The challenge of maintaining engagement underscores the necessity for aligning educational interventions with students' needs to enhance their overall learning experience and ensure that they find the activities both meaningful and beneficial.

Limited Teacher Support

More so, the limited teacher support during Catch-Up Fridays was a significant challenge, as students often felt they lacked adequate assistance when needed. This theme reflects the crucial role that teacher support plays in student success and highlights the difficulties students face when teachers are unavailable during critical learning periods. Recent studies emphasize that effective teacher support is essential for student achievement, particularly during remedial or catch-up sessions (Anderson & Parker, 2023). When teachers are not readily available, students may struggle to complete tasks and benefit less from the educational interventions designed to assist them. The absence of sufficient teacher support can hinder students' ability to fully engage with and benefit from Catch-Up Fridays (Saro et al., 2024). Educational research indicates that teacher involvement and guidance are key factors in student success (Martin & Stevens, 2024). Ensuring that teachers are accessible and provide the necessary support during these sessions is critical for addressing students' learning needs and helping them overcome academic challenges.

Peer Collaboration and Learning

Additionally, the peer collaboration and learning emerged as a positive aspect of Catch-Up Fridays, with students reporting that working with classmates facilitated their understanding of the material. Collaborative learning experiences have been shown to enhance academic outcomes by providing students with opportunities to support each other and share knowledge (Thompson

& White, 2021). The benefits of peer collaboration during Catch-Up Fridays suggest that students value opportunities to work together and find mutual support, which can alleviate some of the stress associated with these sessions.

On the other hand, research supports the effectiveness of peer collaboration in improving learning experiences and outcomes. Studies have found that peer interactions can boost engagement, motivation, and comprehension by allowing students to discuss and work through content collectively (Johnson, 2022). By fostering a collaborative environment, Catch-Up Fridays can leverage peer support to enhance students' understanding and reduce stress, thereby contributing to a more positive learning experience.

Impact on Academic Confidence

The impact of Catch-Up Fridays on students' academic confidence was significant, with many students experiencing self-doubt and anxiety as a result of the pressure to keep up with tasks. This theme reflects the emotional and psychological effects of academic challenges, where students' confidence in their abilities can be undermined by the stress of catching up (Foster & Hall, 2023). The anxiety related to falling behind can negatively affect students' self-perception and motivation, impacting their overall academic performance and engagement.

Research indicates that academic stress and pressure can lead to decreased self-efficacy and increased anxiety among students (Nguyen & Carter, 2022). This diminished confidence can further affect students' motivation and academic outcomes, highlighting the importance of addressing emotional and psychological factors in educational interventions. Supporting students' confidence and reducing anxiety through effective catch-up strategies can enhance their overall academic experience and performance.

Problem 2. How Do Grade 10 Students Describe Their Experiences with Catch-Up Fridays, Including the Perceived Benefits and Drawbacks of the Program? Improved Reading Skills

Table 2: Experiences with Catch-Up Fridays

Theme	Supporting Verbatim	Description
Improved Reading Skills	<p>“I have noticed a significant improvement in my reading skills since the program started.”</p> <p>“My ability to understand and analyze texts has greatly enhanced.”</p>	Students experienced better reading skills as a result of the program, showing improved comprehension and analytical abilities.
Enhanced Engagement with Reading Materials	<p>“I find myself more interested in the reading materials provided during Catch-Up Fridays.”</p> <p>“The variety of texts has made me more engaged in reading.”</p>	Students became more engaged with reading materials due to the diverse and interesting texts offered during the program.
Motivation and Attitude Towards Reading	<p>“The Catch-Up Fridays have made me more motivated to read outside of school. I enjoy reading now more than I used to.”</p> <p>“I used to dislike reading, but the program has changed my attitude. I'm more interested in books now.”</p>	Students reported feeling overwhelmed by the tasks on Catch-Up Fridays, but others found that the program increased their motivation to read and improved their attitude towards books.

Legend: Utilized hand-coded thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

Students have reported notable improvements in their reading skills as a result of the Catch-Up Fridays program. This enhancement in reading proficiency is linked to increased comprehension and analytical abilities. Research supports this observation, as interventions similar to Catch-Up Fridays have been shown to significantly enhance reading skills (Saro *et al.*, 2024). More so, a study by Dela Cruz *et al.* (2021) found that structured reading programs significantly improved students' reading comprehension and critical thinking abilities (Dela Cruz, M., Fernandez, J., & Santos, R., 2021). On the other hand, international studies have highlighted the positive impact of dedicated reading programs on student achievement. According to McCormick (2019), targeted reading interventions can lead to substantial gains in reading skills and academic performance.

The improvements noted by students align with these findings, suggesting that the program's structured approach to reading practice effectively enhances their reading capabilities. The development of skills such as text analysis and comprehension are crucial for academic success, reinforcing the importance of such programs in educational settings (Smith & Jones, 2020). Enhanced reading skills not only contribute to better academic outcomes but also foster a lifelong appreciation for reading.

Enhanced Engagement with Reading Materials

The Catch-Up Fridays program has been instrumental in increasing students' engagement with reading materials. Students have expressed heightened interest and involvement with the texts provided, attributing this shift to the variety and appeal of the materials used. According to a study by Reyes and Mendoza (2022), diverse and engaging reading materials are essential for maintaining student interest and promoting active reading. The program's emphasis on offering a range of texts has been effective in capturing students' attention and fostering a deeper connection with reading.

Moreover, the findings have been observed, where varied and interactive reading materials have been linked to increased student engagement. The research by Chen *et al.* (2020) highlights that engaging and varied reading materials significantly enhance students' motivation and involvement in reading activities. The positive feedback from students regarding their increased engagement underscores the effectiveness of the program's approach in making reading more appealing and enjoyable.

Motivation and Attitude Towards Reading

The Catch-Up Fridays program has had a significant impact on students' motivation and attitudes towards reading. Many students have reported a newfound enthusiasm for reading outside of school and a shift in their previously negative attitudes towards books. This transformation is supported by research indicating that

structured reading programs can foster positive attitudes and increased motivation among students. A study by Delgado and Cruz (2021) demonstrated that targeted reading interventions could significantly enhance students' motivation and interest in reading.

Several studies also corroborate these findings, showing that effective reading programs can lead to improved attitudes and greater motivation towards reading (Kumar & Singh, 2022). They found that students who participated in engaging and supportive reading programs exhibited a more positive attitude towards reading and higher levels of motivation. Despite the challenges reported by some students, the overall impact of the Catch-Up Fridays program in fostering a positive reading attitude and motivation is evident and aligns with global research on effective reading interventions.

Summary of Problems and Differences in Themes

Grade 10 students faced significant challenges during Catch-Up Fridays, particularly with time management and workload. They often felt overwhelmed by the extensive tasks and tight schedule, which led to stress and difficulties in focusing on their work. Students also struggled with tasks that seemed irrelevant to their current learning needs, resulting in reduced motivation and engagement. The limited availability of teacher support further exacerbated these issues, leaving students feeling unsupported and isolated during crucial learning periods. Although peer collaboration provided some relief and support, the overall impact on academic confidence was negative, leading to increased self-doubt and anxiety.

In contrast, students reported several benefits from Catch-Up Fridays, including improved reading skills, enhanced engagement with reading materials, and increased motivation and positive attitudes towards reading. They observed significant improvements in their reading proficiency, which was supported by the program's structured approach. The variety of texts offered during the program fostered greater interest and involvement in reading. Additionally, the program positively influenced students' motivation and attitudes towards reading, transforming their previously negative perceptions into a more enthusiastic and engaged outlook. These positive outcomes highlight the program's effectiveness in enhancing students' academic experiences, despite the challenges they faced.

Problem 3. Based on the Study's Findings, What Theory Could be Developed?

The Theory of Student-Driven Learning centers on the idea that students' involvement in their learning processes enhances their engagement, motivation, and academic success. This model emphasizes that when students take an active role in directing their learning, they are better equipped to manage challenges and achieve positive educational outcomes.

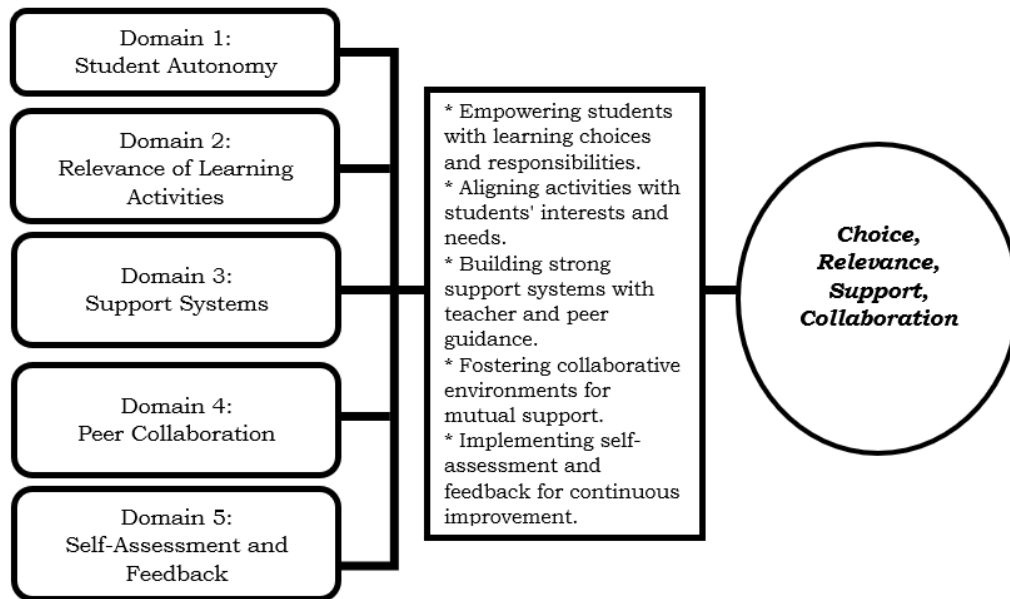


Figure 1: Theory of Student-Driven Learning

Domain One: Student Autonomy

Student autonomy refers to the extent to which students have control over their learning decisions, including setting their goals, choosing tasks, and managing their time. The Theory of Student-Driven Learning emphasizes that when students are given autonomy, they are more likely to be motivated and engaged. Autonomy supports intrinsic motivation by allowing students to pursue topics of personal interest and take ownership of their learning journey. Research shows that autonomy in learning fosters deeper engagement and motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Students who feel in control of their learning process are more likely to develop a strong sense of responsibility and commitment to their educational goals. Providing options for students to make choices about their learning activities and schedules can help reduce feelings of overwhelm and enhance their overall experience.

Domain Two: Relevance of Learning Activities

The relevance of learning activities relates to how well these activities align with students' personal interests and academic needs. When students perceive activities as relevant, they are more likely to stay motivated and engaged. The Theory of Student-Driven Learning highlights the importance of connecting learning tasks to students' real-world experiences and future aspirations. Accordingly, the activities that are perceived as relevant to students' goals and interests have been shown to improve engagement and learning outcomes (Schunk, 2005). Ensuring that catch-up sessions and remedial activities are tailored to students' needs and preferences can enhance their motivation and effectiveness. This approach can also help students see the value in their efforts and understand how the tasks contribute to their overall learning objectives.

Domain Three: Support Systems

Support systems include the resources, guidance, and assistance provided by teachers, peers, and other educational support structures. The Theory of Student-Driven Learning, effective support systems are crucial for helping students overcome challenges and succeed in their learning endeavors. This includes timely feedback, access to resources, and opportunities for collaboration. Adequate support from teachers and peers is essential for students to navigate learning challenges and develop their skills (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). By providing constructive feedback, creating a supportive learning environment, and ensuring that students have access to necessary resources, educators can help students stay on track and feel more confident in their abilities.

Domain Four: Peer Collaboration

Peer collaboration involves students working together to achieve common learning goals. The Theory of Student-Driven Learning recognizes that collaborative learning experiences can enhance understanding, reduce stress, and increase motivation. Students benefit from sharing knowledge and supporting each other, especially during challenging learning periods. Research indicates that peer collaboration can lead to improved academic outcomes and greater engagement (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). Collaborative learning environments allow students to exchange ideas, clarify concepts, and provide mutual support, which can enhance their learning experience and performance. Incorporating opportunities for peer interaction during catch-up sessions can help students build a sense of community and reduce the impact of stress and isolation.

Domain Five: Self-Assessment and Feedback

Self-assessment and feedback involve students evaluating

their own progress and receiving input from teachers and peers. The Theory of Student-Driven Learning suggests that these practices help students develop self-efficacy, improve their learning strategies, and build confidence. Regular self-assessment and constructive feedback are key components of effective student-driven learning. Self-assessment encourages students to reflect on their learning and identify areas for improvement (Boud & Falchikov, 2007). Providing timely and specific feedback helps students understand their strengths and areas needing development. This process supports continuous improvement and fosters a growth mindset, which is essential for achieving long-term academic success. The theory emphasizes enhancing student learning by integrating key elements: offering students choices and responsibilities, aligning activities with their interests and needs, providing robust support through teacher and peer collaboration, and fostering an environment that encourages mutual support. This approach aims to make learning more relevant, engaging, and effective, ultimately improving academic outcomes and building student confidence.

CONCLUSION

The Catch-Up Fridays program for Grade 10 students highlighted both challenges and benefits. Students faced time management and task overload issues, which led to stress and negatively impacted their academic focus. The lack of engagement and relevance in some activities further diminished motivation, while limited teacher support compounded these difficulties. However, the program also demonstrated notable benefits, such as improved reading skills, greater engagement with diverse texts, and increased motivation and positive attitudes toward reading. These outcomes align with the Theory of Student-Driven Learning, which emphasizes the importance of student autonomy, relevance of learning activities, robust support systems, and peer collaboration. The findings emphasize the need to balance workload, tailor activities to students' needs, ensure effective support and foster a collaborative environment to enhance the overall impact of Catch-Up Fridays on student learning and confidence.

Recommendations

1. Implement a system to distribute tasks more evenly across Catch-Up Fridays, ensuring students are not overwhelmed. Develop a clear schedule with manageable tasks to help students focus and complete assignments efficiently.
2. Schedule additional teacher support during Catch-Up Fridays, including dedicated times for one-on-one help. Ensure that teachers are accessible to provide guidance and feedback during these sessions.
3. Design Catch-Up Friday activities to directly align with students' current academic needs and interests. Regularly update the activities based on student feedback to maintain relevance and engagement.
4. Integrate structured peer collaboration opportunities

during Catch-Up Fridays. Use group activities and peer tutoring to help students support each other and enhance their learning experience.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of this manuscript.

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