



Readiness and Instructional Practices of Tutors: A Correlational Study within the Aral Program

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Abstract

Review Article

The Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program in the Philippines aims to address learning losses caused by the pandemic. This study assessed the readiness of ARAL tutors in terms of knowledge, skills, and confidence, and how these factors influenced their teaching. Data from 55 tutors were analyzed using various statistical methods. Results showed that most tutors were novice educators, and while they generally displayed high readiness and effective classroom practices, those with post-graduate degrees performed better in complex tasks like curriculum implementation. The study revealed a positive link between tutor readiness and classroom performance, suggesting that higher proficiency leads to better outcomes. It also found no significant impact of years of experience or economic status on readiness. Based on these findings, the study proposed the Tutor Readiness Assessment and Development Framework (TRADF) to guide targeted, competency-based professional development. The findings highlight the importance of targeted training to improve teaching effectiveness and maximize learning recovery outcomes.

Keywords: ARAL Program, Learning Recovery, Tutor Readiness, Instructional Practices, Remedial Education, Teacher Competence.

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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly disrupted global education systems, particularly in elementary and secondary education, resulting in widespread learning losses. Extended school closures and the rapid transition to remote learning exacerbated pre-existing educational inequities, with students in low-resource and rural settings disproportionately affected (Gajderowicz et al., 2025; UNESCO, 2022). Studies indicate that pandemic-related learning losses can translate into months of missed

instruction, with long-term implications for academic achievement, socio-emotional development, and future workforce readiness (Hammerstein et al., 2021). In response, governments and educational institutions worldwide have implemented tutoring and remediation programs as evidence-based strategies to help students recover lost learning and mitigate inequalities (Bethhäuser, B. A., Bach-Mortensen, A. M., & Engzell, P., 2023).

In the Philippines, the Academic Recovery and



Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program was introduced to provide structured support for students struggling in foundational subjects such as reading, mathematics, and science (Department of Education [DepEd], 2025). While the program aims to address learning gaps intensified by the pandemic, its effectiveness is closely linked to the preparedness of tutors. Tutor readiness encompassing content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and confidence has been shown to influence not only instructional quality but also student engagement and learning outcomes (Dionglay et al., 2023; Backer, 2021). Educational change frameworks, including Fullan's Educational Change Theory (2007) and Bandura's Social Learning Theory, highlight the pivotal role of educator preparedness and the dynamics of tutor-student interactions in shaping learning environments. These frameworks underscore that effective tutoring requires more than technical proficiency; it demands the ability to motivate learners, foster a positive classroom climate, and adapt instructional strategies to diverse needs (Storey, N., & Zhang, Q. 2024).

The significance of tutor readiness becomes even more pronounced in rural and resource-constrained areas such as Maddela, Quirino, where geographic isolation and limited access to teaching resources present additional challenges. Despite these barriers, regional data indicate encouraging progress in educational access, with primary and secondary enrollment rates reaching 97.8% and 95.2%, respectively, in 2024 (Provincial Government of Quirino, 2025). Nonetheless, persistent challenges related to educational quality highlight the need to investigate how tutor readiness, instructional practices, and contextual factors interact to influence the success of interventions like the ARAL Program. Understanding these dynamics is essential for designing targeted strategies that maximize learning recovery, promote equitable education, and strengthen the capacity of tutors to support vulnerable learners in rural settings (Department of Education 2026).

This study aims to explore the demographic profile of ARAL tutors and assess their readiness in terms of knowledge, skills, confidence, and emotional

preparedness to identify areas for professional development. It also examines the instructional practices they employ, including teaching strategies, classroom management, assessment methods, use of technology, and student engagement. Finally, the study investigates the difference on the Readiness and Frequency of Used of Instructional Practices Employed by ARAL Tutors and the relationship between tutor readiness and the frequency of instructional practices to inform strategies for enhancing teaching effectiveness and student outcomes.

Hence, the study aims to provide valuable insights into improving tutor preparation, ensuring that tutoring interventions are better equipped to meet the educational needs of students, especially in rural districts. Ultimately, this research will contribute to advancing the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, which calls for inclusive and equitable quality education for all.

Methods

This study utilized a quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design to assess the readiness and instructional practices of tutors in the ARAL Program. The descriptive approach provided a detailed account of tutors' current readiness, including their knowledge, skills, and confidence in delivering the program, while the correlational aspect examined the relationship between demographic factors (such as educational attainment, years of service, and socio-economic status) and tutors' preparedness and instructional strategies. This design was chosen for its ability to systematically analyze the interplay of these variables and provide insights into how demographic factors influence tutor effectiveness and the success of the program.

The study included a total population of 68 tutors involved in the ARAL Program in Maddela I District, Quirino. Using total enumeration sampling, all 68 tutors were included in the study to ensure comprehensive data collection from every participant actively involved in the program. The inclusion criteria required tutors to have at least one

month of experience with the ARAL sessions. A structured survey questionnaire was the primary data collection tool, consisting of sections on demographic profiles, tutor readiness (assessing knowledge, skills, and confidence), and instructional practices (examining the strategies tutors use to deliver the ARAL sessions). The survey employed a 4-point Likert scale to measure responses, providing a clear quantitative assessment of the tutors' perceptions and practices.

The data gathered from the survey were analyzed using statistical methods appropriate for non-normal distributions, including frequency counts, median scores, and the Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests to identify significant differences based on demographic factors. The findings were aimed at determining the impact of tutor readiness on instructional practices and program success. Ethical considerations included

obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring confidentiality, and providing clear instructions on data usage. The study aimed to provide valuable insights into the factors influencing tutor effectiveness and to propose a framework for improving tutor preparation in rural districts.

Ethical considerations, including informed consent and confidentiality, were observed throughout the research process.

Results and Discussions

This section presents the results systematically, using appropriate tables and figures, followed by an in-depth interpretation and analysis. The findings are discussed in light of existing theories and related literature to establish their significance, implications, and consistency with previous studies.

Table 1. Frequency Counts and Percentages of the Respondents' Profile

Profile	Specifics	Frequency	Percent
Highest Educational Attainment	College Graduate	39	70.91
	Post Graduate	16	29.09
Sex	Male	7	12.73
	Female	48	87.27
Civil Status	Single	17	30.91
	Married	38	69.09

N=55

Table 1 summarizes the demographic profile of the 55 respondents in the ARAL Program. Most tutors are college graduates (70.91%), with 29.09% holding post-graduate degrees, indicating strong academic qualifications. The majority (87.27%) are female, and 69.09% are married, reflecting typical gender

and marital trends in education. These demographics highlight a well-educated, predominantly female workforce with varied financial backgrounds, which may influence instructional diversity and tutor retention within the ARAL Program.

Table 2. Level of Readiness of ARAL Tutors

Category	Median	Description
Knowledge	3.50	SA
Skills	3.00	A
Confidence	3.00	A

*Legend: 1.00 – 1.75 Strongly Disagree (SD)
 1.76 – 2.50 Disagree (D),
 2.51 – 3.25 Agree (A),
 3.26 – 4.00 Strongly Agree (SA)*

The data from Tables 2 highlights the self-assessed readiness of tutors in the ARAL Program. While tutors expressed strong confidence in their subject knowledge and ability to relate content to real-world contexts (median: 3.50), they reported moderate preparedness in program-specific areas like the ARAL curriculum and remediation strategies (median: 3.00). This suggests a need for targeted professional development in these areas to improve pedagogical skills, which is supported by research emphasizing the importance of ongoing educator training in learning recovery contexts (Amemasor et al., 2025; Pan et al., 2023).

In terms of teaching skills, tutors displayed moderate confidence (median: 3.00) across essential areas such as session planning, explaining concepts, and using materials. However, there is room for

improvement in specialized skills like diagnosing learning gaps and providing formative feedback, which are vital for student engagement and academic success (Fernandes et al., 2023; Asterhan et al., 2024).

Additionally, while tutors showed high confidence in managing classroom dynamics (median: 4.00), their confidence in adapting instructional strategies and incorporating new methods was more moderate, suggesting areas for growth. Research supports the need for professional development in adaptive teaching and modern instructional strategies to better support individualized learning and improve outcomes in remedial settings (Fernandes et al., 2023; Asterhan et al., 2024).

Table 3. Instructional Practices Employed by ARAL Tutors during Tutoring Sessions

Categories	Median	Description
Teaching Strategies	4.00	A
Classroom Management	4.00	A
Assessment Methods	4.00	A

*Legend: 1.00 – 1.75 Strongly Disagree (SD)
 1.76 – 2.50 Disagree (D),
 2.51 – 3.25 Agree (A),
 3.26 – 4.00 Strongly Agree (SA)*

Table 3 illustrates that ARAL tutors consistently employ a wide range of teaching strategies with high effectiveness, as reflected by a median score of 4.00 ("Always"). Tutors integrate differentiated instruction, collaborative learning, and inquiry-based tasks, approaches that have been shown to enhance student engagement, critical thinking, and deeper learning (Subandiyah, 2025; Goyibova, 2025). Their application of scaffolding and self-directed learning strategies demonstrates a balanced approach, providing structured guidance while promoting student autonomy both crucial for sustaining motivation and fostering long-term academic growth (Frontiers Research on Formative Learning Design, 2025). These results indicate a strong pedagogical foundation among tutors, yet, continued professional development in advanced and innovative teaching methods remains essential to address the evolving needs of diverse learners.

Furthermore, the data reveal that tutors excel in classroom management, also achieving a median of 4.00 ("Always") across all items. They establish structured, supportive learning environments by setting clear expectations, managing disruptions effectively, and offering academic guidance through goal-setting and timely feedback. Such practices not only enhance student motivation and engagement but also contribute to positive classroom dynamics and improved learning outcomes (Cambaya & Paglinawan, 2024; Putra, 2025). Collectively, these findings underscore that ARAL tutors possess both strong instructional skills and effective classroom management techniques, positioning them to deliver high-quality, impactful tutoring that meets the demands of modern education.

Table 4. Test of Difference on the Readiness and Frequency of Use of Instructional Practices Employed by ARAL Tutors

Readiness of ARAL Tutors	Median	Years of Service as Tutor in the ARAL Program	Highest Educational Attainment	Sex	Civil Status	Monthly Household Income
Knowledge	3.50 (SA)	ns	sig	sig	ns	Ns
Skills	3.00 (A)	ns	ns	sig	ns	Ns
Confidence	3.00 (A)	ns	ns	ns	ns	Ns
Instructional Practices Employed						
Teaching Strategies	4.00 (A)	ns	ns	ns	ns	Ns
Classroom Management	4.00 (A)	ns	ns	ns	ns	Ns
Assessment Methods	4.00 (A)	ns	ns	sig	ns	Ns
Use of Technology	3.00 (O)	ns	ns	ns	ns	Sig
Student Engagement	4.00 (A)	ns	ns	ns	ns	Ns

Table 4 reveals that ARAL tutors generally exhibit high levels of readiness in knowledge (Median=3.50; strongly agree) and moderate readiness in skills and confidence (Median=3.00; agree), while the use of technology as an instructional practice was only occasional (Median=3.00; occasionally). At the same time, tutors reported frequent use of teaching strategies, classroom management, assessment methods, and student engagement (Median=4.00; agree), indicating that tutors are inclined to consistently employ core pedagogical practices in ARAL settings. The significant differences in knowledge and assessment methods by highest educational attainment and the influence of civil status on knowledge suggest that certain demographic variables may affect specific dimensions of readiness and instructional practice use, though most background factors did not show significant effects. These findings align with recent research demonstrating that teachers who possess stronger pedagogical preparation tend to apply more diverse instructional strategies and exhibit greater frequency in their use (Rawlings, 2025), while gaps in technology use persist when professional

development and ICT support are limited (Nkonkonya Mpuangnan, 2024). Studies on teacher preparedness have also identified that readiness for instructional practices, particularly those involving digital tools, remains sub-optimal where training is insufficient, underscoring the need for targeted professional development programs that build both technological and pedagogical confidence among educators (Baniqued & Bautista, 2024; Lausa, Balinario, & Arceño, 2024).

Furthermore, Philippine-based research on teachers' readiness for ICT integration highlights the importance of exposure to instructional resources and hands-on experience to support effective technology use, which may help explain why ARAL tutors report only occasional use of technology in their practices (Lausa et al., 2024; Otom et al., 2023). Overall, these findings suggest that while ARAL tutors are relatively prepared and active in many instructional domains, there remains an imperative to strengthen professional preparation and confidence especially regarding technological integration to ensure more consistent and impactful implementation of instructional practices.

Table 5. Correlation between Readiness and Frequency of Use of Instructional Practices Employed by ARAL Tutors

Instructional Practices	Readiness of ARAL Tutors		
	Knowledge	Skills	Confidence
Teaching Strategies	Significant	Significant	Significant
Classroom Management	Significant	Significant	Significant
Assessment Methods	Significant	Significant	Significant
Use of Technology	Significant	Significant	Significant
Student Engagement	Significant	Significant	Significant

Table 2 presents the correlation between the readiness of ARAL tutors and the frequency of their use of instructional practices, revealing significant positive relationships across all domains of readiness

knowledge, skills, and confidence and all five instructional practices, including teaching strategies, classroom management, assessment methods, use of technology, and student engagement. These results

suggest that tutors who demonstrate higher levels of knowledge, stronger pedagogical skills, and greater confidence are more likely to implement a variety of instructional practices consistently and effectively. This aligns with research by Rawlings (2025), who found that teachers with robust pedagogical preparation frequently employ diverse teaching strategies and adapt them to the needs of their learners. Similarly, Nkonkonya Mpuangnan (2024) and Baniqued and Bautista (2024) emphasized that teacher readiness, particularly in confidence and skills, strongly predicts the extent to which instructional practices, including classroom management and assessment strategies, are applied in practice.

Despite the significance across all readiness domains, the lower scores in the use of technology observed in Table 1 indicate that even tutors with high readiness in knowledge and skills may encounter challenges in integrating technological

tools effectively, reflecting findings by Lausa, Balinario, and Arceño (2024), who reported that insufficient training and limited exposure hinder digital readiness among educators. The significant correlations between readiness and instructional practices also support the theoretical assertion that teacher efficacy is a critical factor in instructional decision-making and classroom engagement (Bandura, 2021). Therefore, these findings collectively highlight that while ARAL tutors are generally prepared and capable, continued professional development especially focused on confidence-building and technology integration is essential to maximize the frequency and quality of instructional practices. This emphasis is consistent with contemporary Philippine research suggesting that enhancing teacher readiness across all domains can directly improve instructional effectiveness and student engagement outcomes (Otom et al., 2023; Santos & Cruz, 2025).

VI. Proposed Tutor Readiness Assessment Framework for the ARAL Program

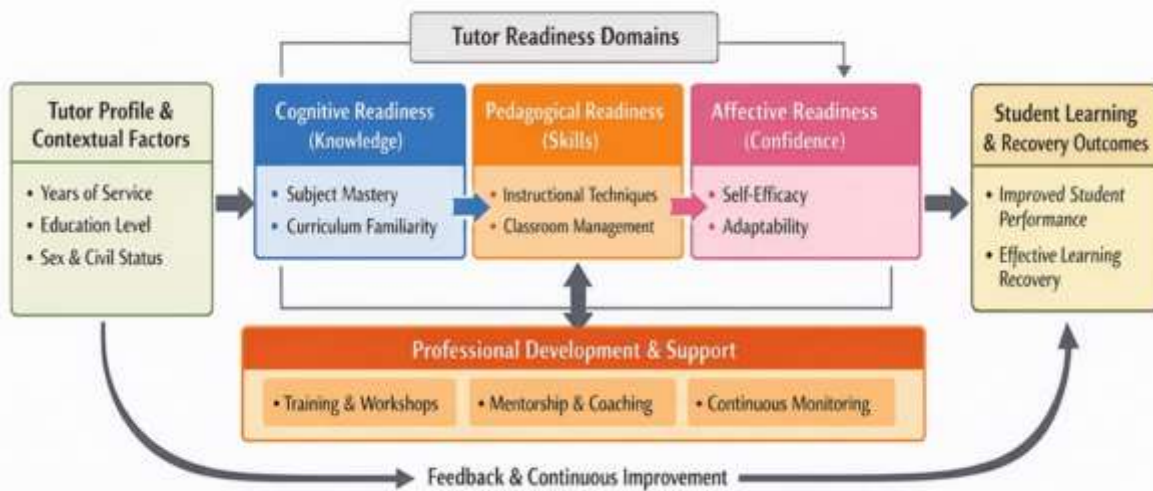


Figure 1: Tutor Readiness Assessment Framework (TRADF)

The Tutor Readiness Assessment Framework (TRADF) developed in this study is shown in figure

1. It represents a significant enhancement to the ARAL Program by providing a comprehensive

mechanism to evaluate and strengthen tutors' knowledge, skills, confidence, and emotional preparedness. Recognizing that tutor effectiveness extends beyond content expertise, the framework specifically addresses gaps in advanced pedagogical skills, particularly among tutors with undergraduate qualifications, through targeted professional development opportunities. TRADF emphasizes the integration of both academic and emotional dimensions of teaching, ensuring that tutors not only master instructional strategies but also develop essential "soft skills" such as classroom management, student engagement, and adaptive communication competencies that are critical for fostering a positive and productive learning environment (Timperley, 2022; Koh et al., 2023).

Functioning as a dynamic, competency-based system, TRADF prioritizes continuous assessment and tailored development, allowing for the identification of individual strengths and areas requiring improvement. It incorporates key domains, including Pedagogical Knowledge and Emotional Preparedness, which collectively guide personalized support interventions. Through the integration of mentorship programs, specialized training modules, and ongoing performance evaluation, the framework provides tutors with structured opportunities to refine their instructional practices, cultivate resilience, and build confidence in diverse classroom scenarios. By systematically addressing these multifaceted aspects of tutor readiness, TRADF ensures that tutors are well-equipped to meet the evolving academic and emotional needs of their students. Ultimately, this comprehensive approach enhances instructional quality, promotes sustained student engagement, and contributes to improved learning outcomes, thereby supporting the long-term effectiveness and success of the ARAL Program (Hew & Brush, 2020; Azevedo & Bernard, 2021).

The study concludes that the ARAL Program should prioritize supporting novice tutors through targeted professional development, aiming to bridge gaps in specialized skills, particularly in areas such as assessment and pedagogy. Investing in tutor readiness covering knowledge, skills, and confidence will lead to improved instructional quality,

benefiting both tutors and their students. In addition, fostering emotional preparedness is critical for effective classroom management and addressing the diverse needs of students in remediation settings. The program should also focus on addressing proficiency gaps in areas like assessment techniques and scaffolding, particularly among tutors with lower educational attainment. Implementing a structured development framework will help ensure that tutors continuously improve and reach a high standard of teaching, contributing to the overall success of the program.

The study provides several key recommendations to enhance the ARAL Program's effectiveness. First, evidence-based policies for tutor development should be created, addressing specific needs and allocating resources effectively. Additionally, local challenges should be assessed to refine training approaches and ensure that they are relevant and effective. The program should also promote continuous professional development by offering tutors opportunities to engage in self-guided learning, mentorship, and collaborative training sessions. Teachers and parents can play an important role by integrating best practices into their daily routines and supporting tutors' efforts. For learners, the ultimate benefit of these improvements is receiving instruction from well-prepared and confident tutors, leading to better learning outcomes. Finally, future research should focus on evaluating development models, such as self-guided development and community practices, and assess the long-term impact of the ARAL Program on student performance, helping to refine educational strategies and address issues related to equity and quality in education.

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