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Project Based Learning as a strategy to improve Reading Comprehension in Language among Preparatory Stage Learners

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Abstract

The present study investigated the effects of Project-based learning on the Reading Comprehension of English language learners in the preparation stage. The study was limited to third-graders, who are in the Preparatory Stage of the Indian educational system, in accordance with the National Education Policy (2020). The current investigation was experimental in character. A pre-test post-test control group design was used to collect the data. A total of 96 students (54 urban students and 42 rural students) were selected from 2 CBSE schools (I urban and 1 rural) by using random sampling technique. A self-made reading comprehension test was used to evaluate students' English language reading comprehension. While the control group was taught using traditional techniques, the experimental group was taught through project-based learning. The collected data was statistically analysed using mean, SD, T-test, and ANOVA. The study's findings demonstrated that students who got education through project-based learning differed considerably and favourably from those who received instruction in the traditional approach. Furthermore, rural students demonstrated a significant difference in their scores on reading comprehension in contrast to urban students. Overall, project-based learning proved to be effective in developing students reading comprehension in English language.

Keywords: *Project based learning, Reading Comprehension and Preparatory stage learners*

1. Introduction

The school is a unique social space where children who will be the community's future are educated, trained, and have their personalities developed. Various teaching strategies, suitable physical space, and a positive psychological environment all assist these children's development. Every expert in education and educational psychology of teaching and learning concurs that having a purpose, making sure the classroom's physical and social surroundings are suitable, teacher and student motivation for teaching and learning, the

cognitive, emotional, and motor readiness of the kids, the instructors' effective classroom management, their subject-matter expertise, and their enthusiasm for their jobs and the advancement of the students. In addition to preventing the development of behaviour and annoyance issues, the teacher works to create the ideal learning environment. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2013) states that in order to fulfill the rapidly evolving needs of the societies they serve, educational institutions in the modern world must continuously adapt. Teaching and learning cannot take place in a vacuum in formal educational settings. It occurs when components of the learning environment interact with one another. In a learning environment, the teaching-learning process consists of the teacher, the students, the content, the learning process, and the learning context. (Arul Laurence, 2012). Pritchett and Beatty (2012) assert that a school's learning environment—which encompasses its technology and educational materials, instructional strategies, learning preferences, and connections to regional and international contexts—is essential. The learning environment is a combination of human activities and material systems, just as ecology is a blend of living things and the physical environment. (Omolo and others, 2020). According to RTE (2009), the classroom should provide a child-friendly and child-centered learning environment. This will release the youngster from trauma, worry, and fear and enable him to freely express his ideas. According to Duruji et al. (2014), by encouraging efficient teaching and learning, a school with an appropriate learning environment helps to stimulate the intended learning objectives that would inspire extraordinary academic success. Classrooms that meet the demands of both individual and group learners should be available to modern students. To address this challenge, educational leaders must design engaging and impactful physical and cultural environments (Ikegbusi et al., 2021). Learning environments vary depending on the classroom and context, each with unique elements. The student's learning curve is influenced by the elements that comprise the learning environment. Omolo et al. (2020) list the following factors: curriculum, training, and teaching; people; instructional materials, technology tools, and learning resources; and the physical environment/learning space. A favourable learning environment is not something that just happens. They should be created using intentional strategies that promote learning activities in the classroom, include connecting with students in a good way and setting an example of positive behavior (Becton, 2017).

Students' motivation, classroom engagement, and the development of literacy and basic life skills have all been found to be impacted by various aspects of the learning environment (Ambrose et al., 2010). A language-rich environment is a nurturing learning setting that has been thoughtfully created to give kids the stimulation they need to successfully develop their language skills. Students regularly practice reading and writing as language literacy skills. Practitioners seize every opportunity to interact, communicate, and encourage sharing in situations when language is widely available. By encouraging pleasant interactions with children and enhancing their confidence in language usage, practitioners in language-rich environments are well-positioned to help children develop crucial communication skills. A language-rich environment encourages children to use language in everyday situations, supports their natural linguistic development, and offers them opportunities to learn the language. According to research, children's literacy development was

influenced by the kindergarten literacy frameworks (environment and experiences), (Nielson and Monson, 1996).

1.1. Project Based Learning and Reading Comprehension

As per Dijkstra et al. (2015), the learning environment encompasses the various patterns of school life experiences that have an impact on norms, values, goals, instructional strategies, the teaching-learning process, interpersonal relationships, leadership practices, and the organizational structures of the school as a whole. Students at lower learning levels can be advanced through the use of instructional techniques, which are deliberate, organized, and goal-oriented learning activities (such as memorizing facts and data or rote learning) to higher learning levels (such as using critical and creative thinking skills to understand complex and abstracted phenomena). To establish a helpful and encouraging learning environment, a teacher can employ a variety of teacher-centred and student-centred instructional tactics, such as: project-based education, activity-based learning, co-operative learning, collaborative learning, blended learning, experiential learning and game-based learning gives opportunities to students to practice and reflect upon what they are learning. Because such techniques actively involve students in ways that compel them to use a variety of modes of thinking and learning, they are excellent at promoting greater levels of learning. Effective learning settings can be facilitated by the quality of instructional design, as noted in Clark's key study from 1983 (Kanuka, H. (2005).

Project-based learning (PBL), which encourages learner-centred education through creative, interesting, and exploratory activities carried out outside of the classroom, is one of these strategies (Fried-Booth, 2002). Project-based learning (PBL) enables students to actively engage in the learning process, make decisions, and bring their interests to the classroom, according to Beckett and Miller (2006) and Gras-Velazquez (2019). As a result, it has a high potential to increase children's attention spans. Through in-depth research, data analysis, issue solving, conclusion generating, product production, and knowledge sharing, PBL entails students actively engaging in the learning process. In addition to providing students with 21st century skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, innovation, teamwork, and real-world communication abilities, the well-liked method known as Project-Based Learning (PBL) also greatly increases students' English language proficiency. PBL projects help students improve their time management, critical thinking, and feeling of accountability. Additionally, PBL's pillars—group study, teamwork, peer evaluation, and feedback—all enhance students' cooperation, feeling of community, and interpersonal skills. (Lou & Kim MacGregor, 2004; Railsback, 2002). Since English alone is insufficient for pupils to be proficient in the technologically demanding and fiercely competitive digital age, all of the aforementioned abilities are essential and important in the quickly evolving twenty-first century (Ananiadou & Claro, 2009; Saavedra & Opfer, 2012). Being process- and product-oriented in real-world contexts is another virtual aspect of PBL in an EFL setting. (Grabe & Stoller 1997). As a result, students develop their language proficiency in a real-world setting, use their practical knowledge and life experiences, and develop their creativity, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking abilities (Brunetti, Petrell, & Sawada, 2003; Poonpon, 2011; Solomon, 2003). In the The Buck Institute for Education (BIE) defines Project Based Learning (PBL) as an educational

strategy in the United States (2015). Over the past 25 years, this institution has played a crucial part in its growth. John Dewey's pedagogy regarding the benefits of experience and reflective learning forms the basis of this approach. Every learning process is framed by Dewey as a hands-on activity where students make choices to accomplish a goal. Because they promote a cognitive and behavioural framework to construct teacher teaching as well as a social activity for learning, neuroscience and psychology are cited in the concept of learning. PBA Dewey's pupil William Heard Kilpatrick advocated the Project Method, which was later adopted in language teaching and developed into a student-centered learning model. (Beckett and Gulbahar, 2006). This trend led to the development of numerous instructional frameworks and evaluation methods that enhance student engagement and foster language and content learning. PBL gives BIE students a setting in which to practice fundamental abilities like reading and math. Reading and math are not explicitly taught in this context, but students who participate in the inquiry process gain implicit abilities in a real-world setting.

The best approaches to give children in the classroom authentic reading experiences are through project-based learning, which entails forcing them to read and write for real purposes. In order to address the additional issues of inquiry that students independently generate, the initiative provides them with a real "need to read." By reading the authentic resources—which may be characterized as the body of knowledge that exists outside of the learning context in the context of writing and reading—the kids discover the answers. Bell (2010) asserts that Project Based Learning (PBL) enables students to become lifelong readers and attain the critical learning level necessary for success in the twenty-first century. Numerous research on language acquisition and literacy abilities indicate that children gain literacy skills through acquisition, which implies that they learn skills from their actual work rather than through explicit instruction. They develop their own strategies to improve their literacy and learning preferences after being provided the opportunity to try new things. Social factors are crucial for students to take control of their learning style and abilities, according to Gee et al. (2001). Students may have the opportunity to practice and advance their literacy skills through project-based learning. It encompasses more than just writing and reading; it includes all facets of literacy. Due to their inability to understand the purpose of the assigned book, a number of pupils struggled to be attentive readers. Students, however, desired to engage in a social environment that would foster their passion for reading, which PBL offers. PBL gives students the freedom to choose and produce their own projects, which helps them succeed. PBL also shows how kids can interact with their classmates to improve their reading skills. Through peer interaction, the students will learn how to use their skills in society. As students work on their projects, they develop a range of reading skills. Students are able to teach themselves and their peers' skills in this way. (Bell, 2010). In their study, Larson and Marsh (2014) discussed literacy skills and made the case that they can be taught through engaging with one another rather than just reading novels, answering questions, writing, or memorization.

2. Review of Literature

A comprehensive examination of the pertinent literature is essential to every research effort since it gives context and covers all prior research on the variables selected for the current study. It provides the conditions and background of the subject under study and aids the researcher in understanding prior

research. It enhances the individual's ability to contribute to the corpus of prior knowledge by either adding something entirely new or broadening the body of current information from a fresh perspective. It also enables the person to learn about earlier successes and advancements in the pertinent field. Research studies on project-based learning and the study's components, such as reading comprehension abilities, are presented in this part along with a review of pertinent literature.

The first qualitative case study of a novel and inventive high school student-led Project-Based Learning (PBL) Virtual Reality (VR) program was carried out by Morales et al. (2013). The findings demonstrated that PBL can be successful even when teachers provide little direction. The results supported an educational strategy for a subset of kids, who merit much further research to fully realize its strong potential for self-directed and peer-mentored learning. The usefulness of environmental science projects in evaluating students' environmental knowledge and attitudes toward science was examined by Balushi and Aamri (2014). According to the study, students' participation in environmental initiatives improved their scientific attitudes and environmental knowledge in a statistically significant way. The study also guarantees that PBL can be used within the school premises, with few resources, and within the time allotted by the instructor and topic guide. In order to better understand how fourth-grade science students studying "Electricity in Our Lives" responded to project-based learning in terms of academic achievement, attitude, and information retention, Kracalli and Korur (2014) conducted a study. “According to the results of the forms, students who use the method are able to evaluate changes in their own behaviour and build their own learning. In order to determine whether Project Based Learning (PBL) affects secondary school students' cognitive, behavioural, and emotional characteristics, Cynthia and Shannon (2015) carried out a study. The study examined how 25 students' behavioural, cognitive, and emotional engagement changed when they learned two distinct chemistry units utilizing the PBL technique versus when they didn't. Tests, surveys, attendance logs, and checklists were the instruments used to gauge the degree of participation. The study's findings showed that PBL had an impact on students' cognitive engagement in a single unit. In both units, there was a high level of emotional engagement. Therefore, there was no evidence that the implementation of PBL had an impact on students' emotional engagement. The usefulness of the seven steps of the Project Based Learning Model (PjBL) in enhancing students' productive competencies was investigated by Jalinus et al. (2017). The findings demonstrated that using the seven PBL phases was a useful and efficient way to improve students' productive competencies. Oktay and Oktay (2017) attempted to find out if the Project Based Learning approach has a substantial impact on seventh-grade students' academic performance in the structure and characteristics of matter. The experimental and control groups' scores, which were derived from their "Achievement test" post-test performance, did not differ significantly, according to the data. According to the study, pre-activities based on project-based learning should be implemented to help teachers and students adjust before treatment, and discussions should be conducted based on literature. An investigation was carried out by Ahmad and Ahmad (2018) to find out how project-based learning affected the achievement and self-efficacy of student teachers. The findings demonstrated that the experimental group benefited from Project-Based Learning, as evidenced by statistically significant differences in self-efficacy

and achievement scores between the experimental and control groups. A study by Huan and Cih (2019) examined the overall impact of project-based learning on students' academic performance. When compared to traditional instruction, project-based learning had a medium to substantial beneficial impact on students' academic achievement, according to the analysis, which revealed that the overall mean weighted effect size (d+) was 0.71. Furthermore, topic area, school location, length of teaching, and information technology support all had an impact on the mean effect size; however, educational stage and small group size had no influence. Through the use of Project Based Learning (PBL) with the support of E-Learning through Lesson Study activities, Widyaningsih et al. (2020) investigated the potential for enhancing the quality of learning in physics learning planning courses. The findings indicated that the learning environment appeared to be very enjoyable and that student-learning outcomes raised student responses to good learning. In 2022, Wiratmo, Wirawati, and Sulistyawati studied eighth-grade children at SMPN 43 Surabaya, Indonesia. Their study showed that PBL implementation greatly enhanced students' notice text reading comprehension. The results showed that PBL promoted greater student engagement and creativity in learning activities in addition to improving reading achievement. Stevkovska's 2023 study looked at PBL's application in higher education courses for English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The study came to the conclusion that PBL greatly improves academic reading abilities by involving students in meaningful and cooperative projects, which fosters critical thinking and deeper learning. García, Agila, & Calahorrano examined the effects of PBL on English reading comprehension in the Ecuadorian curriculum in 2024. Through contextualized and participatory learning experiences, PBL successfully enhances reading comprehension, according to their literature analysis. However, they also identified challenges such as the need for teacher training and project adaptation to local contexts.

A review of the aforementioned studies shows that not much research has been done on project-based learning and students' English language reading abilities. Thus, the gaps in this field's study have been identified. The first research gap is that, since project-based learning has been shown to be one of the most successful methods for teaching science, the majority of studies have focused on it and students' science attainment only (Balushi and Aamri 2014). Second, it has been noted that, in contrast to an increase in students' reading comprehension, project-based learning encourages creativity and deeper thinking in middle-level pupils. Students that struggle with traditional approaches can improve their performance with PBL (Kracalli and Korur, 2014). The third research gap is that, when compared to primary school students, project-based learning has been shown to be highly effective in fostering higher order thinking skills, particularly critical, abstract, and reflective thinking, for higher grade students. Apart from this, most of the project-based learning studies have been conducted in Western countries and very few studies are found in Indian Context, so keeping in mind all these research gaps, this study was conducted to examine the effect of project-based learning on English reading comprehension among learners in the preparatory stage in Indian settings. As project-based learning has its unique relevance in creating a student-centred, highly motivated learning environment which is mandatory for enhancement of student’s literacy skills specifically reading comprehension skill of learners at varied levels.

Statement of the Problem

EFFECT OF PROJECT BASED LEARNING ON READING COMPREHENSION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE AMONG PREPARATORY STAGE LEARNERS

Delimitations of the Study

1. The study was delimited to the Gurdaspur city only.
2. The study was confined to Urban and Rural (CBSE) schools of Gurdaspur.
3. The study was delimited to Preparatory Stage students of 3rd grade only.
4. This study was confined to Reading comprehension in English Language of 3rd grade students.

Objectives of the Study

1. To prepare lesson plans on project-based learning for reading comprehension in English language.
2. To study the effect of Project based learning on Reading Comprehension in English language among 3rd grade students.
3. To study the Reading Comprehension in English language among 3rd grade students taught through Project based learning with respect to locale.
4. To study the interaction between treatment and locale on the gain scores of Reading Comprehension among 3rd grade students.

Hypotheses of the Study

1. There was no significant difference in the mean gain scores of Reading Comprehension in English language among 3rd grade students taught through Project based learning and Conventional learning method.
2. There was no significant difference in the mean gain scores of Reading Comprehension among 3rd grade students taught through Project based learning with respect to locale.
3. There was no interaction between treatment and locale on the mean gain scores of Reading Comprehension in English Language among 3rd grade students.

3. Methodology

3.1 Measures

A self-prepared Reading Comprehension test in English was used to measure the reading comprehension of 3rd grade students. Test items were prepared according to the syllabi of the class. A total of 60 items were prepared in the first draft of the reading comprehension test. Then expert views were taken and a final draft of the test contained 20 test items. Lesson Plans on Project-based learning were prepared to provide students better learning experiences. The steps of project- based learning model which is developed by Hosnan (2016) were followed to prepare the lesson plans and these steps are: i) Determining Project, ii) Project Steps Planning, iii) Schedule Preparation, iv) Monitoring, v) Reports, Preparation and Presentation. Rusman & Bidarra (2017) states that the advantages of the project-based learning model is that it makes learning more enjoyable and engaging.

3.2 Sample and Sampling Design

In the present study, experimental design with pre-test and post-test (Experimental group and Control group) of quantitative research technique was used. A sample of 96 (54 urban students and 42 rural students) was selected from two CBSE schools of Gurdaspur city. A random sampling technique was used to select the sample. Before conducting the study and implementation of the strategy, consent from the principals of the schools was taken. Then the selected sample was divided into two groups i.e. experimental group and control group. The pre-test of both groups was taken. Experimental group was taught through project based learning and traditional teaching method was used to teach students of conventional group. After the treatment, post-test was conducted for the experimental and control group).

3.3 Statistical Analysis

The data was evaluated using the relevant statistical techniques such as Mean, SD, T-test and ANOVA (Analysis of Variance).

3.4 Analysis and Interpretation

HYPOTHESIS – 1

"There was no significant difference in the mean gain scores of Reading Comprehension in English Language among 3rd grade students taught through Project based learning and Conventional learning method".

TABLE 1.1

SHOWING MEAN GAIN SCORE, SD, AND T- VALUE OF EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUP WITH RESPECT TO READING COMPREHENSION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Group/Method	N	Mean Gain Score	S. D	df	t-Value	Remarks
Experimental Group	48	8.00	4.43	94	4.37	Significant at 0.05 level
Control Group	48	1.79	2.05			

Significant at 0.05 level**

It is evident from Table 1.1 which shows that the mean gain scores in Reading Comprehension in English language of the Experimental and Control Group were 8.00 and 1.79 and the value of SD for the two groups was 4.43 and 2.05 respectively. It's further indicated that the t-value of the two groups was 4.37, which was higher than the table value (1.97) at 0.05 level of confidence. Hence, there was a significant difference between the Experimental group (taught through Project based learning) and Control Group (taught through conventional learning method) on their Reading Comprehension in English language. Thus, the Null Hypothesis *"There was no significant difference in the mean gain scores of Reading Comprehension among 3rd grade students taught through Project based learning and Conventional learning method"* was rejected.

HYPOTHESIS – 2

"There was no significant difference in the mean gain scores of Reading Comprehension among 3rd grade students taught through Project based learning with respect to locale".

TABLE 1.2

SHOWING MEAN GAIN SCORE, SD, AND T- VALUE OF EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUP OF READING COMPREHENSION WITH RESPECT TO LOCALE

Variable	Gender	N	Mean Gain Score	SD	t-value	Remarks
Reading Comprehension Skill	Urban	54	5.14	4.11	2.47	Significant at 0.05 level
	Rural	42	5.56	3.42		

Significant at 0.05 level**

From the table 1.2, it is found that the mean gain score of urban school students 5.14 and the rural school students were 5.56. It was found that the t-value was 2.47, which was greater than the table value (1.97) at 0.05 level of confidence. So, our Null Hypothesis *"There was no significant difference in the mean gain scores of Reading Comprehension among 3rd grade students taught through Project based learning with respect to locale" was rejected*." As a result, children's reading comprehension in urban and rural schools differed significantly. Because students in rural schools received instruction through project-based learning, their mean gain scores were greater than those of students in urban schools. It can be concluded that project-based learning improved the performance of rural pupils. According to Kumar & Kaur (2015) study exposed that rural student performed better through innovative pedagogical methods rather than urban students. The main reason is that rural students have sharp minded and they enjoyed everything, which helps to learn easily through environmental and innovative pedagogical methods very effectively.

HYPOTHESIS – 3

"There was no interaction between treatment and locale on the mean gain scores of Reading Comprehension among 3rd grade students"

TABLE 1.3

SHOWING SUMMARY TABLE OF TWO-WAY ANOVA OF TREATMENT AND LOCALE ON READING COMPREHENSION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Sources of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Sum of Squares	F	Significance
Locale (A)	407.30	1	205.28	4.87	.000
Treatment (B)	105.206	1	175.565	700.660	.000
Locale * Treatment (AxB)	14.12	1	46.111	5.280	.002
Error	2056.464	93	26.231		
Total	2567.049	96			

From table 1.3 also discloses that f-value for the interaction impact of Locale and Treatment on Reading Comprehension of students were .002, which was significant at 0.05 level of confidence. The high interaction effect implies that locality and treatment (delivered through Project based learning) have major impact on Reading comprehension of pupils. Thus, the Null Hypothesis, *"There was no interaction between treatment and locale on the mean gain scores of Reading Comprehension among 3rd grade students" was rejected.*

Discussion of Findings

According to the study's findings, pupils who were exposed to project-based learning showed notable and positive differences from those who were exposed to the conventional learning method. According to the study's findings, students in the experimental group outperformed those in the control group in reading comprehension. Thus, project-based learning has a significant positive impact on the reading comprehension skills of children in the preparation stage. The results of the study showed that students in rural schools who participated in project-based learning were better able to develop their reading comprehension abilities than students in urban schools. A study by summers and Dickinson (2012) provides relevant insights. They found that students from a PBL-implemented rural high school had a significantly higher percentage of students scoring proficient or above on state assessments compared to their urban counterparts. This implies that PBL can be especially helpful in rural areas, possibly because of its ability to involve students in meaningful, practical learning experiences and its adaptation to local situations. The main reason is that rural students have sharp minded and they enjoyed everything, which helps to learn easily through environmental and innovative pedagogical methods very effectively. Projects inspire educators and students to go beyond what is taught in textbooks, develop original concepts, strengthen social skills, and lay the groundwork for automatic learning. They make it possible for students to become more involved. They assist in overcoming major flaws and difficulties with conventional teaching techniques.

Educational Implications of the Study

It has been found from various studies that project based learning benefits language learners in a drastic manner. Therefore, policies pertaining to the implementation of project-based learning at the school level should be developed by educationists, and professional development training for teachers should be given careful consideration. Project-based learning has the following educational implications: 1) It can be successfully used in elementary schools to accomplish a variety of goals, and it can be experimentally adopted for all disciplines to raise students' overall achievement. 2) Teacher training institutions should be especially careful to teach teacher candidates how to employ this tactic since it has a major impact on raising achievement. 3) Teachers should also be given the tools, in-service training, and encouragement they need to apply blended learning more successfully and purposefully. Project based learning is efficient for inclusive classroom settings because it provides benefit to all students irrespective of their gender and learning styles. 4) The carefully thought-out content of the reading activities that were employed, which attempts to enhance students' reading comprehension skills, is another potential primary explanation. Each lesson's procedures and outcomes were driven by a specific stage in the core curriculum for both the instructor and the students. Students'

comprehension of what they read is therefore positively impacted by the well-planned activities of project-based learning. 5) Additionally, the teaching approach is largely responsible for the significant increase in the students' reading comprehension levels. To encourage participants to take part in these projects, it should be developed to include both the learners' ability level and the amount of difficulty posed by the project activities themselves. To be clear, there were a variety of objectives and activities in the educational program. From the most basic (literal level) to the most difficult (critical level), these tasks varied in difficulty from simple (literal level) to moderate (inferential level) to harsh (critical level). The range of reading comprehension level difficulties prompted a variety of questions to be utilized in reading comprehension sessions. This feature allows students of various grade levels to actively engage in the project exercises.

Conclusion

The results of this study demonstrate how Project-Based Learning (PBL) improves English reading comprehension, especially for rural pupils. By engaging learners in meaningful, hands-on projects, Project based learning fosters deeper understanding, critical thinking, and increased motivation to read. Because project-based learning is participatory, it not only improves literacy skills but also increases overall academic achievement by making learning more interesting and meaningful. Additionally, the study indicates that by offering a more student-centred and experienced approach to learning, project-based learning helps close the educational gap between rural and urban pupils. Rural students, who often face limited access to resources and traditional lecture-based teaching, benefit significantly from Project based learning emphasis on collaboration, creativity, and real-world application. To sum up, using project-based learning as a teaching method in rural schools can be a beneficial step toward raising academic achievement and English reading comprehension. Future research should explore long-term effects and best practices for integrating Project based learning in different educational settings to maximize its effectiveness.

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