



TEACHERS' PREPAREDNESS AND PERCEIVED ADHERENCE TO DEPED MATATAG CURRICULUM

RIAGEN SIAROT LANGUIDO

DepED

ABSTRACT :

This study sought to ascertain the preparedness of educators and their adherence to the Department of Education's MATATAG Curriculum. Employing an explanatory sequential design, quantitative data was initially collected to establish a correlation between teacher readiness including logical reasoning, behavioral management, stress resilience, and professional development and the effective implementation of key curriculum components: Catch-up Fridays, HOTS-SOLO, and GMRC.

Quantitative findings revealed statistically significant positive associations between teacher preparedness and the successful execution of these components. Behavioral preparedness exhibited a strong influence on GMRC, while stress management and professional growth emerged as pivotal predictors for HOTS-SOLO. Notably, Catch-up Fridays demonstrated limited dependence on teacher preparedness, suggesting that external factors such as administrative support play a more significant role.

The qualitative phase identified two global themes which are navigating professional demands through strategic preparation and continuous growth and comprehensive and collaborative teaching approaches to ensure effective curriculum implementation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Preparedness is an individual's capacity to adapt to challenging situations. An individual who possesses high levels of preparation tend to be resilient and could have greater self-efficacy and self-esteem (Stanley et al., 2018). Through preparation, individuals are grounded on positive adaptation which enables flexibility and allows individuals to find the meaning and purpose in conflict and change (Van Buren, 2019).

Teachers who are well-prepared have the capability to overcome their personal and environmental vulnerabilities which enables them to maintain their commitment to their profession even though they face work-related challenges, work pressures, and work demands (Platsidou & Daniilidou, 2021). As mentioned by Kowitartawatee and Limphaibool (2022), it is already understood that teaching is quote an emotionally demanding job and leads to high levels of stress and anxiety compared to other occupations.

In the words of Van Wingerden and Poell (2019), teachers are always under constant job demand changes and are required to gain new skills. With the announcement of the new educational paradigm shift of the Department of Education which is the MATATAG Curriculum, it is expected that teachers shall once again have to adjust and cope with new challenges and work expectations. However, teachers who have high levels of preparation ultimately have greater capacity to go beyond surviving challenges but also have to capability to continue their professional development which ultimately results to high-quality teaching.

The researcher identified a knowledge gap. Based on the works of Schmid et al. (2022), studies about preparedness in school settings usually focused on the context of general education. Mostly, studies about teacher preparedness are about pre-school and university students (Gates, 2018). Due to this, studies about teacher preparedness *are not given* much attention. Also, because of the novelty of the MATATAG Curriculum of the Department of Education, there is still scant evidence about what it really is and how teachers respond to it. Due to this, a knowledge gap has been identified. As defined by Miles (2017), a knowledge gap exists if there is little to no existing data in the actual field.

With the new educational paradigm in sight, it is advised that education researchers keep abreast with it. Hence, the researcher decided to come up with this study. Not only is it due to the knowledge gap that the researcher was compelled to conceptualize this study, but also due to the novelty of the concepts. Since the MATATAG Curriculum is very new, it is wise that seminal work about it would be performed, and the researcher intends to be among those who study it during its early stages.

Statement of the Problem

This study intends to determine the influence of an individual's preparedness particularly on the part of the teachers towards their ability to meet the mandate of the Department of Education which is on the MATATAG Curriculum. To be specific, the researcher sought answers to the following research questions:

PHASE 1: Teachers' Preparedness and the Implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum

1. What is the extent of teachers' preparedness in terms of their logical domain, behavioral domain, stress response, and personal and professional growth.
2. What is the extent of the implementation of DepEd's MATATAG Curriculum in terms of Catch-up Fridays, Higher-Order Thinking Skills – Structure of Observed Learning Outcomes (HOTS-SOLO), and the Good Manners and Right Conduct (GMRC)?
3. Is there a significant relationship between teachers' preparedness and implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum of DepEd?
4. Is there a significant influence in the teachers' preparedness towards the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum?

PHASE 2: Lived Experiences of teachers in the preparation and implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum

5. What are the lived experiences of teachers in relation to preparedness for the new curriculum?
6. How do teachers' guarantee the implementation of the new curriculum proposed by DepEd?

Hypotheses of the Study

Based on the research questions, the hypotheses below have been conceptualized which were tested.

1. 1: There is no significant relationship between teachers' preparedness and the implementation of DepEd's MATATAG Curriculum.
2. 2: The indicators of preparedness do not influence the implementation of DepEd's MATATAG Curriculum.

Significance of the Study

The study of teacher preparedness is of great importance especially during this time. With this study, benefits in the implementation of the new curriculum may be attained. Also, a new understanding about the necessity for preparedness among public school teachers would also be brought to surface. In the meantime, the researcher considers this study to be significant to the following beneficiaries:

1. School Administrators. Through their influence, they could help to understand how the preparedness of school teachers are necessary to implement the programs of DepEd. This way, school administrators are better able to plan policies to support and promote teachers' preparedness as they meet new policies from DepEd central office. Also, through them, teachers would be able to gain profound understanding about the need for adherence to the MATATAG Curriculum of the department. Through this, the entire school could function in unison to guarantee that students are being prepared for the uncertainties of the future.
2. Teachers. With the results of this study, teachers could be able to understand the different factors which could influence their preparedness. In addition, public school teachers could utilize the results of this study in coming up with best practices which they could adopt for themselves and for their school so that they may become active agents who shall implement the MATATAG Curriculum for it to be fully realized especially in the grassroots level.
3. Stakeholders. The results of the study may help stakeholders to realize their vitality in taking part in school's planning and execution of policies. Moreover, parents and guardians, community members, and government and non-government agencies may see the essence of coming together to be able to support schools in the realization of the new curriculum of the Department of Education to ensure that students would gain the competencies expected out of them during this period.
4. Students. The results of this research may help students to learn the value of preparation as well. Since the life of a student is a challenging one, it is also vital that they have the capacity to be flexible as they juggle the occurrences which are happening in their personal and scholarly lives. They also need to be active participants of the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum of the Department of Education as it will greatly benefit them as they prepare for the challenges and uncertainties of the 21st century.
5. Future Researchers. The outcomes of this study could be used as basis for further research in the field of education management and curriculum development. As this study gives emphasis on preparedness, researchers may be able to utilize the results to advance understanding on this aspect. They may also make use the results for the basis of assigning dimensions for preparedness in their own research. Further, they could be able to explore the MATATAG Curriculum at an in-depth manner since the researcher has already provided seminal work on it through this study. Furthermore, the researcher acknowledges that there is no such thing as a perfect research study. This means that future researchers may refute the results of this study. Then again, this is the whole point of doing research studies, the active construction of new knowledge.

Scope and Delimitation of the study

The whole agenda for the conduct of this research is to determine the relationship and possible influence that preparedness have towards the public-school teachers' adherence capacity with the Department of Education's MATATAG Curriculum. With this, public school teachers from the Division Offices of Cotabato and Kidapawan shall be chosen as respondents for the survey and participants for the interview. These individuals must be considered to properly answer the questions of this mixed methods research. The study shall be conducted during the school year 2023-2024.

This study will have an independent and a dependent variable. The researcher identified preparedness as the independent variable composed of dimensions such as logical domain, behavioral domain, stress response, and personal and professional growth. Meanwhile, the dependent variable is the DepEd's MATATAG Curriculum broken down into components parts namely the Catch-up Fridays, HOTS-SOLO, and GMRC.

In terms of the delimitations of this study, the researcher will not include private school teachers since their schools also have different dynamics in relation to the implementation of the curriculum. Additionally, other geographies would not be considered in this study since the researcher lack access to these areas. In the event that the researcher would persist in doing so, she might end up encountering hurdles and stumble blocks which could delay the conduct of this study and even incur financial burden on her part.

II. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The researcher made use of the mixed-methods research design for this study.

Quantitative Method. This employed a descriptive correlation design. The reason why the researcher made use of such a design is to determine the extent of the preparedness of teachers in relation to their logical domain, behavioral domain, stress response, and personal and professional growth. The design also aids the researcher in determining the extent of the teachers' capacity to adhere to the implementation of the **MATATAG** Curriculum of the Department of Education. Ultimately, through the quantitative method, the researcher would be able to determine the relationship between teachers' preparedness and their adherence to the said curriculum. Further, it could aid in identifying the dimensions of preparedness which could influence the teachers' ability to support the implementation of the curriculum.

Qualitative Method. The researcher drew upon the methodologies in qualitative research so that an explanatory element would be embedded in this study. The reason why the researcher would make use of the qualitative method is to gain answers on questions regarding their lived experiences about preparedness as well as on the manner of their adherence and support for implementation of the newly proposed curriculum of DepEd. To do this, the researcher included the participation of Key Informant Interviews who answered the interview questions which were prepared by the researcher in this study.

Respondents of the Study

In the conduct of this research, the researcher tapped into the available Grade 7 public secondary school teachers among the schools in Cotabato and Kidapawan Division.

Locale of the Study

The locale for this research study is in the Schools Division Office of Cotabato and Kidapawan. The respondents and the participants of this research came from the said geographies to ensure representation pertaining teacher preparedness and adherence to the new curriculum.

Research instrument

For the researcher to be able to answer the research questions of this mixed-methods study, there was a need to prepare two sets of instruments.

For the first phase which is quantitative research, the researcher prepared a survey questionnaire. The survey questionnaire shed light to the first four (4) research questions which were posted on the initial chapter.

Part I, gauged on the preparedness of teachers such as logical domain, behavioral domain, stress response, and personal and professional growth. These were based on the framework provided by Feldon (2007) as he proposed in his work. *The survey questionnaire to be used for this study is close-ended, which means that the respondents answered the quantitative part using a Likert Scale.*

Part II pertains with the DepEds Matatag Curriculum which was composed of questions on the implementation of Catch-up Fridays, HOTS-SOLO, and the GMRC. The basis for the instrument came from the mandate of the Department of Education in relation to what should be expected out of each component of the MATATAG.

Meanwhile, to be able to answer the fifth and sixth research question, the researcher made use of an interview guide. The interview guide questions asked the participants about the lived experiences of teachers in relation to their preparedness. It also inquired about how the teachers adhere and implemented the new curriculum mandated by the Department of Education. The interview questions were composed of main questions which directly sought answers to the subject matter. In addition, the researcher also asked probing questions.

Data Gathering Procedure

For the researcher to gather all of the data needed in this research, the following procedures were observed:

Prior to the actual gather of the data, the researcher sought for the approval of higher authorities. In this case, the researcher sent a letter to the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) of the Schools Division Office (SDO) of Kidapawan City and Cotabato Division. The letter asked for this approval that the study was conducted among the public-school teachers who are under his supervision.

Then, the approved letter of the SDS was attached to the communication letter which was sent to the Public Schools District Supervisor (PSDS) of the SDOs. This way, they were made aware about the conduct of this study under the district which they supervise. Once they were already made aware of this academic endeavor, the researcher then proceeded to the sending of letter and survey questionnaires to the respondents of this research.

The research respondents were given enough time to answer the survey. They were given a few hours to a few days in case they were engrossed with work since the nature of the teaching profession is always cramped and the schedules are hectic. When they were already through in answering the survey questions, the researcher retrieved the survey questions for review. In case there was an item in the questionnaire that was unanswered, the researcher called the attention of the respondent and ask him or her to answer it. Through this process, the researcher ensured that no data were spoiled or no data were missing.

When all of the survey questionnaires from the respondents were collected, the researcher tabulated the responses. This was in preparation for the statistical treatment of the data. By this means, the data was arranged for it to be analyzable and could be interpreted by the researcher. As for the phase two of this mixed methods study, the researcher prepared the interview questions which were already validated by experts. Then, the researcher proceeded to the identification of the interview participants who have met the criteria for the selection.

Data Analysis

With the use of the mixed methods design for this study, the researcher employed two types of data analyses – statistical treatments/analysis and thematic analysis. These two were discussed at length below:

For the first phase which is on the quantitative nature of this mixed methods research, the researcher made use of descriptive statistics particularly the Weighted Mean to answer SOPs 1 and 2. By making use of the weighted mean, the researcher was able to achieve the identification of the extent of the teachers' preparedness (Gunawat et al., 2015). The researcher could also achieve the identification of the respondents' extent of capacity to adhere to the MATATAG Curriculum of DepEd.

Moreover, inferential statistical was used to answer SOP 3 in which Spearman Rho was utilized. Through the use of such a statistical tool, the researcher was able to prove or disprove the existence of a relationship between the independent and the dependent variable (Temizhan et al., 2022). As for SOP 4, inferential statistics which is Multiple Linear Regression was used to ascertain the influence that the dimensions of the independent variable have towards the dimensions of the dependent variable (Cox et al., 2021).

Meanwhile, to answer the fifth and sixth research questions, the researcher utilized the thematic analysis. By making use of this type of analysis, the researcher was able to draw out important details surrounding the interview participants' lived experiences with regards to preparedness as well as on how the teachers ensure that they are able to adhere to the mandate of the new MATATAG Curriculum of the Department of Education.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Phase 1 of the Study: Extent of Teachers' Preparedness

Table 1 presents data on teachers' utilization of logical reasoning in their professional endeavors, indicating a weighted mean of 4.31 and a description of "Strongly Agree." The educators exhibited confidence in their capacity to devise and execute lessons logically, employ logical reasoning to resolve classroom challenges, and structure lessons in alignment with learning objectives effectively. Research has demonstrated that explicit logic training enhances educators' capacity to structure lessons and model metacognitive skills, corroborating the original data's findings of robust teacher confidence in logical planning and problem-solving (Kozulin, 2021).

Table 2 evaluates the level of teachers' preparedness in the behavioral domain, revealing a weighted mean score of 4.39, indicating a strong agreement among respondents. The teachers exhibited a high level of effectiveness in managing classroom behavior, effectively adapting their teaching strategies to accommodate student needs, and consistently enforcing classroom rules for the students' benefit. When educators adopt proactive strategies, such as establishing clear expectations, reinforcing positive behavior, and utilizing reflective dialogue, they foster a classroom culture that encourages student responsibility and collaboration (Nugroho et al., 2025).

Table 3 evaluates the level of teachers' preparedness in managing stress, revealing a weighted mean of 4.24, indicating a strong agreement. Teachers generally expressed confidence in their ability to handle stressful situations, possess effective stress management strategies, and effectively recover from stressful events. Extensive research has demonstrated that effective stress management and a commitment to personal and professional growth are essential traits among highly effective educators (Jeyapriya & Jayachithra, 2023).

Table 4 evaluates the level of teachers' preparedness in terms of personal and professional development, indicating a weighted mean of 4.42 and a description of "Strongly Agree." The teachers demonstrated a strong commitment to continuously seeking opportunities for professional development, recognizing the positive impact of personal growth on their teaching processes, and adapting to changes in the teaching profession. Teachers who actively seek out innovative methods and remain current with educational trends demonstrate a proactive stance toward professional development (Ramírez-Montoya et al., 2021).

Table 5 evaluates the extent of implementation of the Department of Education's (DepEd) MATATAG Curriculum in terms of Catch-up Fridays. The weighted mean score is 4.00, indicating a "Agree" response. Teachers generally concur that they maximize Catch-up Fridays for remediation and find these sessions effective in addressing literacy deficiencies. Additionally, they report that their activities for Catch-up Fridays are well-prepared and that they effectively utilize this time to provide individualized attention to students requiring intervention. Effective time management and instructional flexibility are fundamental components of responsive teaching (Olivo, 2021), particularly in specialized programs designed to address learning disparities.

Table 6 assesses the extent of implementation of the Department of Education's (DepEd) MATATAG Curriculum in terms of Higher Order Thinking Skills-Structure of Observed Learning Outcomes (HOTS-SOLO). The weighted mean score of 4.26 indicates a strong consensus among the teachers. They demonstrated a strong commitment to integrating HOTS-SOLO into their lessons, employing its approaches to foster critical thinking and assess students effectively. Furthermore, they acknowledged HOTS-SOLO's role in guiding students through discussions and problem-solving activities. The effective integration of HOTS-SOLO into teaching practices demonstrates a profound commitment to fostering students' higher-order thinking and cognitive development (Cojorn, 2024).

Table 7 evaluates the extent of implementation of the Department of Education's (DepEd) MATATAG Curriculum in the domain of Good Manners and Right Conduct (GMRC). The weighted mean score is 4.53, indicating a strong agreement among teachers. They demonstrated a strong commitment to integrating GMRC into their teaching practices, modeling appropriate behavior for their students, and assessing its effectiveness in promoting positive conduct. The effective implementation of GMRC within the classroom setting reflects the teachers' unwavering commitment to character education and holistic student development (Afafe, 2024).

Table 8 presents the correlation matrix examining the relationship between teachers' preparedness and the implementation of the Department of Education's (DepEd) MATATAG Curriculum, specifically in Catch-up Fridays, HOTS-SOLO, and GMRC. Utilizing Spearman's Rho correlation coefficient, the results indicate statistically significant positive correlations across all domains of teacher preparedness, with p-values of 0.000. These findings provide evidence to reject the null hypotheses, which asserted that there was no significant relationship between teachers' preparedness and the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum, nor did the indicators of preparedness influence its implementation.

The logical domain of teacher preparedness exhibits a moderate correlation with Catch-up Fridays ($r = 0.513$) and stronger correlations with HOTS-SOLO ($r = 0.662$) and GMRC ($r = 0.773$). This suggests that teachers with well-developed logical skills possess the capacity to implement activities that necessitate higher-order thinking and impart a strong emphasis on education. Conversely, the behavioral domain exhibits strong correlations with all three implementation indicators, with the highest correlation observed in GMRC ($r = 0.800$). This implies that teachers' behavioral preparedness significantly influences their ability to foster appropriate conduct and manners among students.

Furthermore, teachers' stress response demonstrates substantial correlations, particularly with HOTS-SOLO ($r = 0.772$) and GMRC ($r = 0.767$), indicating that stress-resilient teachers exhibit enhanced effectiveness in promoting critical thinking and character education. Additionally, personal and professional growth exhibits strong associations, with the highest correlation observed in GMRC ($r = 0.793$). This reinforces the notion that continuous professional development enhances teachers' efficacy in delivering values-based instruction. Stress management and resilience sustain teacher effectiveness, especially in challenging situations (Pozo-Rico et al. 2023).

The present study investigated the impact of teachers' preparedness on the implementation of the Department of Education's (DepEd) MATATAG Curriculum, particularly in relation to Catch-up Fridays. Table 9 presents the statistical findings, indicating that the overall model is highly significant at the 1% level (F-value of 11.746, p-value of 0.000). However, the regression coefficient $R^2 = 0.353$ suggests that only 35.3% of the variation in Catch-up Fridays' implementation can be attributed to teachers' preparedness, while the remaining 64.7% is attributed to other factors not included in the model. Further analysis of the individual predictors revealed that none of the measured domains—logical domain, behavioral domain, stress response, and personal and professional growth—had a statistically significant impact on Catch-up Fridays' implementation. All probability values exceeded the 0.05 threshold. The logical domain yielded a negative coefficient ($\beta = -0.044$, $p = 0.860$), suggesting minimal influence. The behavioral domain showed a positive coefficient ($\beta = 0.226$, $p = 0.490$), but its effect remained statistically insignificant. Similarly, stress response ($\beta = 0.312$, $p = 0.212$) and personal and professional growth ($\beta = 0.258$, $p = 0.220$) demonstrated weak predictive power, indicating that while these factors may contribute to preparedness, they do not significantly drive the effectiveness of Catch-up Fridays. Teacher preparedness, encompassing cognitive skills, behavioral strategies, stress management, and ongoing professional development, is crucial for curriculum implementation (Little & Paul, 2021).

The study also investigated the influence of teachers' preparedness on the implementation of the Department of Education's (DepEd) MATATAG Curriculum, specifically in terms of Higher-Order Thinking Skills – Structure of Observed Learning Outcomes (HOTS-SOLO). The results presented in Table 10 indicate that the overall model exhibits a high level of significance, with an F-value of 72.301 and a probability of 0.000. This suggests that teachers' preparedness exerts a substantial impact on the implementation of HOTS-SOLO. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R^2) equals 0.771, indicating that 77.1% of the variance in HOTS-SOLO implementation can be attributed to teachers' preparedness, while the remaining 22.9% is influenced by factors beyond the scope of the model.

Among the four domains of teacher preparedness, stress response ($\beta = 0.781$, $p = 0.000$) and personal and professional growth ($\beta = 0.529$, $p = 0.000$) emerged as significant predictors, both at the 1% significance level. This finding suggests that teachers who possess effective stress management skills and continuously engage in professional development are more likely to implement HOTS-SOLO successfully. Their ability to adapt, cope with challenges, and enhance their teaching competencies plays a pivotal role in fostering higher-order thinking skills among students.

In contrast, the logical domain ($\beta = -0.167$, $p = 0.213$) and the behavioral domain ($\beta = -0.145$, $p = 0.413$) did not exhibit statistically significant effects on HOTS-SOLO implementation. This indicates that cognitive reasoning and behavioral tendencies alone may not be sufficient in driving the successful integration of HOTS-SOLO strategies within the classroom environment.

The study further investigated the influence of teachers' preparedness on the implementation of the Department of Education's (DepEd) MATATAG Curriculum in relation to Good Manners and Right Conduct (GMRC). Table 11 presents the findings, indicating that the overall model is highly significant, with an F-value of 112.517 and a probability of 0.000, confirming that teachers' preparedness significantly impacts the implementation of GMRC. The $R^2 = 0.840$ suggests that 84.0% of the variation in the implementation of GMRC can be attributed to teachers' preparedness, while the remaining 16.0% is due to other factors beyond the model.

Among the predictors, the behavioral domain ($\beta = 0.535$, $p = 0.000$) and personal and professional growth ($\beta = 0.379$, $p = 0.000$) were found to be highly significant at the 1% level. This underscores the crucial role of teachers exhibiting positive behavioral tendencies and demonstrating a commitment to continuous professional development in fostering good manners and right conduct among students. Their ability to model appropriate behavior and integrate ethical lessons into classroom interactions significantly enhances the effectiveness of GMRC implementation.

Additionally, the stress response ($\beta = 0.206$, $p = 0.050$) was found to be significant at the 5% level, suggesting that teachers' ability to manage stress contributes to their effectiveness in promoting good manners and right conduct, although its impact is relatively weaker compared to the behavioral and professional growth factors.

On the other hand, the logical domain ($\beta = -0.149$, $p = 0.161$) did not exhibit a statistically significant influence on GMRC implementation. This implies that while logical reasoning is essential in various aspects of teaching, it may not be a primary determinant in shaping students' values and ethical behavior. Teachers' preparedness, positive behavior, commitment to professional development, and modeling appropriate behavior are crucial for fostering good conduct in students (Masnawati & Hariani, 2023) within the MATATAG Curriculum.

Phase 2 of the Study: Experiences of Teachers in relation to preparedness for the new curriculum

The informant's responses in relation to their experiences pertaining to preparedness for the new curriculum were analyzed and discussed in this section of the chapter. The global theme which emerged is "Navigating Professional Demands through Strategic Preparation and Continuous Growth". The global theme explores how teachers navigate the complexities of implementing the new curriculum. This theme emphasizes that preparedness is not a static state but an ongoing process that demands strategic planning and professional development.

Moreover, organizing themes emerged based on the specific theme and these are time and workload management, instructional planning and curriculum alignment, adaptability and innovation, and professional growth and capacity building.

Phase 2 of the study: How the Teachers guarantee the implementation of the

new curriculum proposed by DepEd

The researcher also analyzed the responses of the participants regarding how they guarantee the implementation of the new MATATAG curriculum as proposed by the Department of Education. In the analysis, the researcher was able to determine the global theme which is "Comprehensive and Collaborative Teaching Approaches to Ensure Effective Curriculum Implementation". This global theme underscores the significance of employing diverse teaching methods and fostering teamwork among educators to successfully implement the new DepEd curriculum.

The analysis also led to the discovery of varied organizing themes which are strategic literacy instruction of curriculum alignment, instructional planning and delivery with emphasis on critical thinking, promotion of values and character integration in learning, collaboration and professional growth for effective implementation, and assessment and reinforcement to support mastery and progress.

V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Teachers exhibited comprehensive preparation across various domains, including logical reasoning for lesson design and problem-solving, behavioral management through adaptive strategies and positive reinforcement, effective stress management through workload management and resilience, and a commitment to personal and professional development through continuous learning and feedback integration. The implementation of the Department of Education's MATATAG Curriculum was highly effective, with Catch-up Fridays addressing literacy gaps through remediation, HOTS-SOLO fostering critical thinking, and GMRC promoting character development through modeled conduct and assessment. These findings underscore the robust teacher readiness and curriculum execution that contribute to enhanced student outcomes. The study revealed statistically significant positive correlations between teachers' preparedness and the implementation of the Department of Education's (DepEd) MATATAG Curriculum across its domains: Catch-up Fridays, HOTS-SOLO, and GMRC. Teachers with strong logical skills exhibited moderate correlations with Catch-up Fridays and strong correlations with HOTS-SOLO and GMRC, demonstrating their ability to integrate higher-order thinking and values-based education. Behavioral preparedness exhibited strong correlations across all domains, particularly with GMRC, underscoring its role in fostering student conduct. Stress resilience and professional growth also showed substantial influence on HOTS-SOLO and GMRC implementation, emphasizing the importance of adaptability and continuous development in promoting critical thinking and character education. These findings refute the null hypothesis, affirming that teacher preparedness significantly correlates with curriculum implementation.

Meanwhile, qualitative results revealed that teachers' experiences in preparing for the new curriculum revolved around four key areas. Firstly, time and workload management challenges, such as balancing ancillary tasks, workload overlaps, and time allocation, significantly impacted their readiness to implement the curriculum effectively. Secondly, instructional planning and curriculum alignment necessitated focused preparation of materials, advanced lesson planning, and student-centered strategies to meet the curriculum's requirements. Thirdly, adaptability and innovation emerged as crucial factors, with teachers emphasizing flexibility, resourcefulness, and creative teaching methods to address the evolving demands. Lastly, professional growth and capacity-building through training, peer collaboration, and familiarity with curriculum strategies enhanced their preparedness. These findings underscore how strategic planning, adaptability, and continuous development shape teachers' ability to navigate the challenges of implementing the new curriculum.

Conclusion

To conclude, educators demonstrated extensive preparation across diverse domains, including logical reasoning, behavioral management, stress resilience, and professional development. This comprehensive preparation enabled them to effectively implement the Department of Education's (DepEd) MATATAG Curriculum. The curriculum successfully addressed literacy gaps through Catch-up Fridays, fostered critical thinking through HOTS-SOLO, and promoted character development through GMRC. These findings underscore the robust readiness of educators and the successful execution of the curriculum, contributing to improved student outcomes. Furthermore, the phased implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum reflects its potential to streamline competencies and align learning with contemporary demands. Continuous training and monitoring mechanisms are imperative to sustain its effectiveness and address challenges encountered during its rollout.

Moreover, teachers' preparedness significantly correlates with the successful implementation of the Department of Education's (DepEd) MATATAG Curriculum across its domains: Catch-up Fridays, HOTS-SOLO, and GMRC. Teachers with strong logical reasoning skills effectively integrate higher-order thinking and values-based education, particularly in HOTS-SOLO and GMRC. Behavioral preparedness plays a critical role in fostering student conduct, while stress resilience and professional growth enhance critical thinking and character education. These findings reject the null hypothesis, affirming that teacher preparedness is a key factor in curriculum implementation. The results emphasize the importance of continuous training, adaptability, and professional development to ensure effective curriculum delivery and improved student outcomes.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of the study the following recommendations were drawn

1. Education Policy Makers need to prioritize systemic support for teachers by allocating resources to reduce extraneous tasks, streamline workload management, and fund professional development programs focused on stress resilience, behavioral strategies, and curriculum alignment. Policies should mandate time for peer collaboration and integrate training on innovative teaching methods, critical thinking, and values education to enhance curriculum implementation.
2. School Principals have to foster collaborative environments by organizing regular professional learning communities (PLCs), providing access to instructional resources, and advocating for balanced workloads. Implement mentorship programs, monitor curriculum adherence, and ensure alignment between teaching practices and Department of Education (DepEd) goals, particularly in literacy, critical thinking, and character education.
3. Teachers need to encourage peer collaboration, adopt student-centered strategies, and engage in continuous professional growth. Emphasize stress management, adaptability, and creative lesson planning—particularly for HOTS-SOLO and GMRC—to strengthen curriculum delivery. Prioritize structured literacy interventions and values integration to further enhance student outcomes.
4. Stakeholders should partner with schools to provide funding, infrastructure, and training resources. Support community programs that reinforce literacy and values education, as well as initiatives to address external factors such as resource gaps, to bolster curriculum success.
5. Parents need to support curriculum goals by fostering a home environment that encourages reading, critical thinking, and ethical behavior. Collaboration with teachers to reinforce values education and literacy practices ensures consistency between school and home learning.
6. Future Researchers can investigate the long-term impact of teacher preparedness on student outcomes, explore systemic barriers to curriculum implementation (e.g., resource limitations, administrative challenges), and assess the effectiveness of interventions such as stress management training or peer collaboration models. Further studies could also examine how parental involvement and community partnerships influence curriculum success.

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