



TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES IN SHIFTING FROM K-12 TO MATATAG CURRICULUM: BASIS FOR IN-SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive-qualitative study determined the experiences of teachers in shifting from the K to 12 Curriculum to the MATATAG Curriculum as a basis for an in-service training program during the school year 2025–2026. The findings revealed that, under the K to 12 Curriculum, teachers experienced simplified lesson objectives, provision of teaching and learning materials, and strengthened teaching skills in terms of preparation and support. Under the MATATAG Curriculum, teachers highlighted attendance in in-service training, collaborative support, and learner-centered teaching. In terms of the learning process under the K to 12 Curriculum, the themes that emerged were collaborative learning, reflective learning, and flexibility and adaptability to change. Meanwhile, the teaching-learning process under the MATATAG Curriculum was characterized by contextualized learning methods, a roadmap for daily instruction, and the learning station approach. Based on these findings, the study proposed an in-service training program for teachers as its output.

Keywords: *Teachers' Experiences, K-12, MATATAG Curriculum, In-Service Training*

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INTRODUCTION

The Philippine Basic Education system has undergone several changes in past decades, aiming to improve the quality of basic education in the country. These reforms include the Revised Basic Education Curriculum in 2002, the Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum in 2023, and the MATATAG Curriculum in 2023.

The MATATAG Curriculum is a Philippine basic education reform by the Department of Education (DepEd) launched to improve education quality and relevance. It features a decongested, competency-based curriculum focusing on foundational skills like literacy and numeracy, while integrating 21st century skills such as critical thinking, and digital literacy (Deped Order no. 25, s. 2002).

The Enhanced Basic Education curriculum was introduced through Republic Act number 10533, which aims to strengthen the curriculum by increasing the number of basic education programs by adding Kindergarten and two years of senior high school, which provides technical-vocational courses (Barrot, 2021).

Recently, the Department of Education launched the "MATATAG" Curriculum, which emphasizes providing students with essential 21st-century skills while decongesting the learning competencies by focusing on fundamental skills like numeracy and literacy (DepEd Order no. 10, s. 2024).

Gouédard et al. (2020) stated that many countries are constantly reviewing their curriculum to provide learners with the knowledge, skills and competencies required to meet global trends. However, these changes in the curriculum can bring many challenges for

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teachers. According to Tribuzzi (2017), teachers can experience exhaustion from frequent curriculum changes due to adjustments they need to make, like adapting to new teaching practices, adjusting instructional materials, and aligning assessment methods to meet the new standards.

Teachers, as front-line implementers of educational policies, play an important role in the success of any curriculum reform (Irembere, 2019). However, Magallanes et al. (2022) suggest that understanding how teachers perceive these changes is also important because their attitudes and insights directly influence how curriculum reforms translate into classroom practices and student outcomes.

The large number of competencies in the curriculum can be overwhelming for teachers, leading to time constraints and lack of deep learning, which may hinder the development of critical thinking, encourage. It is along this line that the researcher was encouraged to conduct this study on the full implementation of MATATAG curriculum.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This chapter presents the research method, research design, participants of the study, data gathering procedures, research instrument, and data analysis used in the study.

The purpose of this study was to determine teachers' experiences in shifting from k to 12 to MATATAG Curriculum as basis for in-service training program during the school year 2025-2026.

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Research Method

This study employed a qualitative research design using in-depth interviews to gather data. The descriptive method, as explained by Fraenkel and Wallen and cited by Betito (2024), was utilized to present and explain a particular situation in a detailed and comprehensive manner.

Qualitative research is useful for collecting detailed information about the values, perspectives, behaviors, experiences, and social contexts of specific groups of people. In-depth interviews, on the other hand, involve direct conversations with individuals to obtain more comprehensive information that goes beyond initial or superficial responses.

In this study, the researcher conducted face-to-face interviews while strictly observing the required health protocols. This approach allowed the participants to openly share their views and experiences through their detailed responses to the interview questions.

Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research focuses on understanding how individuals interpret and make meaning of their experiences in order to better understand social realities. According to Mohajan (2020), qualitative research examines social actions by exploring how people perceive and make sense of their experiences.

It uses various data collection methods such as interviews, diaries, journals, classroom observations, immersions, and open-ended questionnaires to gather and analyze information. It also involves the analysis of visual and textual materials as well as oral histories to interpret meanings within a particular context.

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Qualitative research is generally exploratory in nature, aiming to explain how and why certain social phenomena or programs function the way they do within specific settings. It helps researchers gain a deeper understanding of the social world and the reasons behind particular situations or behaviors (Polkinghorne, 2025).

Furthermore, this study employed a phenomenological design. According to Creswell, as cited by Navarro (2023), phenomenology focuses more on describing the lived experiences of participants rather than emphasizing the researcher’s interpretations.

This approach allows the researcher to capture and present the participants’ experiences and perspectives regarding the phenomenon being studied.

Participants of the Study

The participants of this study consisted of ten (10) selected elementary school teachers from various schools in the Schools District of San Lorenzo South, Guimaras. These teachers had undergone training related to both the K–12 and MATATAG curricula and had at least three years of teaching experience at the time the study was conducted.

The inclusion of these criteria ensured that the participants possessed sufficient experience and knowledge relevant to the focus of the study, making them appropriate sources of information.

Sampling Design

The study utilized purposive sampling in selecting the participants. According to Akman (2023), purposive sampling is a technique in which participants are deliberately chosen based on specific characteristics that are relevant to the research objectives.

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This method is particularly useful when only a limited number of individuals possess the qualities or experiences needed for the study. The selection process may consider criteria such as gender, educational attainment, age, socioeconomic background, or other relevant factors, depending on the needs of the research.

Moreover, qualitative research generally reaches data saturation after collecting responses from approximately 12 to 13 participants, as noted by Laja (2023). Data saturation occurs when additional data no longer produces new information or insights relevant to the study.

Research Instrument

The primary research instrument used in this study was a researcher-made interview guide. The instrument was subjected to validation by a panel of experts to ensure its relevance and clarity. All comments and suggestions provided during the validation process were carefully considered and incorporated by the researcher.

The in-depth interviews were conducted either face-to-face or through accessible online platforms such as Zoom or Messenger when in-person interaction was not feasible. Voice and video recording devices were utilized to document the entire interview process to ensure the accuracy of the data collected.

After the interviews were conducted, the recorded responses were transcribed and analyzed. During the data analysis process, significant statements and key phrases related to the phenomenon under study were identified and organized into meaningful themes.

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Validity of the Research Instrument

The research instrument used in this study was a researcher-made interview guide was validated by the experts' jurors using the Eight-Point Scale Criteria for content validation by Good and Scates (as cited by Navarro, 2023).

The instrument used in this study was content-validated by panel of experts in the field of research. Content validity refers to the extent to which a measure represents all facets of a given construct. In order to establish the validity of the instruments since they were constructed by the researcher herself, jury validation was used.

Data Gathering Procedures

After selecting the participants of the study, the researcher secured permission from the participants for a voluntary participation as evidence through signing a consent form. After obtaining participants' written consent letters for the study, interview commenced for every participant.

The interview was done at a convenient time for each participant through face-to-face. A semi-structured interview was utilized. According to George (2023), a semi-structured interview is a qualitative research method that uses a mix of predefined questions and the flexibility to explore new ideas during the interview. It involves an interview guide with open-ended questions focused on specific topics, but the interviewer can ask follow-up questions based on the interviewee's answers. This approach helps maintain consistency while allowing for in-depth insights.

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Data Analyses

The information that was gathered was analyzed using a thematic approach.

The qualitative analysis technique was used to identify the themes of teachers' experiences in shifting from K to 12 to MATATAG curriculum as basis for in-service training program in the Schools District of San Lorenzo South, Guimaras.

According to Caufield (2023), thematic analysis aims to identify significant patterns or themes within the data that are relevant or meaningful to the study. These themes are then used to address the research questions and provide insights about the phenomenon being investigated. The process involves summarizing, analyzing, and interpreting the collected data in order to understand and give meaning to the information obtained.

Furthermore, Braun and Clarke (2023) stated that thematic analysis follows six steps to identify patterns in qualitative data: (1) familiarization with the data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) writing the analysis, where the findings are presented in a clear and coherent narrative.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study was conducted to determine the experiences of teachers in shifting from K to 12 to MATATAG curriculum as basis for in-service training program, at the Schools District of San Lorenzo South, Guimaras, during the school year 2025-2026.

The study used a phenomenological research design under qualitative method. The researcher used in-depth interviews with participants who have the experience in teaching

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under K-12 curriculum and MATATAG curriculum to gather rich descriptions, then analyzed for common themes and meanings.

The participants of the study were the selected ten (10) teachers who have experienced in shifting from K-12 to MATATAG curriculum from the Schools District of San Lorenzo South, Guimaras.

The results of the study was the basis for In-Service Training for Teachers.

Based on the results of the in-depth interviews with the participants, it was found that the teachers' experiences under the K-12 Curriculum, in terms of preparation and support, included the use of simplified lesson objectives, the provision of teaching and learning materials, and the strengthening of teaching skills.

It was also found that the teachers' preparation and support under the MATATAG Curriculum involved attending in-service training, collaborative support, and learner-centered teaching.

On the other hand, the teaching-learning process under the K-12 Curriculum was characterized by collaborative learning, reflective learning, and flexibility and adaptability to change.

Meanwhile, the teaching-learning process under the MATATAG Curriculum was characterized by contextualized learning methods, a roadmap for daily instruction, and the learning station approach.

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CONCLUSION

In light of the findings and insights derived from this study, several recommendations are proposed:

Teachers play a crucial role in the successful transition from the K–12 curriculum to the MATATAG Curriculum because they serve as the primary implementers of the program in the classroom. For this reason, it is essential that they receive comprehensive, well-structured, and motivating professional training.

The MATATAG Curriculum introduces significant changes, including decongested learning competencies, a stronger focus on foundational skills, and improved learning standards. Due to these adjustments, teachers need training that will enable them to fully understand the philosophy and objectives of the new curriculum, apply updated teaching strategies and methodologies, develop appropriate assessment techniques aligned with MATATAG standards, and integrate 21st-century skills through learner-centered approaches.

Training programs should not focus solely on technical knowledge but should also enhance teacher motivation and confidence. When teachers clearly understand the goals and benefits of the MATATAG Curriculum, they are more likely to embrace the changes positively and implement them effectively in their classrooms.

Furthermore, continuous professional development through workshops, mentoring programs, and collaborative learning communities can strengthen teachers' ability to adapt to the new curriculum. Support from educational authorities and school leaders is equally

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important to ensure that teachers feel prepared, supported, and valued during the transition process.

The successful implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum does not depend solely on teachers; it also requires the active participation of school heads, parents, and other community stakeholders.

School heads play a vital role in supervising and guiding curriculum implementation by ensuring that teachers are provided with the necessary resources, training opportunities, and administrative support. Effective school leadership also promotes a culture of collaboration within the institution.

Parents also serve as important partners in their children’s education. Their involvement in school activities, communication with teachers, and support for learning at home significantly influence students’ academic achievement. When parents understand the goals and structure of the MATATAG Curriculum, they are better able to help their children adjust to the new learning expectations.

Likewise, other stakeholders such as community leaders, local government units, and educational organizations can contribute by providing resources, programs, and support systems that enhance students’ learning opportunities. Through the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders, learners can benefit from a holistic and supportive educational environment that promotes both academic success and character development.

In addition, schools are encouraged to revisit the sequencing of competencies across grade levels in order to provide more appropriate instructional space for teaching and learning.

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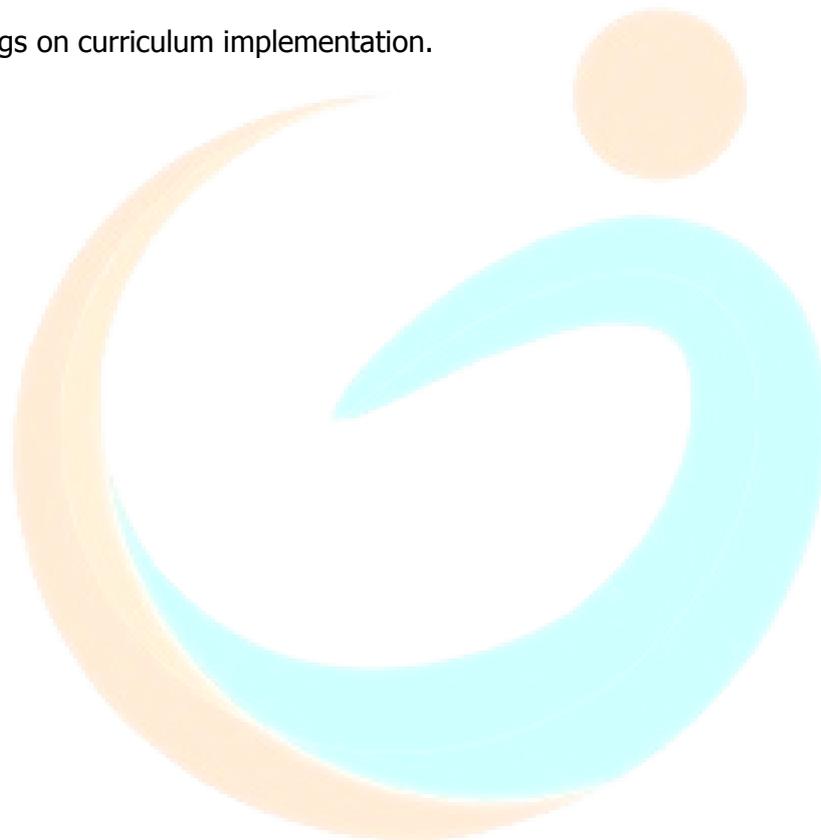
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A copy of the proposed In-Service Training Program developed from this study may also be shared with other schools and implemented when appropriate in their respective contexts.

Finally, future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies that consider other variables not included in this research. It is also recommended that quantitative studies related to the K-12 and MATATAG Curriculum be undertaken to further expand and strengthen existing findings on curriculum implementation.



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