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**MULTI-GRADE CLASSES IMPLEMENTATION IN THE SECOND  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF ILOILO: INPUT FOR  
POLICY RECOMMENDATION**

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**ABSTRACT**

This descriptive-qualitative determined the multi-grade classes implementation in the second congressional district of Iloilo as input for policy recommendation during the school year 2023-2024. The research method utilized in this study was qualitative method using in-depth interview, and the research design was phenomenology. It was found out through in-depth interview with the participants that the benefits and privileges of being assigned as multi-grade teachers were special hardship allowance, exercise of academic freedom, and promotion of multi-tasking. It was also found out that the challenges encountered by multi-grade teachers were risky road for travel, lack of needed materials and resources, lack of preparation, lack of time, lack of stakeholders' support, lack of training, lack of focus, and poor classroom management. Based on the results of the study through in-depth interview with the individual participants, it was found out that the coping strategies employed by multi-grade teachers to the challenges they encountered were being resourceful, using personal resources, and using initiative.

**Keywords:** *Implementation, Multi-Grade Classes, Input Policy Recommendation*

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## INTRODUCTION

In the modern society, education is quite important. It helps people to gain a set of beliefs, knowledge, and abilities that lead to growth on both personal and professional levels, ultimately advancing society. Additionally, employment and active participation in community socioeconomic activities are made possible by education. Considering these advantages, it is thought important that everyone exercise their right to an education, particularly children who require formal education so much in their early years.

Furthermore, for the benefit of students living in rural areas, education ought to extend to even the most distant school in the community. Combination classes have been created to serve all students of all ages and grade levels in order to satisfy these schools. Teaching many grades is one of the tactics.

Multigrade teaching is the practice of instructing students from two or more grade levels in the same class. Specific methods of training, protocols, and classroom management are required in these kinds of settings. Because these classes can be conducted more cheaply and with fewer students than in typical classroom settings, they can be held more frequently. Children are then more likely to attend school as they don't have to travel far from their houses to get there.

Since multi-grade schools are more compact and distinct, they would have stronger ties to the little communities they are intended to serve. This would greatly improve access to education and local attitudes. A valuable resource in a multi-grade setting is the professional

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teacher. A major component of the curriculum involves local content, therefore finding a solution to the problem of hiring qualified instructors with a local focus is crucial.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Research Methodology

This chapter outlines the study's methodology, design, participants, data collection techniques, instrument, and data analysis. The study's goal was to ascertain if multi-grade courses should be implemented in Iloilo's second congressional district in order to provide policy recommendations during the school year 2023-2024.

### Research Method

In-depth interviews were used in the study's qualitative research methodology.

During the interview, the applicant and the interviewer were permitted to sit apart and consider the set of questions regarding a certain topic. Through the participants' answers to the questions, the goal was to obtain the primary or essential opinions of the participants regarding a certain subject in a social setting.

### Research Design

Phenomenological research design was employed in the study. One philosophical method for conducting qualitative research was phenomenology. By concentrating on an individual's subjective interpretations of her experiences, phenomenology aims to comprehend how others see the world and how this view may differ from widely accepted beliefs.

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Phenomenology is widely utilized in disciplines including psychology, sociology, and social work. It involves interviewing subjects to find out about their impressions.

According to Smith (2013), the study of first-person views of consciousness structures is known as phenomenology. Because an experience is defined as an encounter with or knowledge of an item, its basic structure is dictated by its intentionality and direction toward something. The meaning or content of an experience, which stands in for the object, and the proper enabling circumstances are what direct it toward the object.

### **Respondents of the Study**

Ten specifically chosen multi-grade teachers from the Second Congressional District of Iloilo during the 2023–2024 school year served as the study's responders.

To have representation of participants, out of 10, 2 were males and 8 were females with varied educational qualifications and positions. Among the 10 participants, 2 stayed in school while 8 were going home after the class.

### **Sampling Design**

The research utilized a purposive sampling design considered as a non-probability sample that is chosen based on the objectives of the study and the demographics. Other names for purposeful sampling include subjective sampling, judging, and selecting (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2007).

### **Research Instrument**

The study employed a two-part interview schedule created by the researcher.

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The first section focused on the information on the teachers who teach many grade levels. These include the sex of the participants, experience as multi-grade teachers, educational qualifications, distance from residence to school, status of reporting to school, and positions with the salary grades.

Part two was the interview guide of the researcher asked during the in-depth interview. The guide had three questions focusing on the aim of the research.

The researcher employed voice and video recorders to get information from the respondents. With the respondents' consent, these recorders were also used for documentation.

### **Validity of the Research Instrument**

A panel of jurors was asked to validate each question for review and modification, establishing the authenticity of the interview schedule created by the scholar, adviser, and Graduate School Dean. The selection of the panel was based on their proficiency in research, testing and evaluation, and English.

Validity, according to Fraenkel and Wallen (2007), is the appropriateness, importance, precision, and usefulness of a researcher's results. The definition of the variables and the sample of participants to be examined should guide the format and content of content-related proof of validity. It facilitates the verification of the questionnaire's contents.

The validators' panel's remarks, modifications, and recommendations on the interview schedule were taken into account using the relevant Good and Scates form (Appendix A).

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## Data Gathering Procedures

The researcher obtained permissions from her adviser, the graduate school dean, school heads, district supervisors, and respondents to conduct the study.

The researcher conducted the interview face-to-face by visiting the neighborhood, schools, or other suitable location of the respondents. Out of ten respondents, four decided to have the interview conducted at their house and six were interviewed in their respective school assignments.

The researcher used the interview guide when conducting the in-depth interviews with the subjects. The interview guide emphasized the different categories that elicited their perceptions and experiences regarding the implementation of multi-grade classes. The questions were created by the researcher and approved by subject-matter specialists

. Each expert had a copy of the initial draft of the questionnaires and were requested to assess the relevance of every item. The interview was conducted several times to get more valid and accurate responses. To thoroughly execute the data gathering process, the researcher used voice and video recorder to record the responses. After the interview, the researcher combined the data gathered.

## Data Analysis

The acquired data underwent analysis using a thematic method. The process of theme analysis involves identifying patterns or themes in qualitative data (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

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The purpose of a thematic analysis was to identify themes, or important or fascinating patterns in the data, and use these themes to discuss the research or make a point about a specific topic. To do this, the collected data was compiled, assessed, and interpreted to make sense of it.

The generation of themes were drawn from the data of the participants. After the data was collected and interpreted, the researcher formed various codes out of them. To form these codes, the researcher tried to find the meanings or key ideas from the data by manually analyzing and identifying their concepts which was based on their similarity. As the analysis goes on, new patterns of ideas emerged resulting to formulation of another codes. When the codes are formulated, these were sorted out to formulate groups or themes. The responses of the participants under each theme were given corresponding percentage. Responses which will come out to be irrelevant were eliminated. It was done to make sure the significance of the gathered data.

The ethical guidelines for conducting research are taken into account in this study. The target research participants first provided their agreement to participate after being properly informed about the methods involved in the study.

The researcher got the consent and permission from the school principal, as well as the teachers and they were asked to sign a letter together as they were interviewed. Participants were made aware of their rights to withdraw from the study and to refuse to participate.

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Ethical standards also required the researcher to confidentiality and privacy of the research participants. Participants' information would not be accessible to those not directly involved in the study. The research participants remained anonymous throughout the study. Pseudo-names were assigned to the participants to ensure their anonymity.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The purpose of the study was to ascertain how multi-grade classrooms were implemented in Iloilo's second congressional district in order to inform policy recommendations for the 2023–2024 academic year.

In-depth interviews were used as the qualitative research method in this study, and phenomenology was the research design.

Ten multigrade teachers from the Second Congressional District of Iloilo participated in the study during the 2023–2024 academic year.

Data was gathered using an interview schedule created by the researcher.

The use of voice and video recorders for data collection and documentation was contingent upon the participants' consent.

The panel of specialists performed content-validation on the questionnaire. The validity of the interview schedule's questions was assessed using Fraenkel and Wallen's (2007) Criteria for the Content Validation. The researcher took into account every recommendation and feedback pertaining to the tool's validation. Permits were produced so that the researcher may begin the in-depth interview after the questionnaire was determined to be valid.

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The researcher was granted permission to perform the study by the adviser, the graduate school dean, the office of the superintendent of the schools division, the head of the school, and individual participants. To conduct the interview, the researcher personally visited the participants' homes, communities, or other convenient locations.

Following a series of interviews, the researcher combined all of the data that had been gathered. A thematic method was used to collect, examine, and evaluate the data.

The study's findings are as follows:

The benefits and privileges of being assigned as multi-grade teachers were determined by the findings of the in-depth interviews with the participants. These included the encouragement of multi-tasking, the exercise of academic freedom, and special hardship allowance.

Additionally, it was discovered that hazardous travel routes, a shortage of necessary supplies and equipment, a lack of planning, a lack of time, a lack of support from stakeholders, a lack of training, a lack of concentration, and inadequate classroom management were among the difficulties faced by multi-grade teachers.

Based on the study's findings and the in-depth interviews with each participant, it was discovered that multi-grade instructors used initiative, resourcefulness, and personal resources as coping mechanisms for the difficulties they faced.

## Insights

The following conclusions were reached in light of the findings:

Multi-grade teachers faced challenges, particularly those who work in resource-poor settings. Despite the overwhelming demands on their time and energy, these educators

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remain committed to their students and their community. They are often forced to rely on creativity and resourcefulness, finding ways to engage parents, stakeholders, and their own resources to support their teaching. However, the added responsibilities and lack of training make it difficult for them to manage the classroom effectively, especially with a diverse group of learners. In the face of these difficulties, multi-grade teachers develop problem solving skills and seek support from other educators to improve the learning experience for their students. The passage underscores the resilience and dedication of these teachers despite the challenges they face.

## CONCLUSION

The following suggestions are made in light of the conclusions and revelations made by this investigation:

Multi-grade teachers may be provided with accommodation with complete facilities where they can stay during school days. This may be prioritized by the DepEd, Schools Division of Iloilo, when they allocate fund for teachers.

Materials and resources for multi-grade teachers may be given directly to them with complete package including the hauling of the latter. These materials may be different from the regular materials and resources distributed regularly to other regular schools. Given the space requirements of these materials and resources, multi-grade schools may be granted additional classrooms or buildings to ensure the materials and resources are kept safe and of high quality.

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Multi-grade schools may be given more teachers in order to relieve the workload of the teachers who are tasked with instructing classes with several grade levels, help them concentrate, and allow them to spend more time with the students. These additional items of teachers will be taken from the excess items from other schools within the Schools Division of Iloilo.

Considering that administrative staff items are available, multi-grade schools may be given priority when it comes to the provision of this item. People who live in the barangay where the school is situated are also the administrative staff members allocated to multi-grade schools.

Schools with many grades may receive assistance. This support may be given directly to multi-grade schools, may be monitored as to its implementation, and supervised as to its quality.

There should be a regular specialized training for multi-grade teachers focusing on time management and classroom management to equip them with the necessary inputs towards the accomplishment of their tasks. To have a good transfer of technology from the training venue to schools, multi-grade teachers may also be provided with the needed materials, facilities, and equipment for their schools.

For their knowledge, direction, and support, a copy of the policy recommendation may be provided to the offices of the municipal mayors, the Schools Division Office, the Regional Office, and the Central Office.

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Future research of a similar nature that takes into account additional variables not included or utilized in the study is also urged.



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