



Pedagogical Adaptations of Multigrade Teachers in Implementing the Matatag Curriculum in Pudtol District

Charmaine C. Ricardo
Apayao State College

ABSTRACT

This study examined the pedagogical adaptations of multigrade teachers in implementing the MATATAG Curriculum in Pudtol District during the school year 2025–2026. Using a mixed-method approach, data were gathered from 24 multigrade teachers through a researcher-made questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis were used to analyze the data. Findings revealed that teachers commonly applied pedagogical strategies in teaching delivery and assessment practices, while learning support and remediation were less emphasized. Major challenges included limited instructional materials, heavy workload, inadequate technology access, learners' difficulties in reading and basic skills, and inconsistent parental support. Support mechanisms were mainly provided by school heads, DepEd training programs, and co-teachers. Best practices identified were peer tutoring, differentiated instruction, integrated lesson planning, structured routines, and parental engagement. The study concluded that multigrade teachers demonstrate adaptive instructional practices, but stronger remediation and support systems are needed to enhance instructional effectiveness under the MATATAG Curriculum.

Key Words: *Multigrade teaching, pedagogical adaptations, MATATAG Curriculum, mixed-method approach, instructional strategies*

Received: 05-06-2026

Revised: 06-13-

Accepted: 07-24- 2026

Published: 08-30-

ISSN:3116-2991





Introduction

Multigrade education is an educational strategy widely implemented, particularly in rural and marginalized communities where student numbers do not support individual grade-level classrooms. According to Little (2001), Berry (2006), and Veenman (1995), multigrade education provides a practical solution in areas with small student populations and limited resources, offering pedagogical benefits such as peer learning and sustained student achievement. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2020) emphasizes that multigrade teaching is a purposeful strategy for inclusive quality education, enabling schools with limited staff and infrastructure to maintain instructional continuity. Mason and Burns (1995) further note that multigrade classrooms exist in both developing and developed countries to support universal access to education, adapt to diverse geographic contexts, and sustain small community schools despite structural constraints.

Research in Scotland and other European countries indicates that multigrade classrooms enhance younger students' literacy and numeracy through interaction with older peers, foster peer support, and promote collaborative learning (Borberly, 2023). Conversely, studies in developing countries such as South Africa, Pakistan, Timor-Leste, Cambodia, and other Southeast Asian nations identify structural and instructional challenges, including limited teacher support, training, resources, and weak curriculum adaptation (Taole, 2024). These findings underscore that multigrade teaching's effectiveness relies on adequate teacher training, a well-structured curriculum, and strong community involvement.

In the Philippines, multigrade schools primarily function to expand access to basic education in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas, particularly in far-flung barangays where small enrolment and limited resources make single-grade classes impractical. According to Brecio (2023), these schools are important because they ensure that children in remote communities, including indigenous and low-income learners, can complete elementary education and develop collaborative and independent learning skills despite contextual limitations. To strengthen multigrade education, the government has implemented several initiatives through the Department of Education, including the Multigrade Education Program (MEP), as well as policies such as Department of Education Order No. 96, s. 1997, *Policies and Guidelines in the Organization and Operation of Multigrade (MG) Classes*, and Department of Education Order No. 81, s. 2009, *Strengthening the Implementation of the Multigrade Education Program*, along with subsequent reforms aimed at improving teacher training, curriculum support, and access to inclusive education in rural schools. However, despite these efforts, multigrade schools continue to face persistent implementation challenges. Studies by Rayas, Rondero & Casupan (2024) reported issues such as inadequate instructional materials, limited teacher training, insufficient infrastructure, and weak stakeholder support. Similarly, Urma and Callo (2023) found that limited expertise, instructional support, and resources affect teachers' planning, classroom management, and remedial instruction. Teachers also face pedagogical challenges in managing multiple grade levels simultaneously, differentiating instruction, and addressing diverse learning needs within a single classroom. The MATATAG Curriculum poses specific difficulties for multigrade instruction, particularly in terms of shortened time blocks, increased instructional demands, and the need for differentiated teaching across multiple grade levels. According to the Department of Education (2023), one major difficulty is the reduced instructional time per subject, which is typically limited to 40–45 minutes per learning area. In multigrade classrooms, where teachers handle two or more grade levels simultaneously, this restricted time allocation often limits the delivery of complete lessons, meaningful learning activities, and sufficient remediation for learners who require additional support. In addition,



research by SEAMEO INNOTECH (2020) highlights that another significant challenge lies in the curriculum's strong emphasis on foundational literacy and numeracy. While this focus is intended to address persistent learning gaps among Filipino learners, it becomes more complex in multigrade settings due to the wide variation in students' reading, writing, and numeracy skills within a single classroom. As a result, teachers are required to continuously differentiate instruction, learning materials, and assessments across grade levels, which further increases both their planning demands and instructional complexity. Reports by educators and curriculum implementers suggest that implementing MATATAG learning competencies in multigrade contexts can be particularly demanding due to the complexity of tasks and the simultaneous coverage of multiple grade-level standards. Even with curriculum decongestion efforts, teachers continue to experience heavy workloads as they prepare either separate or adapted lesson plans for each grade level while ensuring that all required competencies are effectively addressed. These recurring challenges indicate that while multigrade education remains essential for equity and access, systemic and pedagogical gaps must be addressed to ensure quality learning outcomes in remote schools.

In Pudtol District, Apayao, multigrade teachers, like other geographically isolated areas, handle multiple grade levels within a single classroom while coping with limited instructional materials, inadequate infrastructure, and minimal access to sustained professional development. They face pedagogical demands such as differentiating instruction, managing diverse learner readiness levels, and adapting teaching strategies in line with the MATATAG Curriculum to ensure effective learning. These realities reflect patterns reported in national and local literature, suggesting that the challenges of multigrade instruction remain consistent across rural Philippine settings.

Given these parallels, there is a need to examine the experiences and instructional adaptations of multigrade teachers in Pudtol District to generate localized insights and context-specific recommendations. Conducting this study is therefore essential to better understand the unique pedagogical and systemic needs of teachers in the district and to contribute evidence that can inform targeted interventions, policy refinement, and support mechanisms for multigrade education in similar rural communities.

Statement of the Problem

This study examined the pedagogical adaptations employed by multigrade teachers in Pudtol District in implementing the MATATAG Curriculum. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - a. sex,
 - b. age, and
 - c. years of teaching experience
2. What pedagogical strategies are employed by multigrade teachers in Pudtol District in terms of:
 - a. instructional planning,
 - b. teaching delivery and methods,
 - c. assessment practices, and
 - d. learning support and remediation?
3. What challenges do multigrade teachers encounter in implementing these pedagogical strategies?
4. What support mechanisms are available to help teachers improve their pedagogical strategies?



5. What best practices can be identified from the pedagogical strategies employed by multigrade teachers?
6. What pedagogical adaptations can be proposed to enhance pedagogical strategies in multigrade classrooms in Pudtol District?

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Tomlinson's Differentiated Instruction Theory (2001), which emphasizes that teaching must be adapted in content, process, and assessment to meet the diverse learning needs of students.

Tomlinson's theory asserts that learners have varying readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles, and effective instruction requires teachers to differentiate what is taught (content), how it is taught (process), and how learning is measured (assessment). In multigrade classrooms, where multiple grade levels are taught simultaneously, differentiation is essential for addressing the wide range of abilities and learning needs. The theory provides strategies for planning lessons, modifying instruction, and designing assessments that are responsive to each learner's unique needs.

The relevance of Differentiated Instruction Theory to this study lies in its application to pedagogical adaptations in multigrade classrooms implementing the MATATAG Curriculum. It explains how teachers adjust lesson plans, teaching methods, assessment practices, and learning support to ensure that all learners achieve the competencies outlined in the curriculum. By using this theoretical lens, the study examines how multigrade teachers in Pudtol District strategically adapt their pedagogy to overcome classroom challenges, address diverse learner needs, and optimize teaching effectiveness, thereby supporting the successful implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum.

In addition, the intersection of Differentiated Instruction and multigrade pedagogy is clearly reflected in classroom practices such as peer-assisted learning strategies. In multigrade settings, teachers often maximize learner diversity by organizing peer tutoring and collaborative learning activities, where more advanced pupils support younger or less proficient learners in completing tasks and understanding lessons. This approach aligns with Differentiated Instruction by allowing instruction to be tailored not only through teacher-led adjustments in content, process, and assessment, but also through structured peer interaction that responds to varying readiness levels and learning needs. As a result, these strategies help promote active engagement, reinforce understanding, and optimize limited instructional time, making them practical and effective adaptations within multigrade classrooms implementing the MATATAG Curriculum.

Research Paradigm

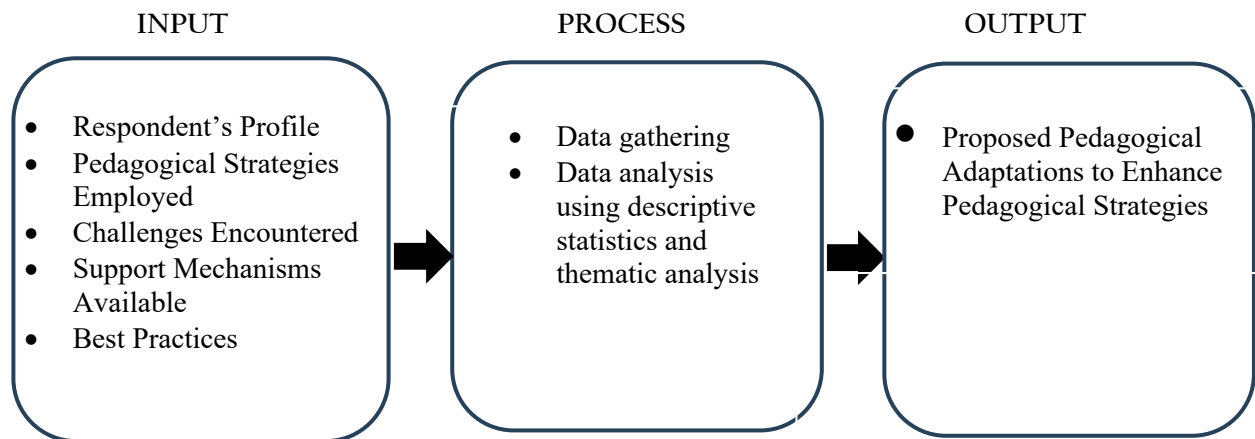


Figure 1: The research paradigm illustrates the flow of the study.

The input includes the respondents' profile, pedagogical strategies employed, challenges encountered, support mechanisms available, and best practices of multigrade teachers in implementing the MATATAG Curriculum. The process involves data gathering through questionnaires and interviews, followed by data analysis using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. The output of the study is the proposed pedagogical adaptations designed to enhance pedagogical strategies and improve the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum in multigrade classes.

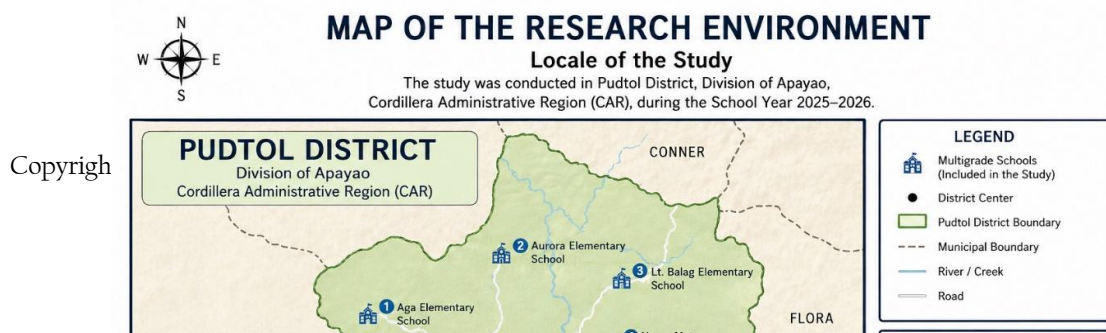
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-method approach, integrating a descriptive survey for the quantitative phase and qualitative thematic analysis for the interview phase to determine the pedagogical adaptations implemented by multigrade teachers in Pudtol District. The descriptive survey described the profile of the respondents, identified the pedagogical strategies employed by multigrade teachers, the challenges encountered, the support mechanisms available, and the proposed pedagogical adaptations to enhance pedagogical strategies. Meanwhile, the qualitative thematic analysis explored and analyzed the best practices employed by multigrade teachers based on the identified pedagogical strategies.

Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in Pudtol District, Division of Apayao, Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR). The district consists of 8 multigrade schools specifically, Aga Elementary School, Aurora Elementary School, Lt. Balag Elementary School, Upper Maton Elementary School, Lower Maton Elementary School, Lydia Elementary School, San Mariano Elementary School and San Jose Elementary School during the School Year 2025-2026.





Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study were 24 multigrade teachers in Pudtol District. All were assigned to handle multigrade classes and were actively implementing instructions for combined grade levels. A total enumeration sampling technique will be used since the population of teachers is manageable and allows full representation of the entire district. The list of participating schools and number of teachers is shown in the table below.

Table 1. Participating Schools and Number of Teachers

Name of Schools	No. of Teachers
Aga Elementary School	3
Aurora Elementary School	2
Lt. Balag Elementary School	3
Lower Maton Elementary School	3
Lydia Elementary School	4
San Jose Elementary School	3
San Mariano Elementary School	3
Upper Elementary School	3
TOTAL	24

Data Gathering Procedure



The researcher sought approval from the Schools Division Superintendent and Pudtol District Supervisor. Upon approval, permission was asked from the school heads of the selected multigrade schools to schedule the distribution of copies of the questionnaires. After permission was granted, the questionnaire and a semi-structured interview were administered personally to the multigrade teachers to identify their pedagogical strategies, challenges encountered, support mechanisms available in their schools, proposed pedagogical adaptations to enhance pedagogical strategies, and to elicit and document the best practices employed by multigrade teachers as revealed during the interview process. The questionnaire was retrieved after the agreed period, and follow-up interviews were conducted when necessary.

Following data collection, the researcher organized, tabulated, and encoded the survey data for descriptive analysis, while the interview data were transcribed, coded, and analyzed thematically. Member checking ensured credibility.

The data collected from the respondents were kept confidential, with procedures designed to protect their privacy, safety, and well-being. Ethical considerations, including adherence to research guidelines, were maintained throughout the conduct of the study.

Research Instruments and Validation

The study utilized a researcher-made questionnaire as the primary instrument to determine the profile of the respondents, pedagogical strategies of multigrade teachers, challenges encountered, support mechanisms available and proposed pedagogical adaptations to enhance pedagogical strategies. A semi-structured interview guide was also utilized to elicit qualitative insights that served to enrich the quantitative findings on the best practices employed by multigrade teachers.

The questionnaire underwent validation to ensure its appropriateness, clarity, and accuracy. Content validity was established using the Item-Content Validity Index (I-CVI). Validation was conducted by school heads from schools outside the study locale to ensure objectivity, including two Teacher-in-Charge with more than five years of experience as multigrade teachers and one Principal I with seven years of administrative experience.

The reliability of the questionnaire, which was designed using a Likert scale, was determined using Cronbach's alpha to measure internal consistency and ensure the stability of the instrument for quantitative analysis.

Data Analysis

The study used the following statistical tools for data analysis. Frequency counts and percentage were used to describe the respondents' profiles, while the weighted mean determined the extent of pedagogical strategies. Rank order was applied to identify the most common challenges encountered and support mechanisms available. Qualitative thematic analysis was used to analyze interview responses (using codes and themes) and answers to open-ended questions.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher ensured voluntary participation of respondents, obtained informed consent, and maintained the confidentiality of personal information. The anonymity of responses was strictly



observed, and all data collected were used solely for academic purposes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Profile of the respondents

Respondents	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	3	12.5
	Female	21	87.5
Age	28- 35	14	58.33
	36-43	8	33.33
	44-51	1	4.17
	52-59	1	4.17
Years of teaching experience	1-3 years	7	29.17
	4-6 years	2	8.33
	7-9 years	5	20.83
	10 years above	10	41.67

As shown in the table, the respondents are predominantly female with 87.5 percent while 12.5 percent are male, indicating that the teaching workforce in multigrade classes is predominantly female. As reported by the Philippine Statistics Authority (2022), majority of teachers in basic education are female. In terms of age, the largest group belongs to the 28–35 age bracket with 58.33 percent. Only two out of twenty-four teachers are in the older age groups, suggesting that most teachers are in their early to mid-career stage. Regarding teaching experience, most respondents have 10 years and above in service with 41.67 percent. Multigrade classes are implemented in challenging contexts, such conditions require teachers who can manage difficulties and operate independently, which is associated with experience.

Table 2. Pedagogical strategies employed by multigrade teachers in Pudtol District

Pedagogical Strategies	Mean	Descriptive Value	Rank
1. Instructional planning	4.18	Often	3
2. Teaching delivery and methods	4.42	Always	1
3. Assessment practices	4.20	Always	2
4. Learning support and remediation	3.95	Often	4
Average	4.19	Often	

The result shows the summary of pedagogical strategies employed by multigrade teachers in Pudtol District. The highest was category 2, “Teaching delivery methods,” with a mean of 4.42, described as Always. Category 3, “Assessment practices,” ranked second with a mean of 4.20, also described as Always, followed by category 1, “Instructional Planning,” which ranked third with a mean of 4.18 and described as Often. The lowest was “Learning support and remediation,” with a mean of



3.95, described as Always.

The overall mean of 4.19 is described as Often. The results indicate that multigrade teachers in Pudtol District generally and frequently employ pedagogical strategies in their classrooms. The pattern of findings suggests a stronger focus on teaching delivery methods and assessment practices, while learning support and remediation may need further strengthening. To ensure that all categories are consistently practiced, multigrade teachers should be provided with targeted training and ongoing mentoring (Little, 2001).

Table 3. Challenges encountered in implementing these pedagogical strategies

Challenges Encountered	Frequency	Rank
Limited learning materials	17	3
Large class size	4	8
Learners' difficulty in reading and foundational skills	18	2
Inconsistent parental support	22	1
Insufficient training on MATATAG implementation	11	6
Limited access to technology	12	5
Time constraints for remediation	14	4
Health-related concerns	8	7

Table 2 presents the frequency and rank distribution of the challenges encountered by the multigrade teachers in implementing pedagogical strategies in Pudtol district.

The data reveal that “inconsistent parental support” obtained the highest frequency (22), ranking first among all identified challenges. This indicates that a majority of the teachers perceive parental involvement as a critical factor affecting the successful implementation of pedagogical adaptations. This finding suggests that home-related factors significantly influence instructional effectiveness.

The second most reported challenge is “learners’ difficulty in reading and foundational skills” (18), ranked 2nd, followed closely by “limited learning materials” (17), ranked 3rd. The relatively high frequency of these identified challenges indicates that learner readiness and resource availability are persistent concerns in the teaching-learning process.

These results suggest that more than half of the respondent’s experience difficulties in foundational competencies and instructional resources, highlighting their widespread occurrence.

Meanwhile, “time constraints for remediation” (14) ranked 4th, indicating that a considerable proportion of teachers struggle to allocate sufficient time for addressing learning gaps. This is followed by “limited access to technology” (12), ranked 5th, and “insufficient training on MATATAG implementation” (11), ranked 6th, suggesting moderate but still significant challenges related to instructional support and teacher preparedness.

On the other hand, “health-related concerns” (8) rank 7th and “large class size” (4), ranked 8th received the lowest frequencies, indicating that these are less commonly experienced challenges among the respondents.

Other challenges encountered by multigrade teachers in implementing pedagogical strategies include limited parental support due to some parents being illiterate, making it difficult for them to assist learners with academic tasks at home. Teachers also observed a lack of reading interest among



learners, which affects comprehension, participation, and overall academic performance. Overlapping school activities further reduce instructional time and make classroom management more demanding in multigrade settings. In addition, the diverse behavior of learners requires teachers to employ varied classroom management techniques to address different needs and learning styles simultaneously. The insufficiency of Teaching Guides and Learner's Materials also limits the effective delivery of lessons and learning activities. Moreover, absenteeism among pupils disrupts continuity of learning, making it difficult for teachers to maintain consistent progress and implement planned pedagogical strategies effectively.

To further explain these quantitative findings, the researcher interviewed the teachers about the challenges they encountered in implementing pedagogical adaptations, and the following key themes emerged:

1. Limited learning resources
2. Lack of teacher training and professional development
3. Time constraints and workload
4. Curriculum implementation and competency issues.

Table 4. Support mechanisms available to help teachers improve their pedagogical strategies

Support Mechanisms Available	Frequency	Rank
Support from the school head	22	1
Training programs from DepEd	21	2
Availability of teaching and learning materials	12	6
Peer support from co-teachers	20	3
Assistance during remediation programs	13	5
Technical support for ICT tools	16	4
Community-based support programs	11	7

Table 4 shows the results of the support mechanisms available to help teachers improve their pedagogical strategies in multigrade classrooms. The highest identified support mechanisms available to multigrade teachers in Pudtol District are “support from the school head” (22), ranked 1st, indicating that the majority of teachers perceive strong administrative guidance and leadership as the most accessible and reliable form of support. This suggests that school heads play a crucial role in facilitating instructional practices, monitoring implementation, and providing direction to teachers. Followed by “training programs from DepEd” (21), ranked 2nd, which reflects that professional development opportunities are widely available and recognized by teachers as important in enhancing their teaching. “Peer support from co-teachers” (20), ranked 3rd, indicates that collaboration and collegial assistance are common and important sources of support within the school. These findings suggest that instructional leadership, professional development, and collegial collaboration are the most accessible forms of support valued by teachers in their classrooms. This aligns with findings that parental and community participation in multigrade settings is often constrained by socioeconomic factors, limited educational background, and geographic isolation, which can reduce their capacity to actively support learners' academic development at home (Bray, 1987). Strengthening these partnerships is therefore essential in improving the sustainability and effectiveness of multigrade education systems.



Inorder to have a comprehensive understanding of the support mechanisms available and needed to enhance teaching and learning in multigrade classrooms under the MATATAG curriculum, the quantitative results are supported by the responses of the respondents and the following themes have emerged.

1. Continuous professional development and training
2. Access to instructional materials and resources
3. Mentorship, Coaching and Collaboration
4. Administrative and Policy Support

Best Practices Identified from the Pedagogical Strategies Employed by Multigrade Teachers

Verbatim Statements

Participant 1

“As Grade 1 and 2 teacher, peer tutoring ya isa nga ammu’ nga best practice u’. Datu Grade 2 ay suruan da datu Grade 1 nga magbasa. Suruan da gida ka basic reading and counting.

(As a Grade 1 and 2 teacher, peer tutoring is one of my known best practices. The Grade 2 pupils teach the Grade 1 pupils how to read. They help them with basic reading and counting.)

Participant 2

“Kiya panangisuru ka multigrade ay atan scheme nga masursurut,Atan Scheme A, B, se C. I usually use Scheme C which is combining two competencies in my lesson plan tapno napaspas ya flow naya lesson. Ya proseso naya lesson ay magpada kitu motivation part inggana discussion. Magsina da ngin kitu activity part mankiya application se evaluation. But in the activities, mas high level tu Grade 2 and lower to Grade 1”.

(In multigrade teaching, there are schemes being followed. There is Scheme A, B, and C. I usually use Scheme C, which combines two competencies in my lesson plan so that the flow of the lesson can be finished easily. The lesson process is the same for both groups from the motivation part up to the discussion part. However, they differ in the activity part, particularly in application and evaluation. In the activities, Grade 2 is given higher-level tasks while Grade 1 is given lower-level tasks.)

Participant 3

“As a newly assigned multigrade teacher, my best practices in teaching the new curriculum include careful planning and organization of lessons so that different grade levels can learn at the same time. I use differentiated instruction by giving varied activities based on the learner’s abilities and levels. I encourage independent and group learning so pupils can help each other and become more responsible for their tasks. Using available and localized materials helps make lessons easier to understand. I also apply continuous assessment to monitor learner’s progress”.

Participant 4

“For my instructional planning, pinagpepair ko yung objective na magkaparehas for Grades 1 and 2 at isahan na lang ang pagtuturo. Para sa teaching delivery, “I use playbase and colorful Instructional Materials and it can be manipulatives. For my assessments, I use oral contest para lahat magparticipate at makinig. For the remediation, I use playbase and contest activities.”



(For my instructional planning, I prepare objectives that are the same for both Grades 1 and 2, so I teach them together. For my teaching delivery, I use play-based and colorful instructional materials, including manipulatives. For my assessments, I conduct oral contests so that everyone can participate and listen. For remediation, I also use play-based and contest activities.)

Participant 5

"I keep my instructional planning simple by teaching one big theme to the whole class once, but I use differentiated instruction to give each grade a different task. For teaching delivery, I keep one group busy with "learning stations" or partner games while I sit down and give my full attention to another group. I use differentiated instruction by giving hands-on tools, like blocks, to students who need extra help, while giving enhancement activities to those who are ready for a challenge."

Participant 6

"Isa nga practice u' kas Multigrade teacher ay ya pinag established ka classroom routine to maintain classroom management and pupils behavior ta senu mas organize ya teaching and learning process."

(One of my practices as a multigrade teacher is establishing classroom routines to maintain classroom management and pupils' behavior, so that the teaching and learning process is more organized.)

Participant 7

"Ginagawa ko ang Differentiated Instruction. Importante Talaga ito. Kapag hindi mo ito ginawa kawawa ang mga batang hindi nakakaalam sa ipinapagawa natin. Naayon sa level dapat ang mga activity para makacope up ang mga medyo mahihina sa klase."

(I practice differentiated instructions. This is very important. If you do not apply for it, the pupils who do not understand the tasks will be left behind. The activities should be appropriate to their level so that those struggling in class can cope.

Participant 8

"In my classroom, I consider buffer activities as part of my best practices in classroom management, as they help maintain order and maximize learning time".

Participant 9

"Patibkeren ya parental engagement kadaya parents. Strategy se best practices ngamin dayan ta senu maiguide se mafollow up daya parents daya anana' da ka balay da. Importante pe ta senu aware ya parents kiya performance naya anana' na."

(Strengthen parental engagement with parents. These are all strategies and best practices to guide parents and allow them to follow up on their children at home. This is important so that parents are aware of their child's performance.)

Participant 10

"Teaching in a multigrade class under the new curriculum is not easy. It is often overwhelming at first, but with these best practices, lessons can run smoothly:

"Use the same topic but assign different task".

"Divide the class into groups and rotate activities".

"Apply differentiated instructions".



“Maximize peer teaching”.

“Establish clear routines”

“Use contextualized and localized materials”

“Prepare self-directed learning materials”

“Stay flexible all the time”.

Participant 11

“Masapsapa ay dapat nga ibaha mu yin tu routine da ki pagpagmaat ta senu mimemorize da dagus, agkan nin nga hassle iyawin nga magi remind peyyang.”

(It is important to tell them their routine early every morning so they can memorize it right away and so that it will not be difficult or a hassle to keep reminding them.)

Participant 12

“Nu mangisuru ka yin ay dapat talaga nga atan IM’s mu nga nakaready, senu continuous tu flow naya lesson. Kasi magtutungtung dayanin nu awan mu adu nga naiprepare. Ya IM’s dapat localized tapno agkan da nga saludsod nga saludsod nu inna ya uwaan da.”

(When you are teaching, you should always have instructional materials (IMs) ready so that the flow of the lesson is continuous. Because students tend to talk to each other when you have nothing prepared for them to do. The instructional materials should also be localized so that they will not keep asking what it is and what they are supposed to do.)

Participant 13

“Ya mayat nga practice ki multigrade ay peer tutoring. Mangtrained ka ka little teacher ta senu atan mangi guide se mangi distribute kaday activity da.”

(One good practice in multigrade teaching is peer tutoring. You train a “little teacher” who will guide the other pupils and distribute their tasks.)

Participant 14

“Magprepare ka differentiated activities ta senu mainspire pe nga mangwa ka activity datu nakapsut nga learner.”

(Prepare differentiated activities to inspire struggling learners to participate in and complete the tasks.)

Participant 15

“Set time to finish the activities tapno agkan da maruwam nga mangitantantan ka trabaho se senu awan backlog nga competencies.”

(Set a time limit for finishing the activities so that students will avoid procrastinating on their tasks and to avoid backlog in competencies.)

Participant 16

“Effective teaching in a multigrade classroom requires thoughtful instructional planning, adaptive teaching methods, and responsive assessment practices. In terms of instructional planning, integration and differentiation are essential considering their differences in terms of

age and grade level. When it comes to teaching delivery methods, flexibility is key. The use of varied grouping strategies, such as peer tutoring, small group discussions, and independent learning stations, allows students to learn collaboratively



and autonomously. When it comes to assessments, it must be tailored to the specific competencies of each grade level to ensure fairness and accuracy. In addition to assessment, providing immediate and constructive feedback helps learners improve while maintaining engagement, especially when the teacher's attention is divided among multiple groups"

Table 5. Best practices from the pedagogical strategies employed by multigrade teachers

Core Ideas	Sub-Theme	Major Theme
Peer tutoring where Grade 2 pupils teach Grade 1 reading, counting, and task guidance: use of "little teacher" strategy	Peer-assisted learning and student leadership	Collaborative Learning Strategies
Use of Scheme C and integrated lesson planning combining competencies; same lesson flow with differentiated tasks for each grade level	Integrated curriculum planning with differentiation	Instructional Planning and Curriculum Adaptation
Careful lesson planning, differentiated instruction, group and independent learning, use of localized materials, continuous and tailored assessment, and flexible teaching strategies	Adaptive, contextualized, and differentiated instruction	Instructional Planning and Curriculum Adaptation
Use of play-based, colorful, and manipulative instructional materials; oral contests; remediation through games and activities	Play-based and engaging instructional delivery and assessment	Instructional Delivery and Assessment Strategies
One common theme for all learners with differentiated tasks; use of learning stations, group rotation, and hands-on materials for varying abilities	Flexible grouping and differentiated engagement strategies	Instructional Delivery and Classroom Differentiation
Establishing clear routines, early routine instruction, time management strategies, buffer activities, and set deadlines for task	Structured routines and time management for classroom efficiency	Classroom Management and Organization
Consistent use of differentiated instruction to match learner abilities and prevent struggling learners from being left behind	Level-based instruction for equity and inclusion	Instructional Delivery and Classroom Differentiation
Prepared instructional materials (IMs), including localized and	Preparedness and use of contextualized learning	Instructional Materials and Learning Environment



contextualized resources to ensure smooth lesson flow and learner understanding	resources	
Strengthening parental engagement for home support, monitoring, and awareness of learner performance	Home-school partnership and parental involvement	Stakeholder Engagement and Support System
Multigrade teaching strategies including flexibility, group rotation, peer teaching, differentiated instruction, localized materials, and self-directed learning materials	Flexible and adaptive multigrade teaching practices	Instructional Planning and Classroom Differentiation
Immediate feedback and continuous assessment aligned with competencies of different grade levels to ensure progress monitoring	Assessment, feedback, and learner progress monitoring	Instructional Assessment and Feedback Integration

The best practices employed by multigrade teachers in Pudtol District reflect their adaptability, creativity, and commitment to effective teaching despite the challenges of multigrade instruction. Teachers commonly utilized collaborative learning strategies such as peer tutoring and group activities to encourage learner participation and cooperation. In instructional planning and curriculum adaptation, teachers modified lessons and integrated competencies to address the diverse needs and grade levels within one classroom.

Effective instructional delivery and classroom differentiation were also evident as teachers used varied teaching approaches, flexible activities, and differentiated tasks suited to learners' abilities and learning styles. Classroom management and organization practices, including structured routines and clear classroom procedures, helped maintain order and maximize learning time. Teachers also made use of available instructional materials and created supportive learning environments to enhance learner engagement.

Moreover, stakeholder engagement and support systems, particularly parental involvement and collaboration with school heads and co-teachers, contributed to improved learning outcomes. Assessment and feedback integration were likewise practiced through continuous monitoring, remediation, and constructive feedback to support learners' progress and development.

Table 6. Proposed pedagogical adaptations to enhance instructional practices in multigrade classrooms in Pudtol District

Proposed Pedagogical Adaptations	Challenges Addressed
Aligning lessons with the MATATAG curriculum	Difficulty in curriculum alignment and ensuring instruction matches updated standards and competencies; inconsistency in lesson implementation across grade levels



Using combination of traditional and technology aided materials	Limited instructional resources, lack of updated teaching materials, and low learner engagement due to overreliance on traditional methods
Designing assessments aligned with MATATAG curriculum competencies	Mismatch between teaching objectives and assessment tools; difficulty in accurately measuring learners' mastery of required competencies
Implementing catch-up programs to bridge learning gaps	Learning loss, unequal learner progress in multigrade classrooms, and foundational skill deficiencies among learners

Table 6 presents proposed pedagogical adaptations to enhance multigrade teaching in Pudtol District. Aligning lessons with the MATATAG curriculum addresses curriculum implementation challenges and ensures consistent competency mastery across grades. Combining traditional and technology-aided materials counters limited resources while boosting learner engagement. Designing MATATAG-aligned assessments resolves mismatches between instruction and evaluation for accurate progress monitoring. Implementing catch-up programs targets learning gaps and foundational skill deficiencies, promoting equity in multigrade settings. These adaptations offer practical solutions tailored to rural resource constraints and DepEd curriculum reforms.

Findings

1. The profile of multigrade teachers in Pudtol District reveals that respondents are predominantly female aged 28 to 35 with most possessing over 10 years of teaching experience encompassing both novice and seasoned educators.
2. Multigrade teachers frequently use pedagogical strategies. Teaching delivery methods and assessment practices are the most commonly used while learning support and remediation are the least practiced.
3. The main challenge is inconsistent parental support followed by learners' reading and basic skills difficulties and lack of learning materials. Time constraints, heavy workload, limited training, and lack of technology also affect implementation.
4. School heads provide the most support followed by DepEd training and co-teachers. Instructional materials and community support are the least available support mechanism.
5. Multigrade teachers use peer tutoring, differentiated instruction, integrated lesson planning (Scheme C), play-based materials, structured routines, and parental engagement as key best practices in teaching, assessment, and classroom management.
6. Proposed pedagogical adaptations focus on aligning instruction with the MATATAG curriculum, using combination of traditional and technology-aided materials, improving assessment alignment and implementing catch-up programs to address learning gaps.

Conclusions

1. Multigrade teaching in Pudtol District is mostly handled by female teachers who are young to mid-career professionals with many experienced educators. This shows a balanced mix of experience that supports teaching in multigrade settings.



2. Multigrade teachers frequently use pedagogical strategies with stronger focus on teaching delivery and assessment but weaker practice in learning support and remediation.
3. Multigrade teachers in Pudtol District face challenges related to home support, learner readiness, and limited resources which affect the implementation of pedagogical strategies.
4. Teachers mainly rely on school leadership, DepEd training, and peer collaboration for improvement while access to instructional materials and community support remains limited.
5. Effective multigrade teaching in Pudtol District depends on adaptive, collaborative, and localized strategies that promote equity and engagement despite limited resources.
6. The proposed adaptations offer practical solutions to address curriculum demands, resource limitations and learning gaps in multigrade teaching.

Recommendations

1. Multigrade teachers should encourage to pursue continuous professional development. Early-career teachers receive mentoring while experienced teachers should act as mentors to strengthen instructional support.
2. Multigrade teachers should design flexible lesson plans with self-paced activities and visual aids to support independent learning.
3. Multigrade teachers should engage parents through community workshops in local venues. They should use low-cost, printable materials made from recycled resources and prioritize peer tutoring and flexible scheduling for remediation.
4. Schools should conduct Learning Action Cell sessions in local venues. They should distribute low-cost, printable MATATAG-aligned materials through DepEd channels and strengthen school head monitoring through weekly rural cluster meetings.
5. Multigrade teachers should promote peer tutoring and establish daily routines through school-based demonstrations.
6. Schools should develop printable MATATAG guides for offline use, train teachers on low-tech catch-up sessions and create shared rural material repositories.

REFERENCES

- Berry, C. (2001). Achievement effects of multigrade and monograde primary schools in the Turks and Caicos Islands. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 21(6), 537–552.
- Berry, C. (2006). *Multigrade teaching in developing countries: Research and policy perspectives*.
- Bongala, N., Bobis, V., Castillo, J. P. R., & Marasigan, A. C. (2020). Pedagogical strategies and challenges of multigrade schoolteachers in Albay, Philippines. *International Journal of Comparative Education and Development*, 22(4), 299–315.
- Borberly, T. (2023). *Collaborative learning in multigrade classrooms: Evidence from Europe*.
- Brecio, R. G. (2023). Lifeworld of multigrade teachers in Leyte: A phenomenological study. *International Journal of Academic Pedagogical Research*, 4(2), 31–34.



Chen, A., et al. (2019). Enhancing multigrade teachers' well-being: A study on adaptive strategies in a global context. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 111(3), 482–497.

Department of Education. (2009). *DepEd Order No. 81, s. 2009: Strengthening the implementation of multigrade program in the Philippine education*.

Department of Education. (2023). *MATATAG curriculum: Bansang makabata, batang makabansa*.

Epstein, J.L. (2011). *School, family and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools* (2nd ed.). Westview Press.

Lawat, D. C. (2025). Challenges and opportunities in managing multigrade classes: A multi-site case study of selected elementary schools in Calanasan, Apayao. *International Journal of Latest Research in Humanities and Social Science*, 8(6), 114–126.

Little, A. W. (2001). Multigrade teaching: Towards an international research and policy agenda. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 21(6), 481–497.

Mason, D. A., & Burns, R. B. (1995). Teachers' views of combination classes. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 89(1), 36–45.

Mason, M., & Burns, R. (1995). *Multigrade classrooms in developed and developing countries: Policies and practices*.

Ocampo, R., & Ballesteros, M. (2016). Best practices of multigrade teaching in Luna, Apayao, Philippines. *International Journal of Novel Research in Education and Learning*, 3(6), 61–73. Retrieved February 21, 2026, from <http://www.noveltyjournals.com>

Snow, C.E., Burns, M.S., & Griffin, P. (2008) *Preventing reading difficulties in young children*, National Academies Press.

Taole, M. (2023). *Structural and instructional constraints in multigrade classrooms in developing countries*.

Tayoni, A. C., & Abocejo, F. T. (2023). Multigrade education in the Philippines: Policies, implementation, and challenges. *International Journal of Academic Pedagogical Research*, 7(1), 1–6.

Tomlinson, C. A. (2001). *How to differentiate instruction in mixed-ability classrooms* (2nd ed.). Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

UNESCO. (2021). *Education: From disruption to recovery*. Retrieved February 21, 2026, from <https://www.unesco.org/en/covid19/educationresponse>

UNICEF. (2020). *Multigrade teaching: A purposeful strategy for inclusive quality education*. UNICEF.



Urma, A., & Callo, J. (2023). *Teachers' pedagogical challenges in multigrade settings: Implications for training and support*.

Veenman, S. (1995). Cognitive and non-cognitive effects of multigrade and multi-age classes: A best-evidence synthesis. *Review of Educational Research*, 65(4), 319–381.