

Challenges in the Adoption Process of the Revised K to 10 Curriculum: A Qualitative Descriptive Study using Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory

Neijan Ysette B. Yamota

Holy Cross of Davao College, Davao City, Davao del Sur, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the challenges encountered during the initial implementation of the revised K to 10 curriculum (formerly MATATAG), utilizing Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory as a framework, specifically focusing on the five perceived attributes of innovation: relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, data were gathered through focus group discussions with eight Grade 1 and 4 teachers from Rizal Elementary School and eight Grade 7 teachers from Panabo City National High School, as well as in-depth interviews with two assistant principals, one principal, one Education Program Supervisor (EPS), and one Curriculum and Instruction Division (CID) Chief. The findings revealed six major challenges: hesitation and reluctance among educators, difficulty adjusting to the new curriculum, concerns with curriculum structure and sequencing, existing curriculum gaps, inadequate teacher training, and lack of essential resources. These challenges highlighted a disconnect between the curriculum's design and the practical realities of classroom implementation. The study concludes that the success of curriculum reforms relies on addressing systemic barriers, empowering teachers as co-implementers, and aligning reform efforts with the actual conditions and needs of public school classrooms and learners.

Keywords: Challenges, Adoption Process, Revised K to 10 Curriculum, Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory

INTRODUCTION

The Problem and Its Setting

Teachers' resistance has been a key factor in the adoption of a curriculum (Loza, 2024). Many teachers are unwilling to adopt and implement new curriculum changes, believing that such reforms do not significantly impact the efficiency of the teaching and learning environment (Aytaç, 2023). Additionally, they often feel forced into these changes, which further reinforces their resistance (Pak et al., 2020). Since teachers play a crucial role as curriculum implementers, their psychological state directly influences the success of curriculum reform (Loza, 2024). Resistance to curriculum change can be verbally or consciously delivered, manifested through non-verbal language, and hidden resistance, which only manifests in a strongly unusual way at critical moments (Lomba-Portela et al., 2022).

A study in Turkey by Aytaç (2023) found that teachers exhibited high resistance to curriculum changes, which hindered their effective implementation in the teaching-learning process. Teachers' resistance did not vary significantly by gender or professional seniority but differed based on school location and type. Additionally, in New Zealand, Loza (2024) highlighted that teachers often resisted educational changes, a pattern observed in various educational systems. Similarly, in Ireland, Byrne and Prendergast (2019) noted that secondary school teachers frequently resisted curriculum reforms in subjects like English, Mathematics, and Design and Communication Graphics.

In the Philippines, the revised K to 10 curriculum—formerly the MATATAG curriculum—was seen by teachers as increasing their administrative responsibilities due to stricter monitoring and evaluation

requirements. They also faced challenges related to assessment preparation and adapting to new teaching materials and planning methods (Loza, 2024). These factors contributed to the teachers' resistance to implementing the new curriculum.

Teachers often resist curriculum reforms, as these require significant changes in their thinking and practices. Such resistance typically stems from concerns about the reform's rationale, classroom implications, student outcomes, and their capacity to implement the changes effectively (Byrne & Prendergast, 2019). These concerns can hinder the success of curriculum implementation and create gaps between what was intended and what is actually practiced in classrooms.

Significance of the Study

The MATATAG Curriculum, introduced in the 2024–2025 academic year and now referred to as the Revised K to 10 Curriculum under the new Department Secretary, underscores the need for continued research on its implementation, particularly regarding the challenges teachers may face in adapting to this change, which could contribute to their resistance. Using Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory, this study examined teachers' resistance and the factors that may influence their adoption of the new curriculum.

The findings could be significant for the Department of Education (DepEd), as they may offer valuable insights and recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of the curriculum's implementation. This research may also guide education leaders, curriculum designers, and instructional supervisors in refining existing policies and developing more responsive and effective implementation strategies.

Furthermore, this study may contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4: Quality Education by addressing potential barriers to effective curriculum delivery and promoting teaching practices that align with evolving educational goals. It may also support SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth by drawing attention to concerns related to teachers' workloads and the need for consistent professional support. Ultimately, this research aims to assist teachers and school communities in fostering a more sustainable and effective learning environment that could enhance both teaching practices and student learning outcomes.

Statement of the Problem

This study identified the challenges encountered by the public school teachers, administrators, and supervisors of Panabo City Division in the initial implementation of the revised K to 10 curriculum. This study sought an answer to this question:

1. What are the challenges encountered by the participants in the initial implementation of the revised K to 10 curriculum?

Assumptions

In this study, it is assumed that the adoption of new curriculum practices aligns with the principles outlined in Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) Theory, with particular emphasis on the perceived characteristics of innovation: relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, traceability, and observability. It is presumed that teachers, administrators, and supervisors engage with the Revised K to 10 Curriculum in ways that may be influenced by their perceptions of these innovation attributes, thereby shaping their acceptance and integration of the curriculum into daily teaching practices.

However, this study does not incorporate all elements of Rogers' framework. Specifically, the stages of adoption (knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, confirmation), communication channels, time span of adoption, and social systems are beyond the scope of the research. This exclusion is based on several key considerations. First, the Revised K to 10 Curriculum remains in the early stages of implementation; thus, it may not yet be possible to determine whether participants have progressed through all phases of the adoption process. The study instead focuses on their current experiences, rather than attempting to track the longitudinal evolution of adoption.

Second, communication channels were not examined, as the curriculum is a top-down mandate from the Department of Education (DepEd), and information is disseminated primarily through official training sessions, memos, and directives. These standardized mechanisms reduce the relevance of studying informal or varied communication pathways. Third, given that all participants were exposed to the curriculum during the same national rollout period, differences in the length of exposure are unlikely to be a significant variable in shaping perceptions of adoption, and therefore, were not explored in depth. Additionally, the study assumes that participants operate within a relatively uniform educational structure governed by DepEd policies, which standardizes curriculum implementation across public schools. As such, while social systems may influence adoption behaviors, they are considered a constant rather than a variable of interest in this context.

It is also assumed that the study participants—including teachers, school administrators, and curriculum developers—would provide honest, reflective responses based on their firsthand experiences with the MATATAG Curriculum. The credibility of their accounts is critical for accurately capturing the challenges and opportunities in implementing the revised curriculum. While the study is geographically limited to selected schools in the Panabo City Division—specifically, Rizal Elementary School and Panabo City National High School—it is assumed that the findings could be applicable to similarly structured public educational settings in the Philippines. This assumption is grounded in the standardized nature of curriculum implementation under DepEd directives, which may result in comparable experiences across schools operating under the same policy framework.

Theoretical Lens

My study employed the Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory of Everett Rogers in 1962. According to Rogers (2003), diffusion is “the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system.” It has five key factors that influence how quickly an innovation is adopted. Relative advantage refers to how much better the innovation is compared to existing solutions—if it offers clear benefits, people are more likely to adopt it. Compatibility measures how well the innovation fits with current workflows, knowledge, and values; the easier it integrates, the faster it spreads. Complexity affects adoption as well—if an innovation is difficult to understand or use, people may hesitate to adopt it. Trialability is the ability to test the innovation before fully committing, which helps reduce uncertainty. Lastly, observability refers to how visible the innovation's success is, if people can easily see its benefits, they are more likely to adopt it. These five characteristics shape individuals’ perceptions and ultimately influence the adoption process.

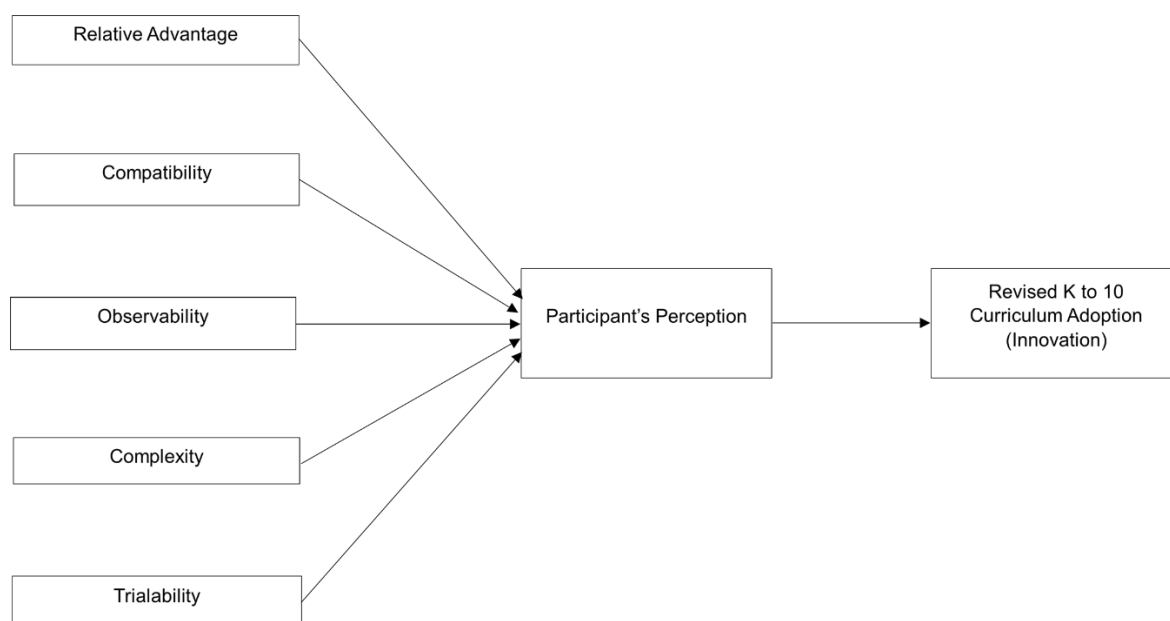


Figure 1. Perceived Characteristics in Rogers’ DOI Theory

This study focused on the element of perceived characteristics, as these were considered the primary determinants of whether an innovation would be adopted or rejected. These characteristics directly shaped participants' willingness and ability to integrate the revised K to 10 Curriculum into their teaching practices. The research aimed to explore which aspects of the curriculum made it easier or more difficult to adopt, making perceived characteristics the most relevant analytical lens for the investigation. By concentrating on these perceived attributes, the study sought to capture what mattered most in the adoption process—specifically, whether teachers viewed the curriculum as beneficial, manageable, and compatible with their instructional approaches.

Paradigm

Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations theory identifies five key attributes that influence how innovations are adopted: relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability (Rogers, 2003). Relative advantage refers to the perceived superiority of an innovation over the previous practice; when the benefits are clear, such as increased efficiency or ease—adoption is more likely (Antonopoulou & Dacre, 2021). Compatibility pertains to how well the innovation aligns with adopters' existing values and experiences. Innovations that fit current norms are more readily accepted (Alyoubi & Yamin, 2024). Complexity involves how difficult the innovation is to understand or use. Simpler innovations are generally adopted faster (Rogers, 2003). Trialability allows users to test the innovation before full implementation, which helps reduce uncertainty (Antonopoulou & Dacre, 2021). Finally, observability concerns the visibility of outcomes; when benefits are observable, adoption tends to spread more quickly (Rogers, 2003). Together, these attributes influence how innovations diffuse through organizations and communities.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research employed a qualitative descriptive design to explore the challenges faced by participants during the implementation of the Revised K to 10 Curriculum, also referred to as the MATATAG Curriculum. A descriptive approach was deemed appropriate, as it allowed for an effective exploration of naturally occurring, real-world challenges related to curriculum adoption, as framed by the Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) Theory (Siedlecki, 2019). This approach facilitated a broader examination of multiple participants' experiences, enabling the identification of common themes and contextual factors. The study analyzed participants' narratives through the lens of Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory, with the aim of gaining a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics that influenced the adoption process during the initial stages of curriculum implementation.

Locale of the Study

This study was conducted in Panabo City's DepEd Division, particularly at Rizal Elementary School and Panabo City National High School. Rizal Elementary School and Panabo City National High School are both public schools with a relatively high number of grade school teachers. The schools' rich and diverse experiences with curriculum implementation, varying levels of teacher preparedness, resources, and administrative support provide a well-rounded perspective on the adoption process. Additionally, conducting research in Panabo City ensured accessibility and feasibility, allowing for more data collection through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. This study was further supported by the endorsement of the Schools Division Superintendent, reinforcing institutional backing and ensuring smoother coordination with participants. Given these factors, Panabo City DepEd Division serves as an appropriate and representative site for examining the experiences of public school teachers in adopting the revised K to 10 curriculum, also known as the revised K to 10 curriculum.

Sample and Sampling Technique

This study used purposive sampling (National Center for State Courts, 2022) to select participants involved in the initial implementation of the revised K to 10 curriculum, also known as the MATATAG curriculum, in

Panabo City DepEd Division. I also utilized both Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and In-Depth Interviews (IDIs). For the Focus Group Discussion, the participants included eight (8) teachers from Grades 1 and 4 from Rizal Elementary School and another eight (8) Grade 7 teachers from Panabo City National High School, which are the grade levels included in the initial phase of the revised K to 10 curriculum. Additionally, one (1) assistant principal from Rizal Elementary School, one (1) assistant principal from Panabo City National High School, one (1) principal, one (1) Educational Program Supervisor (EPS), and one (1) Chief Education Supervisor (CID Chief) were interviewed individually through IDI.

Data Gathering Procedure

Data collection began with the submission of a formal request to the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) of DepEd Panabo City Division to obtain consent and permission to gather data from individuals involved in the implementation of the MATATAG curriculum. Following approval, letters were sent to the principals of Rizal Elementary School and Panabo City National High School, outlining the study's objectives and requesting their assistance in identifying potential teacher-participants. In response, the principal and assistant principal provided a list of teachers who expressed willingness to participate.

Prior to the interviews, informed consent was obtained from all participants. In-depth, face-to-face interviews were conducted, focusing on the challenges experienced during the implementation of the revised K to 10 curriculum. All interviews were audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed verbatim. The transcribed data were then subjected to thematic analysis to identify recurring themes and patterns related to the difficulties encountered in the curriculum implementation.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis, following the method proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), was utilized to identify, analyze, and interpret recurring patterns in the qualitative data. This approach enabled a systematic organization and meaningful interpretation of the narrative interview accounts. The analysis was anchored in Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) Theory, with the five perceived characteristics—relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability—serving as the primary thematic categories. As the analysis progressed, additional sub-themes emerged inductively from the data.

The process began with the transcription of all audio-recorded interviews to ensure accuracy. Preliminary codes were then generated through a careful reading of the transcripts, focusing on segments relevant to the research questions. These codes were interpreted and categorized according to the core themes defined by Rogers' DOI theory. The initial groupings were reviewed and refined, determining whether to merge, separate, or discard particular themes based on the coherence and relevance of the data. Each theme and sub-theme was then clearly defined and labeled, and operational definitions were crafted to capture their conceptual essence. Finally, the analysis was synthesized into a coherent and interpretable narrative, incorporating compelling excerpts from the participants to illustrate each theme in relation to the research question and existing literature.

Trustworthiness

In every qualitative research, identifying the trustworthiness of the study is just as important as the study itself (SooleenAbbas, 2024). Lincoln and Guba (1985) constructed four criteria to manifest trustworthy of the study. These included: a) credibility (confidence that the findings are factual); b) transferability (the applicability of these findings in another context); c) dependability (consistency of the findings), and d) confirmability (objectivity of the findings). In this study, trustworthiness was followed through:

Credibility. My study ensured its credibility by securing data from participants who met the criteria stated in this chapter. Moreover, my study was conducted with the guidance and supervision of the research adviser. Thus, each process and action for this study has undergone confirmation and validity by the research adviser.

Transferability. The Philippine basic education system is new to implementing the revised K to 10 curriculum in public schools. Data from stakeholders includes suggestions for improving the implementation of the MATATAG curriculum. Thus, future researchers could conduct a study in another context or locality and focus on the experiences of other curriculum actors, such as students, parents, and other education leaders.

Dependability. My study ensured that the necessary procedures and guidelines were followed, mainly when gathering data in Panabo City. I also confirmed the data saturation from the interviews to show consistency in the results.

Confirmability. In this study, I secured validation of the transcribed interview with the participants. Moreover, their responses were analyzed through data and information from credible studies and sources.

RESULTS

In this chapter, I present the challenges encountered by the participants in the initial implementation of the revised K to 10 curriculum, previously known as the MATATAG curriculum. The identified challenges are: a) hesitation and reluctance, b) adjustment to the new curriculum, c) issues with curriculum structure and sequencing, d) curriculum gaps, e) insufficient curriculum training, and f) lack of resources. These challenges are the sub-themes of the five (5) perceived characteristics (themes) of Rogers' DOI theory: relative advantage, compatibility, observability, complexity, and trialability, which were categorized according to the theory.

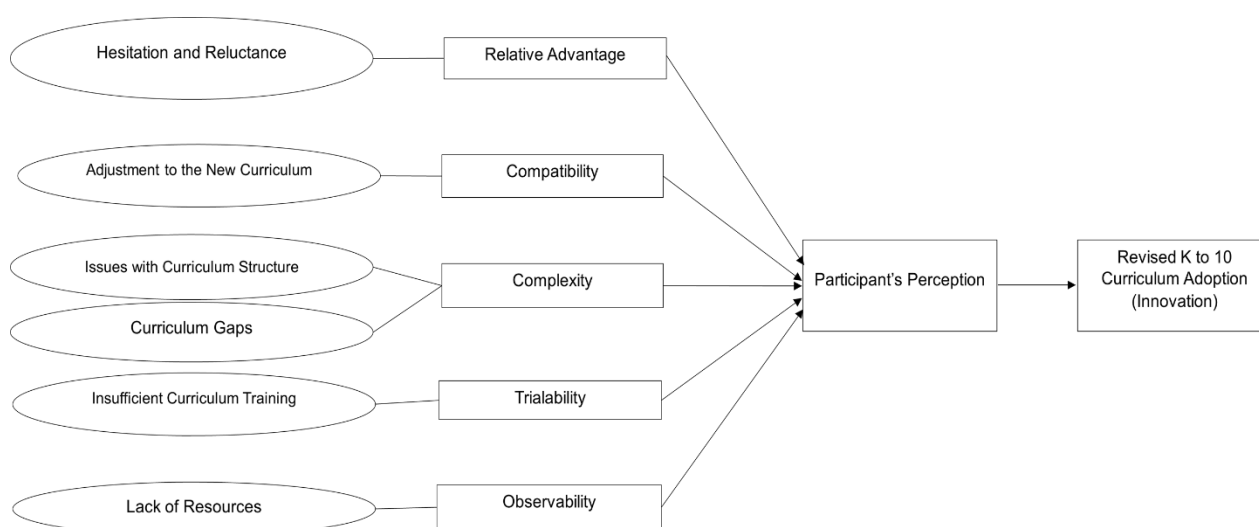


Figure 2: Identified Challenges in the Implementation of the Revised K to 10 curriculum

Challenges of the Participants in the Implementation of the Revised K to 10 Curriculum

I asked the participants about their challenges in the initial implementation of the revised K to 10 curriculum. The participants expressed their concerns and difficulties with its initial phase. The presentation of the findings started with five (5) themes, followed by the presentation of the sub-themes, which were the challenges encountered by the study participants. The five themes that explained the different challenges encountered by the participants were: relative advantage, compatibility, observability, complexity, and trialability. These five themes were originally discussed in the theory used in this study. Hence, this research just affirmed those themes.

Challenge under Relative Advantage

In Rogers's view, the relative advantage is the extent to which the participants perceive the revised K to 10 curriculum as better than the curriculum it replaces. Under the relative advantage, participants expressed how

the revised K to 10 curriculum is different than the previous curriculum. The relative advantage of something can be either financial or non-financial and may be assessed based on factors such as economic benefits, social status, convenience, and enjoyment. However, there is no fixed rule determining who experiences this advantage, as it is influenced by individual perspectives and the specific needs of the user group (Rogers, 2003). The revised K to 10 curriculum presents challenges that lower its perceived advantage.

On Hesitation and Reluctance. A sub-theme that emerges as one of the major challenges for the participants is hesitation and reluctance. Administrators and supervisors expressed that this is a concern. Some teachers were reluctant and hesitant with the implementation of the revised K to 10 curriculum. It became clear that not everyone was immediately onboard with the changes. In one in-depth interview, an administrator mentioned how, in their case, they saw the new curriculum as an advantage and didn't hesitate to embrace it. However, they acknowledged that this wasn't the case for all teachers. Some, particularly those who were more accustomed to previous systems, questioned why another change was being introduced and expressed hesitations about the new approach. This insight highlighted a deeper issue—the divide between those who quickly adapt to new changes and those who struggle with the uncertainty that often accompanies such shifts. IDI APP said,

“...teachers ana especially to those who have hesitations sa imong giingon. Lucky lang kung ingon-ana mi kay wala man ko naghesitate, kita man nako sya as advantage. Pero we cannot say for all, naa man gyud tay mga teachers siguro mag-question ngano na change na pud, naay hesitations on the new implementation.” (...teachers, especially those who have hesitations about what you mentioned. We're just lucky because, in my case, I didn't hesitate—I saw it as an advantage. But we cannot say the same for everyone. There are certainly teachers who might question why it changed again and have hesitations about the new implementation.)

IDI, APP also shared the important roles of administrators and supervisors in helping and assisting teachers in the implementation of the new curriculum.

“As Assistant Principal, ipasabot dyud sa teacher for example naay new changes. Naa man gud miy ginatawag nga LAC session.” (As Assistant Principal, it's really important to explain to the teachers whenever there are new changes. We have what we call LAC—Learning Action Cell—sessions.)

This approach highlights the ongoing support provided by school leadership to help teachers navigate the complexities of curriculum implementation, ensuring a smooth transition and continuous professional development.

Meanwhile, for the teacher-participants, reluctance and hesitations were influenced by a number of factors. A participant expressed that the new curriculum is not feasible, pointing out that while there was a drastic change, the Department was not fully prepared for its implementation. Others echoed similar sentiments, emphasizing that while the structure of the revised K to 10 curriculum appeared ideal, it was not realistic in practice. FGD P8 fearlessly expressed,

“So, there's a drastic change in the curriculum, but then the readiness of the Department is really not feasible.”

Teachers raised concerns about the lack of ready-made materials, which forced them to gather multiple sources, often leading to inconsistencies in content. They highlighted how, in other countries, curricula are well-prepared in advance, allowing teachers to focus solely on instruction rather than spending additional time searching for resources. The abrupt shift in the curriculum, rather than a gradual transition, further added to the challenges. FGD P8 also added that,

“The structure of the MATATAG is very ideal, but not realistic. We can only complain, but we cannot deny the approval. Arang-arang lang siguro if we are like the other countries na prepared daan ang lessons, and

what you are going to do is just to teach already what they have given in the curriculum. The curriculum is ready, the competencies are ready, attainable siya, dili kay mangita pa ka unya di mao ang source unya mangita na pud kag lain. The shifting is drastic, not gradual.” (The structure of the MATATAG curriculum is very ideal, but it is not realistic. We can only complain, but we cannot deny its approval. It would have been much better if we were like other countries where lessons are already prepared in advance, and all the teachers have to do is simply teach what is provided in the curriculum. The curriculum is ready, the competencies are ready, and they are attainable. Unlike in our case, where we still have to search for sources, only to find that they are not the right ones, and then look for another. The shift is drastic, not gradual.)

Teachers have voiced feelings of frustration and overwhelm regarding the revised K to 10 curriculum. While they recognize that its structure looks ideal in theory, the reality of implementing it in the classroom has been far from seamless. The drastic shift in teaching methods and expectations has left educators feeling unsettled and unprepared. The lack of ready-made lessons and resources—something many teachers long for—has contributed to a sense of exhaustion as they search for appropriate materials, only to find that what they’ve found is either not useful or doesn’t align with the curriculum. The constant need to adapt and hunt for the right resources creates a feeling of uncertainty, as teachers constantly question if they’re doing it right. Instead of feeling empowered by the changes, many teachers feel like they are caught in a whirlwind of confusion and frustration. This emotional burden, combined with the pressure to meet new standards and expectations, has made the transition feel not just challenging but overwhelming.

In addition, another participant noted that even the grading system seemed unrefined, as though it was being finalized only when it was already due for implementation. This lack of preparedness left teachers scrambling to keep up, leading to confusion and difficulty in lesson delivery. FGD P6 shared,

“Murag wala pa man gane siguro nila na hand-eye ang kung unsa ang naa diraa sa kana na mga gradings. Murag kintahay ugma itudlo, karon nila gibuhat.” (It seems like they haven’t even thoroughly examined what’s included in those grading components. It’s as if they are creating them today for a lesson that needs to be taught tomorrow.)

FGD P3 also expressed the same concern,

“So, the bottom line is they need to review the curriculum of MATATAG. Review gyud ang top management para dili ma windang si teacher sa implementation.” (So, the bottom line is that they need to review the MATATAG curriculum. The top management should thoroughly review it to prevent teachers from getting overwhelmed during its implementation.)

Additionally, FGD P1 shared,

“Trial and error, pros and cons. Transition gane...transition of the implementation of MATATAG curriculum since this is our first year of implementing the MATATAG. So transition talaga ito maam, so nakita namin na kami na mga teachers...nakita namin na ang competencies nagka baliktad baliktad. Unya ang how we kana ganing...deal our learners nga nay time constraints na ginasunod kay among class program di masunod kay sa isa ka adlaw duha or tulo sa regular na mga bata. Sa mga special class mu maximum sila ug five pero dili pud everyday. So dili gihapon namo ma cope up ang eight subjects per day tungod sa mga bata.” (Trial and error, weighing the pros and cons. This is a transition—the implementation of the MATATAG curriculum is still in its first year. So, this is really a transition, ma’am, and we, as teachers, have observed that the competencies are mixed up and not in the right sequence. Additionally, there are time constraints in how we manage our learners because our class schedule cannot always be followed. In a day, regular students only have two to three subjects, while those in special classes can have up to five, but not every day. As a result, we still cannot keep up with covering all eight subjects per day due to these scheduling issues with the students.)

Additionally, teachers observed discrepancies in the sequencing of competencies, describing them as misaligned or reversed, making it harder to follow a logical progression in teaching. Time constraints in

lesson implementation were another major issue, particularly with the varying schedules of regular and special classes. In some cases, regular students only had two to three subjects per day, while special classes could go up to five, yet this schedule was not consistent. As a result, covering the required number of subjects became a struggle, further complicating the transition to the revised K to 10 curriculum. Ultimately, the teachers called for a thorough review of the curriculum at the management level to prevent confusion and ensure a more structured and effective implementation.

Challenge on Compatibility

Compatibility refers to the degree to which an innovation aligns with the existing values, experiences, and needs of potential adopters (Rogers, 2003). In the context of the revised K to 10 curriculum, compatibility is assessed by examining whether the curriculum fits with the pedagogical beliefs, classroom practices, and contextual realities of the teachers. Innovations that align with the prior knowledge and teaching styles of adopters are more likely to be accepted, while those perceived as misaligned create challenges that slow down adoption.

On Adjustment to the New Curriculum. One of the most emotionally taxing adjustments for teachers has been the sudden reduction of class time from 60 minutes to just 45 minutes per session. At first glance, it might seem like a minor tweak, but for many educators, it has disrupted the entire flow of their teaching. There is a growing sense of pressure and frustration as they struggle to condense meaningful and engaging lessons into a much tighter window. This limited time frame leaves little room for deeper discussions, student activities, or even just moments to pause and process the lesson. Teachers are constantly racing against the clock. It often feels like there's simply not enough time to do both. As a result, many have been left feeling disheartened, as if their ability to truly teach—and their students' ability to truly learn—has been compromised. According to IDI APP,

“Dili nato makita in that small span of time. Unya nagchange dayon, siguro the acceptance the adjustment, kadto sya. Challenges to sya, the adjustment of teachers to the new curriculum. Kay unsa na pud ni... unsa na pud. Kasi ang mga teachers baya no kay mu-follow lang baya ta kung unsa ang ihatag sa atua. So, probably diha nga part sa... sa the implementation, the pre-implementation, pag-accept sa new challenges and sa kadtong pag-introduce man gud ani ni Sara...” (We cannot fully see the impact in such a short span of time. And then, there was an immediate change. Perhaps the real challenge was in acceptance and adjustment—the adjustment of teachers to the new curriculum. It was like, ‘What is this again? What’s new this time? Because as teachers, we simply follow whatever is given to us. So, probably in that aspect—during the implementation, the pre-implementation, the acceptance of new challenges, and when this was introduced by Sara...)

IDI APP also added,

“45 minutes na lang so naay mga options kasi nga 45 minutes for 5 days, or i-one hour for four days. So mao to gi-lessen nila. And then sa MATATAG curriculum pud, is gi-lessen nila sa Junior High School ha sa what I have known sa Junior High School, I focus on Senior High School kasi. Sa Junior High School is gi-lessen nila ang distribution sa time. Mm... mm... Dati-rati uh... 4:30 mag-end ang klase karon sa mga grade 7, grade 8 kadtong nag-implement nami sa MATATAG curriculum 3:30 humana sila.” (It's only 45 minutes now, so there are options—either 45 minutes for five days or one hour for four days. So, they reduced it. In the MATATAG curriculum, they also reduced the time allocation in Junior High School. As far as I know, since I focus on Senior High School, they lessened the distribution of time in Junior High School. Before, classes used to end at 4:30 PM, but now, with the implementation of the MATATAG curriculum, Grade 7 and Grade 8 students finish at 3:30 PM.)

Moreover, adjustments in scheduling have caused changes in school operations. The narratives highlighted how the frequent modifications in class schedules have made it challenging to establish consistency. Schools were initially given options to implement 45-minute classes for five days or extend sessions to one hour for

four days. However, these schedules were repeatedly changed. In large schools with multiple sections and grade levels, a single schedule change impacts the entire system, requiring at least a week to reorganize. The lack of firm and consistent guidelines on time allotment further complicates the transition, adding another layer of stress for educators. IDI APR expressed,

“So, one hour from Monday to Thursday kana. So nagchange-change man to, gibalik na pud ug 50 minutes gibalik na pud... didto ang adjustment. Didto ang kuan kay dili baya lalim maghimo ug class program no. Unya karon big school mi, there are lots of sections, lots of grade level so mag-change ang isa change dyud na tanan, bungkag dyud na. It takes time, at least one week to re-arrange the... ..the school program. So mao na ang challenge gyud, dili sila firm ba. Kani pila ka minutes, kani ingon ana ang class program wala dili man sila change-change man sila. That’s the major ano... major challenge dyud sya.” (So, one hour from Monday to Thursday, like that. So it changed, then they returned it to 50 minutes again... that's where the adjustment is. The challenge is that it's not easy to create a class program, you know. And now, we're in a big school, there are lots of sections, lots of grade levels, so when one change happens, everything changes, it all gets disrupted. It takes at least a week to rearrange the school program. So that's the real challenge, they're not firm on it. How many minutes, what's the class program—it doesn't stay consistent, it keeps changing. That's the major... major challenge.)

These concerns were also similarly exposed by the teacher-participants. The teacher-participants expressed concern about the reduction of class hours because reduction means that they must streamline their teaching methods, cut down discussions, or risk not covering all required lessons. Such changes, implemented abruptly, have left many teachers struggling to balance curriculum demands with the reality of limited classroom time. The challenge, therefore, is not just in adjusting teaching strategies but also in ensuring that learning remains effective despite these constraints. FGD P4 said that this is one of the major challenges of the new curriculum, stating,

“The adjustment of the new class program. The number of minutes per subject. Also, the teachers’ manual. There were only four textbooks.”

Teachers expressed difficulty in adjusting to the MATATAG curriculum due to its abrupt implementation and significant structural changes. FGD, P8 shared that the quick shift in subject adjustments, lesson pacing, and time allotment made it challenging to establish a clear framework for instruction, leaving educators uncertain about how to ensure student mastery of lessons within the new structure. FGD, P8 shared that:

“With the façade in the curriculum, it was quite hard to understand because of the quick shift in adjusting the subjects as well as how many or the length of what should be taught inside the classroom, and how it should run in over a week or in a quarter and we are not yet very familiar of how we are still going to let the children master the lesson.”

Moreover, teachers faced language barriers and instructional constraints in facilitating effective learning. FGD, P3 highlighted the delicate balance of language use, noting that excessive translation into Filipino or Bisaya might lead students to rely on their native language instead of improving their comprehension in English. FGD P3 expressed,

“It still depends on the teachers, how he or she will deliver or facilitate the students na makasabot pwede ra niya buhaton but minimize kay mag anad na pud sila, kung ato ra pud always translating to Filipino and Bisaya, minimize lang pud siguro, kay kung sige na lang tag Bisaya ma inject ra pud sa ilaha na, “ay pwede ra diay magbisaya.” Depende na sa bata kung unsa ang atong i-translate sa iyaha, Bisaya ba or kung i-translate nimo kay Filipino. Daghan kag i-adjust. Many factors that can affect the ongoing implementation.” (It still depends on the teachers, how he or she will deliver or facilitate the students so that they can understand, they can do it, but we should minimize it because they might get used to it. If we keep translating everything into Filipino and Bisaya, we should minimize it as well. Because if we keep using Bisaya, they might start thinking, 'Oh, it's okay to use Bisaya.' It depends on the student, whether we

translate it into Bisaya or Filipino. There are many adjustments to be made. Many factors can affect the ongoing implementation.)

Additionally, FGD, P5 emphasized that since the previous K to 12 instructional materials (IMs) were no longer applicable, teachers had to create entirely new materials, adding to their workload. Unlike in the previous curriculum, where educators had already mastered the daily lessons, teachers now had to constantly adjust and familiarize themselves with new content and pacing. FGD P5 mention,

“For us maam because we are the pioneers of the first implementation of the MATATAG, bug-at pud siya maam because we are making new IMs (Instructional Materials) because the old IMs of the K to 12 curriculum kay wala na, done.” (For us, ma'am, because we are the pioneers of the first implementation of the MATATAG, it's also challenging because we are making new IMs (Instructional Materials) since the old IMs from the K to 12 curriculum are no longer available, they're done.)

The challenge was even more pronounced in Grade 1 classes, where all subjects had to be covered within a half-day session, significantly reducing instructional time. FGD P5 stated,

“Katong K to 12, dugay dugay man pud to no, na master na gud namo tong per day na lesson. Kabalo nami sa lesson for today, dili na kailangan tan-awon, ang karon maam mag adjust pa “Unsa may lesson karon? Sa amoa man gud sa grade 1 maam, isa sa mga difficulties namo is ang half day sessions. Half day sessions, so we mean that all subjects must be taught in half day.” (With the K to 12, it took a while, but we had already mastered the lessons for each day. We knew the lesson for today, no need to check anymore. But now, ma'am, we still have to adjust and ask, 'What's the lesson today?' For us, in Grade 1, ma'am, one of the difficulties we have is the half-day sessions. Half-day sessions mean that all subjects must be taught within half a day.)

Additionally, teachers also needed to adjust their teaching strategies to fit the reduced class hours, ensuring that activities remained effective within the limited time frame. According to FGD P4,

“Ang appropriate activities and strategies pud. Limited lang man ang time so kailangan i-pasok ang mga activities na masulod lang ana na time na makasabot pud ang mga bata. Ang appropriate activities and strategies pud. Limited lang man ang time so kailangan i-pasok ang mga activities na masulod lang ana na time na makasabot pud ang mga bata.” (The appropriate activities and strategies as well. Time is limited, so we need to fit in activities that can be done within that time and still help the children understand. The appropriate activities and strategies are also important. Time is limited, so we need to fit in activities that can be done within that time and still help the children understand.)

However, despite these obstacles, teachers acknowledged the need to adapt, embrace the changes, and be resourceful, recognizing that reliance on provided materials alone would not suffice. FGD P3 also shared,

“And by the way, the Rizal group is very hardworking teachers and dedicated and devoted. The best that we can do is adapt and embrace. You also have to be resourceful, if you only depend on what is given then wala jud ka. So being resourceful is one of the components that can contribute to the teachers.” (The best we can do is adapt and embrace it. You also have to be resourceful; if you only depend on what is given, then you won't get anywhere. So being resourceful is one of the qualities that can help teachers.)

In light of these collective experiences, the adjustment to the revised K to 10 curriculum has not only tested the flexibility of school systems but also the emotional and professional resilience of teachers. Beyond technical and structural changes, what emerges is a deep emotional labor—of grappling with uncertainty, navigating new expectations, and holding on to the core purpose of teaching amidst overwhelming transitions. The narratives reflect not just frustration, but also quiet perseverance. Despite limited time, shifting policies, and the lack of ready resources, teachers continue to show up, recalibrate, and do what they do best—teach. This phase of adjustment is more than logistical; it is human. It demands empathy, realistic

timelines, and genuine support systems that honor teachers not just as implementers of change, but as key partners in shaping a curriculum that works. If reform is to be truly transformative, it must listen to those who live it every day.

Challenges under Complexity

Complexity refers to the degree to which an innovation is perceived as difficult to understand and implement. Innovations that are perceived as overly complex often experience slower adoption, as potential adopters may feel overwhelmed or unprepared to engage fully with the new system (Rogers, 2003). In the context of the revised K to 10 curriculum, complexity arises when teachers encounter difficulties due to inadequate training, curriculum gaps, or unclear implementation guidelines.

On Issues with Curriculum Structure and Sequencing. Another challenge that emerged was the issue of curriculum structure and sequencing. From the IDI interviews with the administrators and supervisors, the narratives revealed that the new curriculum is much simpler due to the reduction of competencies. The revised K to 10 Curriculum, which is the revised K to 10 curriculum under the Department of Education, significantly reduced the number of learning competencies to focus on foundational skills and essential content. According to IDI APP,

“It’s simpler compared to the previous curriculum as I have said before ang kanyang mga competencies was lessened. Unya ang subjects pud... naa pud silay plano nga to... naa naman poy bag-o nga curriculum.” (It’s simpler compared to the previous curriculum, as I have said before, because its competencies have been reduced. And as for the subjects, they also have plans to... there is already a new curriculum.)

The statement highlighted how the reduction in competencies provides teachers with more realistic goals. The revised K to 10 curriculum streamlined these competencies by focusing only on the most essential learning competencies (MELCs) and reducing repetitive topics across grade levels. IDI APP also added,

“Kaning isa ka subject, dili gyud na mahurot ang competency gikan ug first hangtod second so naa gyud mga competency nga later na mga topics di na gyud na namo ma-tackle. So, introducing the MATATAG and looking at the changes especially on the reduction of the number of competencies, positive kaayo kay dilemma man gyud to nako nga nganong di man gyud ni ma...Unya wala pa namo na-tackle. Apil baya gyud to sya, so ingon-ana ba so in this case sa MATATAG at least gamay na lang. Makaya namo ug achieve ang kadtong number of competencies nga.... nga mao pud toy mo-measure sa NAT. Tulisukon baya mi gamay anang NAT no. (laughs) Makasab-an baya nag skwelahan kung gamay ra ang NAT.” (For this subject, we really can’t cover all the competencies from the first to the second grading period, so there are always some competencies, especially the later topics, that we can no longer tackle. So, with the introduction of the MATATAG curriculum and looking at the changes, especially the reduction in the number of competencies, it’s very positive because it has always been a dilemma for me—why we couldn’t cover everything... yet we hadn’t tackled some topics that were supposed to be included. So, in this case, with MATATAG, at least there are fewer competencies. We can manage to achieve the required number of competencies, which are also what will be measured in the NAT. The NAT puts a bit of pressure on us, you know. Schools get scolded if the NAT scores are low.)

The participants acknowledged a recurring issue in the older curriculum: certain competencies, especially those scheduled later in the grading periods, often went untaught due to time constraints. This led to teachers feeling frustrated and pressured, especially with the looming expectations of standardized assessments like the NAT. IDI AP also shared a similar perspective,

“Okay, so as an administrator the specific aspect of MATATAG curriculum that’s difficult to implement, actually for me there’s none. Yeah... because the MATATAG curriculum is easier to implement in compared to the K to 12 because um... the competencies are reduced. So the competencies are reduced um... specially in grade one there are only five subjects. So, implementation of MATATAG is easier

compared to the previous I guess compared to the previous um... curriculum. So, there's none." (Okay, so as an administrator, there isn't any specific aspect of the MATATAG curriculum that is difficult to implement. Actually, for me, there's none. Yeah... because the MATATAG curriculum is easier to implement compared to K to 12 since the competencies have been reduced. The competencies have been reduced, and especially in Grade 1, there are only five subjects. So, the implementation of MATATAG is easier compared to the previous curriculum. So, there's none.)

I found their perspective both affirming and thought-provoking. From an administrative standpoint, they described the revised K to 10 curriculum as easier to implement, primarily due to the significant reduction of competencies and the streamlining of subjects, especially at the primary level, where Grade 1 now only includes five subjects.

However, while administrators viewed the revised K to 10 curriculum as easier to implement due to its streamlined competencies, teacher-participants painted a more complex picture, particularly when it came to curriculum structure and sequencing. According to FGD P5,

"Isa pud sa amoang namatikdan sa Grade 1, kanang mga competencies nagkabaliktad balikad. For example, in the Mathematics, the measurement or the shapes and others fourth grading na, karon they added it in the first grading." (One of the things we noticed in Grade 1 is that the competencies are all mixed up. For example, in Mathematics, topics like measurement, shapes, and others used to be in the fourth grading, but now they have been added to the first grading.)

According to FGD, P5, one of the noticeable concerns with the new curriculum implementation in Grade 1 is the disorganized sequencing of competencies. They pointed out that in Mathematics, topics such as measurement and shapes, which were previously taught in the fourth grading period, have now been moved to the first grading. This abrupt shift has created confusion not only for teachers but also for learners who may not yet be developmentally ready to grasp these concepts at the start of the school year. The participant described the arrangement as "nagkabaliktad balikad," suggesting a lack of logical progression in how the topics are ordered. This narrative highlights the practical challenges teachers face in adapting to the revised curriculum and raises important questions about whether the sequencing truly aligns with learners' readiness and cognitive development.

Moreover, FGD, P8 also expressed an issue with the objectives they have to attain every day, even though competencies were reduced:

"The competencies are lessened from twelve, from previous K to 12, it has been lessened into five. But the objectives in each day are 3 or 4, which for us are impossible, impossible to achieve or attain. Unsa? Brilliant kaayo among mga children? Dili ra ba jud. So mao to sya." (The competencies have been reduced from twelve in the previous K to 12 curriculum to just five. But the daily objectives are three or four, which, for us, are impossible to achieve or attain. What? Are our children supposed to be brilliant? But they really aren't. So that's the situation.)

While the revised K to 10 curriculum may have reduced the number of competencies—from twelve to five—this reduction did not seem to translate into a lighter daily workload for teachers. In fact, the participant shared their frustration over having to accomplish three to four objectives each day, which they described as "impossible to achieve or attain." Their candid remark—"Unsa? Brilliant kaayo among mga children? Dili ra ba jud."—revealed the gap between curriculum expectations and the actual pace at which students could realistically learn. It reflected a sentiment shared by many teachers: that even with fewer listed competencies, the pressure to meet daily objectives remains intense and often disconnected from the learners' real capacities. This highlights a deeper issue beyond content reduction—it's about pacing, feasibility, and how well curriculum policies truly consider the lived classroom experience.

Additionally, FGD P10 expressed an issue with the sequencing of topics.

“Sa amua ma’am sa math, we have the textbooks, we have the exemplar pero the sequence of the les... ah unsa anong tawag nito the topics. Kay ang sa Math man gud dapat ano man gud na sya naay unsay tawag kani dapat mauna then sunod ana, naa syay hierarchy of kuan sa topics. Sa MATATAG is wala gyud sya, wala sya na-ano ba... dili kaayo... oh yes dili sya han-ay kay first quarter na first quarter nagsugod na dayog Geometry then pagka-second quarter didto pa mag-measurement. So dili sya kaayo ing.ana ka-kuan ang sequence. Though kami sa Math, naa na dyud mi actually naa nami textbook then ano gyud sya napasunod na gyud sya, then ano pud sya na-align na pud sya sa exemplar okay na kaayo sya. Ang problema kay ang sequence lang sa topics, mao lang amoang kuan.” (In our case, ma’am, in Math, we have the textbooks and exemplars, but the sequence of the topics is an issue. In Math, there should be a proper hierarchy in how topics are introduced—some concepts must come first before others. However, in the MATATAG curriculum, the sequence is not well-structured. For example, in the first quarter, the lessons immediately start with Geometry, and it’s only in the second quarter that Measurement is introduced. The sequence is not as logical as it should be. Although we already have textbooks that are properly arranged and aligned with the exemplars, the main issue is the order of topics.)

In Math, as stated, for example, there was a clear dissonance between the logical progression of concepts and how the curriculum was arranged—teachers pointed out how Geometry, a concept that should be introduced after foundational skills like Measurement, was tackled first. This lack of hierarchy disrupts the natural flow of mathematical understanding. FGD 13 expressed that,

“Um... We find it difficult for the students to achieve our objective especially during the performance task...like for example ah... having the poetry making ah... exposition, mag-essay writing ah their their foundation of grammar is not...in the level of our grade 7 MATATAG. So, it is hard for us teachers although we have the integration of the grammar pero dili sapat kay naga-apas mi sa.....kanang exemplar nga mahuman namo for one week and another na pud for... Tapos kung ano pa gyud mi ug grammar murag dili kay... sa MATATAG grammar is ah naa didto sa grade four and we... it is we... we are the pioneer, pioneering sila so wala pa gyud, so wala kaayo. Dapat importante gyud unta to sya nga masulod didto sa among competencies.” (We find it difficult for students to achieve our objectives, especially during performance tasks. For example, in poetry writing, expository writing, or essay writing, their grammar foundation is not at the expected level for Grade 7 under the MATATAG curriculum. This makes it challenging for us teachers, even though we try to integrate grammar lessons. However, it is not enough because we have to keep up with the exemplars, completing one each week before moving on to the next. If we spend more time on grammar, we will fall behind. In the MATATAG curriculum, grammar was already covered in Grade 4, but since our students are part of the pioneering batch, they did not receive enough prior grammar instruction. As a result, there are significant gaps in their skills. Grammar should have been properly included in our competencies to better support students in their writing tasks.)

Similarly, in English, teachers lamented the glaring gaps in students’ grammar skills, which significantly hindered their ability to perform in tasks such as essay writing or poetry. Since the revised K to 10 presumes grammar had already been taught in Grade 4, current Grade 7 learners, who are part of the pioneer batch, have not been adequately prepared. This misalignment becomes a heavy burden for teachers who must now compensate for these learning gaps while racing against rigid weekly exemplar schedules. As I listened to their accounts, it became evident that while the revised K to 10 curriculum may appear streamlined on paper, its execution in real classrooms presents complex and nuanced challenges that deserve deeper attention and immediate support.

Moreover, FGD P10 shared,

“Oh... si measurement then geometry then kadtong polygon na dayon. Kay ang polygon man gud application ra man gud sya didto. Nagsolve-solve naman gud sya so mao to sya nga kanang lisod gyud kaayo mao to niana ko. Ah... Niana ko sa ilaha, magsabot siguro ta kung unsa atong unahon ani kay para kanang kuan na ba para tunong na dyud kung unsa gyud ang dapat makuan sa bata. Kay lisod dyud sya kaayo kung kuan, kay matingala sila, measurement pagkasunod lahi na pud ang topic. Kanang nag-ambak ambak na gud

mi. Unya ang libro gud amoa na lang gikuan kay ang libro ing-ani man ang pasequence the same sa exemplar. Among gihimo is, sabot na lang mi kani atong unahon i-lesson karon ha, pareha sa kuan... kay ang sequence man gud niya. Kay sa Math gyud lagi kaylangan dyud nimo ang sequence..." (The sequence goes from Measurement to Geometry, then suddenly to Polygons. But Polygons are just applications, where students are already solving problems. That's why it's very difficult. I told them that we should probably agree on what to teach first so that the lessons align properly with what students need to learn step by step. Right now, it's very confusing because we jump from one topic to another—one moment it's Measurement, then suddenly a completely different topic follows. We're skipping around too much. Since the textbook follows the same sequence as the exemplar, we decided to adjust by discussing among ourselves which lessons to prioritize. In Math, having the right sequence is crucial, but the way it's currently structured makes it harder for students to follow and understand the concepts effectively.)

FGD P16 shared,

"Ana na lang sya pasa-pasa na lang. Then may gane kay naabot amoang libro, ang problem na pud niabot ang libro is nagtunga-tunga na sa first grading ma'am no. Tapos ang amuang problema didto ang una, naa na gyud ang kuan no ang curriculum guide namo naa na mana sya daan. So mao to among gifollow pag-abot sa libro karon nakita nako didto, as in ako nag-ano gyud ko kay lisod kaayo i-ano iexplain sa bata. Second quarter na ang measurement, mao man nimo ma'am no measurement. Unya first grading, first lesson is ano gyud sya unsa gane tawag ani polygon, nag polygon na sya. So dili kaayo... ang bata... niana dyud ko ngano nag-polygon man nga pag-ana nako, pag-scan sa libro measurement second quarter. Nganong na ing-ani man nga ang sequence niya ba." (It just felt like we were just passing things along. Luckily, our textbooks arrived, but the problem was they only came halfway through the first grading period. Initially, we followed the curriculum guide since we already had it. But when the textbooks finally arrived, I realized how difficult it was to explain things to the students because the sequence of topics didn't make sense. For example, Measurement is placed in the second quarter, but in the first grading period, the first lesson was already about Polygons. I was really confused—why were we teaching Polygons first when Measurement, which is a foundational topic, comes later? When I checked the textbook, it confirmed the misalignment in the sequence. It was frustrating because the order of lessons should build upon each other logically, but in this case, it didn't.)

As educators, they emphasized how essential it was for concepts to be introduced in a logical and hierarchical order—yet what they experienced was quite the opposite. P10 recounted the confusion of shifting from Measurement to Geometry and then abruptly to Polygons, which are application-heavy topics. This jump, without first solidifying foundational concepts, left both teachers and learners disoriented. As a result, the teachers had to take matters into their own hands by collectively deciding how to realign the lessons based on what made more pedagogical sense. Similarly, P16 echoed this disarray, narrating how the delayed arrival of textbooks further complicated the situation. They initially relied on the curriculum guide, only to later discover that the textbook's sequencing did not match it at all, highlighting a fundamental misalignment between instructional materials and curricular goals. For both teachers, the lack of coherence and preparation was not just inconvenient; it felt like they were merely "passing things along" without truly guiding students through a meaningful learning process. As a researcher, these reflections revealed that beyond structural issues, there's an emotional weight carried by teachers—frustration, uncertainty, and the deep desire to do right by their students despite the chaos.

On Curriculum Gaps. Another challenge that surfaced in the study was the issue of curriculum gaps, which revealed contrasting perspectives between administrators and classroom teachers. Based on narratives from in-depth interviews (IDI) and focus group discussions (FGD), it became evident that while teachers experienced misalignments and missing foundational concepts in actual classroom implementation, some administrators and supervisors maintained that no such gaps existed. The participant stated,

"Wala man kasi, wala may gap... wala may ma-identify talaga nga mga gaps sa amoang training. Kasi during our training, gipasabot man gyud sa amua uh... unsa ang MATATAG and then ano... gihimay-himay

gyud sya. Per subject area presented kadto nga time and then. Before ha... before ko naka-ano before ko naka-attend ato nga seminar, I have already read the MATATAG curriculum ug naminaw na pud kong Inday Sara during her speech. So naa na dyud tay, kuan naa na tay background.” (There weren’t any gaps; there weren’t really any identified gaps in our training. Because during our training, it was thoroughly explained to us what the MATATAG curriculum is, and it was broken down in detail. Each subject area was presented at that time. And then... before I attended that seminar, I had already read the MATATAG curriculum and had also listened to Inday Sara during her speech. So, we already had some background knowledge.)

IDI APP also expressed,

“I believe every year na gyuy training uh... last time we had already sent Grade 7 teachers, Grade 8 teachers to the MATATAG curriculum ano uh... let’s say capacity building, capacity building kasi yan sa mga teachers. To let them understand what is MATATAG curriculum and how we implement the MATATAG curriculum in our stations. Specially sa atoang mga subject, kasi sa sa... seminar man gud sa mga teachers ang ilahang gina-ano for example is if you are Math Major separate mo, so by Major na sya by... by subject area. So how do you implement the MATATAG curriculum in your classes. Gina-discuss didto ang mga competencies nga dapat kuan and then the process unsa ang approach nga gamiton ganyan.” (I believe that there is training every year. Last time, we had already sent Grade 7 and Grade 8 teachers to the MATATAG curriculum... let’s say, capacity building, because that’s really capacity building for teachers. It helps them understand what the MATATAG curriculum is and how we implement it in our respective stations, especially in our subjects. Because in the seminar for teachers, for example, if you are a Math major, you are grouped separately—so it’s by major, by subject area. They discuss how to implement the MATATAG curriculum in your classes. The competencies that need to be covered are discussed there, as well as the process and the approach to be used.)

The administrators mentioned that there were no identifiable gaps in their training on the MATATAG curriculum. The participant emphasized that the training was comprehensive, with each subject area clearly explained and broken down. The administrator even noted that they had already familiarized themselves with the curriculum before attending the seminar and had listened to the official launch speeches, which further solidified their understanding. Additionally, another explained that regular training and capacity-building initiatives were conducted, particularly for Grade 7 and Grade 8 teachers. These sessions, according to the participant, were tailored to subject specializations, allowing educators to deeply understand the competencies and appropriate teaching approaches required for implementation. From their perspective, these structured efforts ensured that teachers were well-equipped and that the curriculum was being delivered as intended.

However, this administrative confidence contrasts sharply with the field realities narrated by teachers, underscoring a potential disconnect between policy-level preparations and classroom-level experiences. Teacher-participants shared that some students struggled with the transition, particularly in subjects where the language of instruction changed from their Mother Tongue to Filipino and English. The MATATAG curriculum anticipated that learners had already mastered basic skills, such as reading comprehension and grammar, but many teachers found that their students had not. Some teachers, especially those accustomed to traditional methods, struggled to adapt to student-centered approaches. According to FGD P11,

“In English we have difficulties in uh... for example were going to ask one student to read. They know how to read but the thing is they cannot comprehend. Then maybe because the MATATAG anticipated already that learners from the elementary they know already how to read when in fact some of them cannot. That’s why uh... that’s why uh... kahit anong ano namin sa pagbabasa still there are some students na they cannot read ah... struggling students especially now that the focus of English 7 MATATAG is not more on grammar grammar.” (In English, we face difficulties when asking students to read. They know how to read, but the problem is that they struggle with comprehension. It seems that the MATATAG curriculum assumes that learners from elementary school already have strong reading skills, when in reality, some of them do

not. No matter how much we try to reinforce reading, there are still struggling students who cannot read fluently. This is especially challenging now that the focus of English 7 under MATATAG is not primarily on grammar, making it harder to address these foundational gaps.)

FGD P12 also added,

“Asa namo iinject si grammar? It’s because si MATATAG anticipated already that from the elementary they know already, how to do this, how to do that, which is not especially for us. Good for the first section, second ug third because maybe they know how to read but not all of them also cannot... yung they completely comprehend the story. They know how to read but the thing is especially in our reading yung reading materials namin, tools for the reading they know how to read but one thing for sure why is it that they go to frustration it’s because of the comprehension.” (Where do we even inject grammar? The MATATAG curriculum assumes that students have already learned these skills in elementary school—how to do this, how to do that—but that’s not the case, especially for us. It might work for the first, second, and third sections since some of those students know how to read, but even then, not all of them fully comprehend what they’re reading. They can decode words, but when it comes to understanding the story, that’s where they struggle. Our reading materials and tools show that while they can read, many still reach a level of frustration because their comprehension is weak.)

One of the emerging issues in the implementation of the MATATAG curriculum, particularly in English, is the apparent disconnect between curriculum assumptions and the actual preparedness of learners. As highlighted, students are often expected to have already developed basic reading skills, including comprehension, by the time they enter junior high school. However, the reality is that many learners struggle to understand what they are reading despite being able to decode the words. This discrepancy is further complicated by the shift in focus under the MATATAG curriculum, which places less emphasis on grammar instruction in Grade 7. FGD P12 expressed a similar concern, noting the difficulty of determining where and how to integrate grammar when comprehension itself remains a challenge. While students in higher-performing sections may have an easier time, comprehension gaps remain evident across the general student population. These narratives reveal the frustration felt by teachers who are left to manage foundational learning gaps that were assumed to have already been addressed. The accounts suggest a curriculum design that may not fully account for the varied learning levels and experiences of students entering junior high, thereby placing additional pressure on teachers to adjust instructional strategies without sufficient support. Additionally, another concern was expressed by FGD P14,

“With the subject that I am handling is there are also many activities that were there found in the learning activity sheets but not fitted to the subject. That’s why, what we going to do is select... we select the activities fitted to the subject. Marami talaga mga activities na hindi pwede at tsaka nakikita mo sa activities parang gidali-dali.” (In the subject I am handling, many activities in the learning activity sheets are not suitable for the subject. Because of this, we have to carefully select the activities that actually fit. There are a lot of activities that are not appropriate, and it’s obvious that some were rushed in their design.)

The participant observed that many of the tasks included were not appropriate or aligned with the subject they were assigned to teach. As a result, teachers felt compelled to sift through the materials and select only those that were suitable and pedagogically sound. The participant also pointed out that several activities appeared to be hastily created, suggesting a lack of careful planning in the development process. This narrative highlights the practical challenges faced by teachers in implementing the MATATAG curriculum when provided materials do not meet classroom needs, ultimately placing additional workload on educators who must compensate for these gaps.

FGD P8 expressed,

“Based on the length of the topic given in each week, hindi level sa thinking ng learners. It’s quite difficult to achieve for us it’s because, as being mentioned, we used to believe that this MATATAG curriculum digested

the subjects, but in reality, it is not. We had a hard time dividing the subjects, the topic. The subjects were lessened into five, but then the topics are quite complex to give to the learners so we need to find a way na okay so kani na semana dapat master sa ni nila. But on the lessons given to us, it also doesn't come from a certain source. We have a lot of sources kay dili siya...wala nag prepare daan si MATATAG just like the K to 12. The K to 12 was not yet ready, it has been implemented while the materials were not yet available for us to use all along the way. So mangita mi diri na source, mangita mi diri na source—the length of the topic there kay ingon ani, from the Manila from Quezon, unya mag wait na pud ka sa Division in the portal ingon ani na pud ilang length didto. So gina compare sad namo balik na pud sa competency kung unsaon jud siya na dapat kani sa ma-master sa kay dili man gyud tanan bata, like their child or children rather na in a special section dali maka grasp, dali makuha. So the fault there, going back, falls on not considering the levels of those learners at the grassroots level of the education process.” (Based on the length of the topics given each week, they are not aligned with the thinking level of the learners. It's quite difficult for us to achieve because, as previously mentioned, we used to believe that the MATATAG curriculum had streamlined the subjects, but in reality, it has not. We struggled to divide the subjects and topics. While the number of subjects was reduced to five, the topics remain quite complex for the learners, so we need to find a way—okay, for this week, they must master this. However, the lessons given to us also do not come from a single source. We have to gather multiple sources because MATATAG did not prepare materials in advance, unlike K to 12. The K to 12 curriculum was not fully ready when it was implemented, and the necessary materials were not available for us to use right away. So, we have to search for sources here and there—the length of the topic varies, for example, from Manila or Quezon, then we also have to wait for materials from the Division through the portal, which may have a different length as well. We also compare it back to the competencies, trying to determine how it should be mastered because not all students, like those in special sections, can quickly grasp or understand the lessons. So, ultimately, the fault lies in not considering the different learning levels of students at the grassroots level of the education process.)

A concern echoed by one participant centered on the complexity and pacing of topics under the revised K to 10 curriculum, which were perceived as misaligned with the learners' cognitive levels. While the expectation was that revised K to 10 curriculum would simplify or streamline subject content, the participant described the reality as quite the opposite. Despite the reduction in the number of subjects, the topics themselves remained dense and difficult for students to absorb within a week. This mismatch forced teachers to improvise strategies to help learners master the content within tight timelines. Moreover, the absence of a unified or consistent source of lessons compounded the challenge. Teachers found themselves searching across various platforms and references—national, regional, and divisional—each offering differing content lengths and details. The participant also compared this situation to the early implementation of the K to 12 curriculum, which similarly lacked ready teaching materials. A more critical issue pointed out was the curriculum's failure to consider the diverse learning levels of students, particularly those outside the high-performing or special sections. This neglect, according to the participant, reflects a top-down approach that overlooks the realities of learners at the grassroots level.

The narratives presented above highlight the challenges in addressing curriculum gaps in foundational skills such as reading comprehension and grammar. While the MATATAG curriculum assumes that learners entering high school have already mastered these skills, many students continue to struggle, leaving teachers with the difficult task of reinforcing these concepts while keeping pace with the new curriculum. Additionally, teachers reported that some learning activities included in the curriculum were not appropriately aligned with the subject matter, forcing them to modify or select only the most relevant tasks. These gaps create additional pressure on teachers, making it difficult to fully implement student-centered approaches as envisioned by the MATATAG curriculum.

The implementation of the MATATAG curriculum has highlighted significant gaps between the curriculum's design and its real-world application in the classroom. While administrators believe that comprehensive training and capacity-building initiatives have adequately prepared teachers, many educators experience a disconnect due to mismatched expectations regarding student preparedness and the complexity of topics. The

lack of unified, reliable teaching materials and the assumption that students possess foundational skills such as reading comprehension has left many teachers struggling to meet learners' diverse needs. Furthermore, the curriculum's failure to account for varying student learning levels, particularly in lower-performing sections, has added pressure on educators to adapt without sufficient support. This misalignment underscores the need for a more tailored approach that reflects the realities of the classroom and provides educators with the resources they need to effectively bridge these gaps.

Challenge under Trialability

Trialability refers to the extent to which an innovation can be experimented with on a limited basis before full-scale adoption. When teachers have the opportunity to test and refine their approaches, they gain confidence and a deeper understanding of the innovation (Rogers, 2003). In the case of the MATATAG Curriculum, trialability is evident in how teachers experimented with various strategies and collaborated with colleagues to adapt to the new system.

On Insufficient Curriculum Training. One of the challenges identified by administrators and supervisors was the lack of sufficient training for the revised K to 10 curriculum, formerly known as the MATATAG curriculum. Participants expressed that the one-week training period was inadequate, as it was conducted only a few weeks before the curriculum's implementation, leaving them with limited time to adjust, process, and apply the necessary changes. Additionally, the training was only provided to a select group, with priority given to administrators and supervisors in higher positions, further limiting access for those who needed hands-on preparation. They also expressed that not all public school teachers were given the opportunity to attend the training, and instead, they relied only on the information provided by their colleagues. According to IDI APR,

“The training was conducted week-long... so that was the only training for the teachers. We, the administrators, were trained but not all... And then right after that, we re-echo that to the field to the concerned Grade 1 and Grade 4 teachers, but that is the only training that we have, and I think wala naman sya nasundan yata.” (The training was conducted for a week, and that was the only training provided for the teachers. We, the administrators, were trained, but not all of us. Then, right after that, we relayed the training to the concerned Grade 1 and Grade 4 teachers in the field. However, that was the only training we had, and I think there were no follow-up sessions.)

IDI APP also added,

“Pipiliin lang, and those teachers will share what they have learned. Pagbalik na sa station, so we will have local local ano training pud to help those who have not attended.” (They will just select a few, and those teachers will share what they have learned. When they return to the station, we will also have local training to help those who were not able to attend.)

IDI P also shared the same concern,

“For me, I think it's not enough because I was one of the... I was one of the speakers so talagang kungbaga we're really running out of time every time that we discuss. Implemented a little longer so that the teacher can ano can internalize what they what we were trying to impart to them.” (For me, I think it's not enough because I was one of the speakers, so we were really running out of time every time we had a discussion. It should have been implemented for a longer period so that the teachers could internalize what we were trying to impart to them.)

As the administrators expressed this concern, it was evidently disappointing. I could hear the frustration in their voices—like they were holding onto this hope that more support would come, that maybe there would be follow-through, especially for their teachers and subordinates. But nothing followed. It felt like they were left hanging, expected to lead and implement something so big with just that one round of training. Honestly,

you could sense the weight of it—the pressure, the confusion—and it made me realize just how unprepared and unsupported they must have felt with the inadequate training provided.

Additionally, this challenge presented by the administrators and supervisors was parallel to the challenges encountered by the teacher-participants. The training for teachers was conducted, but many teacher-participants found it similarly insufficient. Some were unable to attend as the attendees for the training were a selected few, leading to a reliance on "re-echo" sessions from those who participated. FGD P16 shared,

“Ako ma’am, ako actually wala dyud ko nakaapil sa training. Kanang murag ano na lang from the word of kuan na lang word from our friends.” (Ma’am, I actually wasn’t able to attend the training. I just got the information secondhand from my colleagues.)

Additionally, FGD P8 shared,

“Not everyone was available in the training proper, and the training was quite insufficient for the teachers.”

This was also confirmed by FGD P7,

“The training pud ma’am was very short ra pud siya for the implementation of the MATATAG curriculum wherein days lang ang training.” (The training, ma’am, was also very short for the implementation of the MATATAG curriculum, as it only lasted for a few days.)

FGD P7 shared the same narrative,

“Very short, for a week lang.” (Very short, only for a week.)

FGD P6 also added,

“Only six days lang pud, Ma’am. Ang ila lang pud gi focus is what is MATATAG, but not about unsaon namo pag implement ang MATATAG.” (Only six days, Ma’am. They only focused on what the MATATAG curriculum is, but not on how we are supposed to implement it.)

FGD P5 also expressed that it seems like they were teaching themselves how to implement the new curriculum.

“Mura mig ga self-study maam.” (It's like we're doing self-study, ma'am.)

Listening to their responses, I cannot help but feel the weight of uncertainty and frustration in their words. P16, with a quiet resignation, admitted she had never even attended the training—learning about the MATATAG curriculum only through the fragmented accounts of her colleagues. It was like piecing together a puzzle with missing parts. P8 echoed this concern, her tone revealing the shared sentiment that the training, even for those who did attend, was barely enough. The sessions were brief, almost rushed, and left many questions hanging. P7’s voice carried the same frustration, describing the training as just a few days long—too short to truly prepare anyone for such a significant shift. “Very short, for a week lang,” she repeated, as if still surprised at how fleeting it was. P6’s reflection was perhaps the most telling—six days of training, mostly spent introducing what MATATAG is, but never really touching on the ‘how’ — how to bring it to life in the classroom, how to make it real for their learners. Behind these stories lies a deeper cry for clarity, support, and time — things that are often overlooked but are most needed when change knocks at the door.

Challenge under Observability

Observability refers to the extent to which the results of an innovation are visible to others. When the benefits and challenges of an innovation are observable, they serve as valuable feedback for other potential adopters (Rogers, 2003). In the context of the MATATAG Curriculum, observability is reflected in teachers’ recognition of areas that require improvement and the visibility of challenges related to resource shortages.

On Lack of Resources. Another key challenge that emerged from the study was the issue of curriculum sequencing and the organization of topics within the MATATAG curriculum. This refers to how lessons and subjects are arranged, whether they build on each other logically, and how well they support student learning across the grade levels. Interestingly, perceptions on this matter varied significantly between administrators or supervisors and classroom teachers. IDI APP stated,

“So far no, uh... we are lucky that nahatag man pud sa government ang mga resources sa ang mga needs dyud . For example, if we are, if we are if we will just request sa mga resources okay man, even... even before the MATATAG. Sa K to 12 pa lang na deck ug... before gi-implement ang K to 12 dyud gi-ready ang mga schools, and ang mga laboratories to cater the students. Kanang specially sa atong Tech-Voc, Technical Vocational Livelihood, they need laboratories. So, before na-implement ang... ang grades 11, pagsugod sa grade 11, gi prepare gyud ang school. Tagaan dyud ug budget para maka, makapahimo ug laboratories and through time bisan pag kanang nag-sugod na sige gihapon sila ug provide. Even karon sa... sa MATATAG I believe naa gihapon. Unya intensified ang ilahang ano karon ICT.” (We are lucky that the government has provided the necessary resources. For example, if we request resources, it’s okay—they are provided, even before MATATAG. Back in the K to 12 curriculum, the government had already prepared the schools and laboratories before its implementation to cater to students' needs. Especially for our Tech-Voc (Technical-Vocational Livelihood) programs, which require laboratories, the schools were properly prepared before Grade 11 was introduced. A budget was allocated to build laboratories, and over time, even after the implementation started, they continued to provide support. Even now, under MATATAG, I believe the support is still there, and their focus on ICT has been intensified.)

However, IDI APR has a contradicting narrative,

“Okay, so I have part been part of the MATATAG training so since this is the first year of implementation, I would believe that the most difficult part in the beginning is the lack of resources, learning resources because there was a change, a transition of curriculum from the K to 12 to MATATAG. So naturally there will be changes in the learning materials to be used. So, in the beginning there were no materials provided however on the latter part so there were books but uh... grade one and grade four not all subjects were provided. So, that is one of the major struggles.”

IDI EPS also shared the same narrative with IDI APR,

“By the way teachers, though teachers are resourceful but then in the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum the clamor is the lack of references. We don’t have textbook in Grade 1 and also in Grade 7 and since in the MATATAG curriculum we have new subject”

In the quiet contrast of their stories, a deeper truth emerges about the MATATAG curriculum’s rollout. APP shared her positive experience, saying they were lucky because the government provided what they needed. Even during the K to 12 implementation, she said schools were given enough support—from laboratories for Tech-Voc programs to ICT equipment. For her, if schools requested resources, the government responded. It gave her confidence that even now, under MATATAG, support is still there. But APR’s experience was very different. She spoke honestly about the struggles in the early days of MATATAG. For her, one of the hardest parts was the lack of learning materials. There were changes in the curriculum, but no new books or resources arrived on time. And even when some did come later, they were not complete—not all subjects had materials, especially in Grades 1 and 4. It was frustrating and difficult for teachers who were expected to teach something new without the tools to do it properly. These two stories show how different the situation can be from one school to another—some feel supported, while others are left struggling to catch up. Additionally, IDI APP expressed her role as an administrator:

“Mga needs sa mga teachers, unsa ang pwede mahatag sa admin. Oh... sa school in general, nga pwede iprovide sa ilaha so kana nga time diha nimo to ipasabot ang new curriculum. Unsay advantage unsay mga disadvantage. That’s the... the kuan dyud the way unya you listen to the teachers gyud. You listen to them

kung unsa ang ilahang mulo, kay as a leader its our responsibility to address those mulo. O... whether against na sa atoa or pro or (laughs). We must oh... we must answer gyud na nato kay dili man pwede pabayaang imohang mga teachers. Responsibility mana together with students.” (The needs of the teachers—what the administration can provide for them. Oh... in general, what the school can offer to support them. So, during that time, you should explain the new curriculum—its advantages and disadvantages. That’s really the way to go. And you must truly listen to the teachers. You have to listen to their concerns because, as a leader, it is our responsibility to address those concerns, whether they are against us or in favor of us (laughs). We must answer them because we cannot just ignore our teachers. It is our responsibility, along with taking care of the students.)

In her words, the participant did not just speak as an administrator—she spoke as someone who deeply understood the heart of leadership. Her voice carried a quiet sense of duty, one grounded in empathy and care. She talked about how it is not just about providing what teachers need, but about truly listening—being present for their concerns, their doubts, and even their frustrations. Whether those concerns support the change or question it, she believes they all deserve to be heard. With a soft laugh, she admitted that not everything said is easy to accept, but as a leader, it’s never about taking sides—it’s about standing with your people. For her, supporting teachers is not just a task, it’s a responsibility—one that goes hand-in-hand with caring for the students. She sees leadership not from behind a desk but beside the teachers, sharing the weight of change and making sure no one is left behind.

Truly, the narratives from the FGD interviews revealed that teacher-participants encounter insufficient instructional materials, particularly textbooks and teacher guides, as presented by the narratives above. The scarcity of ICT resources was also a significant hurdle. These concerns also emerged from the FGD interviews conducted with the teacher-participants. For example, teachers had to share a single computer, which slowed down teaching. According to FGD P4,

“Sa ICT pa lang, isa ra ka computer, lisod gyud, puli-puli sila. Dugay kaayo mahuman. Amoa sauna, gi isa-isa gyud namo sila. Gipasulat ra nako silag “I love you” sa word pagkahuman gitudluan nako unsaon pag save, isa-isa sila, unya dugay kaayo nahuman—two weeks.” (In ICT alone, there is only one computer, which makes it really difficult. Learners have to take turns, so it takes a long time to finish. Before, we had to do it one by one. I had them type 'I love you' in Word, then I taught them how to save it, one by one, and it took a very long time—two weeks.)

FGD P8 also expressed the concern about the lack of textbooks:

“Kuan man to kanang wala dyud mi libro, in our... in my subject handling ESP kay module pa lang, wala mi ma-reference gyud ba.” (It was that we really had no books. In our... in my subject handling ESP, we only had modules, so we had no proper reference.)

FGD P12 also shared the same problem:

“Sa asignaturang Filipino ma’am, napapansin namin na ang bago ang mga paksa and then hindi sapat ang mga sanggunian lalong-lalo na yong mga aklat. Dahil ang mga bawat estudyante, walang aklat talaga hanggang ngayon.” (In the Filipino subject, ma’am, we noticed that the topics are new, and the reference materials, especially the books, are insufficient. Each student still does not have a book up to now.)

FGD P14 added,

“No books to read man sila so either if it is si teacher pareha sa akola, si teacher nga wala talagang pang-projector so sometimes I will ask somebody to write on the board so that they have also their copy.” (They have no books to read, so if the teacher is like me and doesn’t have a projector, sometimes I just ask someone to write on the board so that the students can have a copy.)

Additionally, FGD P14 stated,

“Because we cannot supply everytime like this, kay si coupon bond si among... ang among printer dili pwede padaghanan sa office.” (Because we cannot always provide supplies like this, since we have to use our own coupon bond... and our printer in the office cannot handle large-volume printing.)

The narratives from the FGD interviews deeply moved me, as they revealed the day-to-day struggles of teachers who are doing their best despite limited resources. It was striking to hear how the lack of basic instructional materials, such as textbooks and teacher’s guides, continues to hinder effective teaching. What resonated most with me was the story of P4, who patiently taught each student how to use a computer—one by one—because there was only a single unit available. This act of dedication, though it took two weeks just to teach the basics, speaks volumes about a teacher’s heart and perseverance. I also felt a sense of shared frustration from P8, who couldn’t fully reference their lessons due to the absence of books in ESP, and from P12, who highlighted that their students have never even had books for Filipino. These testimonies made me reflect on how far passion and creativity must stretch when material support is scarce. Even simple acts, like P14 asking a student to write on the board because there’s no projector, or struggling to print due to limited office resources, show how teachers constantly find ways to adapt. These lived experiences reveal not just the problems in the system, but the resilience and resourcefulness of teachers who continue to show up for their learners every single day.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Summary of Findings

In this chapter, I discuss the findings about the challenges encountered by the participants through the lens of Rogers’ Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) Theory. Additionally, challenges shared by the participants were analyzed and interpreted in relation to the five perceived characteristics of innovation, which are: relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. The theory guided the interpretation of challenges encountered by educators in adopting the revised K to 10 curriculum. Moreover, I compared what I have discovered in my study with recent scholarly works, identifying where my findings align with or challenge existing literature. Through this lens, I aimed to understand participants’ narratives by examining how they perceive the curriculum’s challenges.

Hesitation and Reluctance of Educators under Relative Advantage Theme

In this study, the first finding shows hesitation and reluctance among educators during the implementation of the revised K to 10 curriculum. Study participants expressed skepticism and uncertainty regarding the abrupt curriculum changes, questioning the necessity and feasibility of the revised K to 10 curriculum. This finding of hesitation and reluctance reflects similar patterns observed by Harris and Graham (2019), who found that many secondary school history teachers in England were cautious about engaging with ongoing curriculum reforms. Their engagement varied depending on school context and their professional identity as subject specialists. Similarly, Poulton (2020) found that standardized assessments can limit teachers’ autonomy, leading to resistance during curriculum reforms. However, this finding contradicts the study conducted by Lomba-Portela et al. (2022), which found that teachers did not exhibit significant resistance. The most common sources of resistance were legislative changes and teachers’ perception of having excessive duties, with greater resistance observed among male teachers, those in public schools, and those with more experience.

Lack of Resources on the Implementation of the New Curriculum under the Observability Theme

In this study, the lack of resources emerges as one of the challenges teachers face in the implementation of the new curriculum. Public schools, particularly Rizal Elementary School and Panabo City National High School, reported a lack of instructional materials, textbooks, and supplementary teaching aids necessary for

the efficient and effective implementation. Teachers had to develop their own materials, often relying on different or sometimes outdated resources or personal funds to supplement what was provided. This lack of resources significantly affected the consistency and quality of instruction across the schools, leading to disparities in the learning experiences of students. This finding—specifically the lack of resources—aligns with Pratiwi et al. (2020), who found that although Indonesian teachers were generally receptive to curriculum changes, challenges such as a lack of training and resources impede effective implementation. Moreover, the challenge of a lack of resources also affirms the study conducted by Magallanes et al. (2022), who revealed that teachers expressed in the beginning that the K to 12 curriculum is hard for them to deliver because one of the many reasons is the lack of resources.

Insufficient Curriculum Training of Educators under Trialability Theme

The third sub-theme highlights insufficient curriculum training as a central barrier. This study found that teachers felt ill-prepared due to limited and selective training opportunities, often relying on cascade-style information dissemination rather than direct training. This finding, insufficient curriculum training, supports the study by Eroğlu and Donmuş Kaya (2020), which highlighted the challenges that teachers encounter, such as limited in-service training, inconvenient scheduling, unengaging content, ineffective facilitators, and demanding workloads. Additionally, the finding also affirms the study of Magallanes et al. (2022), whose mixed-methods research showed that Filipino teachers implementing a new curriculum often lacked the practical exposure and support necessary for successful adoption. Their study suggested that the absence of in-depth, hands-on training increased confusion and reduced innovation uptake. According to Hadisaputra et al. (2024), insufficient teacher training—characterized by short durations and limited participation—can hinder effective curriculum implementation. Additionally, according to Chuene and Teane (2024), comprehensive training is essential to equip educators with the necessary skills and knowledge for successful curriculum delivery. Similarly, this finding aligns with the research of García and de la Fuente (2023), which revealed notable gaps in teacher preparation, which include insufficient competence in addressing diverse learning needs, a heavy emphasis on theoretical knowledge with limited practical application, and a training framework rooted in outdated, deficit-based models of student learning. However, this finding opposes the claims made by Kaur et al., (2023), who found that brief training sessions effectively enhanced teachers' confidence and subject matter knowledge, enabling successful curriculum delivery. This indicates that extensive training may not always be necessary for effective curriculum implementation.

Issues with Curriculum Structure and Sequencing under Complexity Theme

The fourth sub-theme revolves around the issues with curriculum structure and sequencing. The findings reveal that teachers experienced confusion due to poorly sequenced lessons and misaligned topics, which disrupted logical learning progression and student comprehension. This finding, issues with curriculum structure and sequencing, aligns with the study conducted by Mateo (2021), which highlighted that while the spiral design aims to build upon previously learned concepts, it often revisits content without ensuring mastery. This approach can lead to redundancy and learning gaps, suggesting a need for better curriculum mapping. Furthermore, this finding also echoes the conclusions drawn by Barrot (2021), who identified issues in curriculum structure, such as the lack of constructive alignment and specificity in components. These curricula may require conceptual and pedagogical refinements, particularly in the area of constructive alignment, technology integration, and specificity of their components. Moreover, this finding is also consistent with the findings of Quijano (2021), which highlighted structural issues within the Philippine curriculum, particularly the need for improved alignment of learning competencies and the integration of essential skills. It recommended strategic revisions in curriculum design and instructional practices to improve the program's overall effectiveness.

Curriculum Gaps of the New Curriculum under Complexity Theme

The fifth sub-theme underscores the existence of curriculum gaps, particularly in foundational areas such as grammar, reading comprehension, and logical progression of content. Study participants encountered

misalignments between assumed student skills and actual competencies, which hindered effective teaching. This finding, curriculum gaps, corroborates the research of Reyes and Santos (2024), which identified curriculum gaps such as the lack of alignment between learning competencies and assessment methods, insufficient integration of technology in teaching, and inadequate teacher training in new pedagogical approaches. Furthermore, this finding also echoes the findings of Olipas (2024), which highlighted the MATATAG curriculum's provision for localization and contextualization of lessons, while also noting challenges in implementation consistency and resource availability.

Adjustment to the New Curriculum under Compatibility Theme

The final finding concerns adjustment of the participants to the new curriculum, with emphasis on abrupt changes in class scheduling, reduced instructional time, and the absence of transition planning. These changes demanded immediate and extensive pedagogical adjustments. Teachers found the new curriculum structure and content demanding, requiring a shift in pedagogical strategies. The integration of competency-based learning and performance-based assessments required a more student-centered approach, which some teachers found challenging due to their familiarity with traditional lecture-based teaching methods. The findings suggest that while some educators were able to transition effectively by adopting innovative instructional strategies, others struggled to keep pace with the expectations set by the new curriculum framework. This finding supports the study conducted by Ramoso and Ortega-Dela Cruz (2024), which revealed that educators encountered difficulties related to instruction delivery, access to necessary technologies, internet connectivity, and additional non-teaching responsibilities. Furthermore, the finding also aligns with the study of Puspitasari (2024), who highlighted that the frequent curriculum reforms—driven by political and ideological shifts—pose challenges for teachers. Nonetheless, the study emphasized how teacher adaptability and consistent policies are key to successful curriculum implementation.

Implications

As a researcher and practicing educator, I have come to realize that the challenges revealed in this study carry significant implications for the education sector in the Philippines, particularly in the context of public schools and curriculum implementation. The hesitation and reluctance among teachers, adjustment to the new curriculum, issues with curriculum structure and sequencing, curriculum gaps, insufficient curriculum training, and the lack of resources, and all point to deeper systemic issues that must be addressed if educational reforms like the revised K to 10 (MATATAG) curriculum are to succeed. The findings in my study suggest that for reforms to be effective, they must be paired with adequate preparation, clear communication, and continuous professional development that goes beyond mere orientation. Teachers need to be trained not just on what the curriculum entails but on how to realistically implement it given their actual classroom conditions.

Furthermore, I believe that these challenges also reveal important implications for learners, particularly those in marginalized and resource-constrained environments. When foundational skills are assumed rather than assessed, and when lesson pacing or content sequencing is misaligned with learners' developmental readiness, students are left struggling to catch up. The revised curriculum's goal of simplifying content does not always translate into meaningful learning when the materials are unavailable, the time is insufficient, and the instruction is rushed. As a teacher who works closely with students, I see how these gaps directly impact their learning and academic performance. My study reinforces my belief that curriculum development must be anchored in classroom realities, and that educators must be treated not just as implementers of change, but as essential partners in shaping and sustaining it. For any curriculum reform to be truly transformative, it must listen to and support those who live it every day—our teachers and our learners.

Future Directions

Moving forward, I see the need to expand this research by conducting longitudinal studies that examine how the implementation of the revised K to 10 curriculum evolves over time, particularly beyond its initial

rollout. While my current study captures the immediate challenges faced by teachers during the early adoption phase, I believe it is equally important to investigate how these challenges shift, diminish, or persist after one to three years of implementation. I am interested in exploring how schools adapt their instructional strategies, resource allocation, and teacher development plans in response to ongoing curriculum demands. Future research could also include perspectives from learners, parents, and regional or division-level curriculum developers to gain a more holistic understanding of the curriculum's long-term impact. This would help determine whether the initial problems—such as curriculum sequencing, insufficient training, and lack of resources—were addressed adequately over time or remained as persistent barriers to innovation.

In addition, I hope to explore how localized innovations and teacher-led practices can be amplified and sustained within the revised curriculum framework. I am particularly curious about how teacher collaboration, school-based professional learning communities, and grassroots solutions might contribute to the successful adaptation of the curriculum despite systemic limitations. Another possible direction would be to develop a set of practical recommendations or frameworks that policymakers and school leaders can use to implement future reforms more effectively, using the insights from my research as a foundation. Ultimately, I envision future studies that advocate not only for policy refinement but also for the empowerment of teachers as change agents. I hope my continuing research can help bridge the gap between policy and practice—ensuring that education reforms are not just well-designed on paper but also feasible, inclusive, and meaningful in everyday classrooms.

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DEDICATION

*To those who lit the path ahead,
When doubts and fears grew loud instead—
This humble work, though mine to bear,
Was shaped by love, support, and care.*

*To family, firm through every storm,
Your faith in me became my form.
Your prayers and presence, soft and strong,
Have kept me grounded all along.*

*To mentors' wise and voices true,
Who saw my steps and helped me through—
Your guidance lit the darkest nights,
And turned my wrongs to learning's rights.*

*To friends who cheered from near and far,
You knew my worth, you raised the bar.
Your laughter soothed the hardest days,
And walked with me through winding ways.*

*And to the learners yet to be,
Whose future holds uncertainty—
May this small work, in word and deed,
Plant seeds of thought, and hope, and need.*

*This page I pen with a grateful heart,
For every end is just a start.*

FAITH REFLECTION

Throughout the journey of completing my thesis, I have come to realize that a thesis is not only an intellectual pursuit but also a spiritual one. Undeniably, there were certainly moments of uncertainty and discouragement, but during those moments, I turned to faith and found the strength to continue.

I believe that God has been with me in every step of this process. From the initial plans to final revisions, I felt His guidance in moments of clarity and peace amid deadlines. I cannot deny I have thought of not continuing my paper, but His presence reminded me that knowledge is not pursued for its own sake, but to serve a greater purpose, to contribute meaningfully to others and to the world.

My journey has deepened my faith. While I understand that a thesis demands discipline and objectivity, my strengthened faith taught me humility and purpose. I am reminded that while I do the work, it is God who grants wisdom, sustains me through difficulties, and opens doors I cannot see.

As I close this chapter, I lift this work as an offering, thankful for God's grace that has sustained me, and I am hopeful that this small contribution may serve a greater good.

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