

Issues and Concerns on the Implementation of MATATAG Curriculum: Its Effect on the Teachers of Masbate National Comprehensive High School

Rean M. Esller

Masbate National Comprehensive High School, Masbate, Philippines

Email of Corresponding Author: rean.mijares@deped.gov.ph

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Abstract

This study examined the issues and concerns encountered by teachers of Masbate National Comprehensive High School (MNCHS) in implementing the MATATAG Curriculum, particularly its effects on workload, professional well-being, and instructional practices. The study was anchored on Tyler's Rationale, Fullan's Change Theory, the Job Demands-Resources Model, and Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, with the Input-Process-Output model serving as its conceptual framework. A quantitative descriptive research design was employed involving 38 Grade 7 teachers selected from a population of 60 through purposive sampling after determining the sample size using Slovin's formula. Data were collected through an expert-validated and pilot-tested structured survey questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics and SPSS, with Cronbach's Alpha used to assess instrument reliability. Findings showed that time constraints were the most pronounced implementation challenge, while insufficient instructional materials, increased workload, difficulties in aligning teaching strategies with new competencies, and assessment concerns also affected implementation. Difficulty aligning teaching strategies and resistance to change had notable effects on workload and professional well-being. Teachers responded by extensively using digital tools, collaborative learning, differentiated instruction, real-world applications, and formative assessment. They strongly recommended updated instructional materials, continuous training, teacher collaboration, administrative support, and reduced non-teaching workload. The study concludes that effective MATATAG Curriculum implementation requires sustained professional development, adequate resources, supportive leadership, collaboration, and manageable teacher workloads. The study primarily supports SDG 4 – Quality Education, while also relating to SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-Being, SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth, and SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals. Its sustainability impact lies in strengthening educational and institutional capacity, supporting teacher well-being, and promoting more responsive and sustainable curriculum implementation.

Keywords: Administrative Support; Curriculum Implementation; Instructional Practices; MATATAG Curriculum; Professional Development; Professional Well-Being; Teacher Workload

1. Introduction

The Philippine basic education system continues to undergo curriculum reforms intended to improve instructional quality, strengthen foundational learning, and respond to changing educational and societal demands. Central to these reforms is the MATATAG Curriculum, introduced by the Department of Education (DepEd) to streamline curriculum content, address learning gaps, and strengthen literacy and numeracy while supporting learner well-being and teachers' capacity to deliver effective instruction (Department of Education, 2023). As with previous

large-scale reforms, however, the success of MATATAG depends substantially on how teachers interpret, adapt to, and implement its requirements within actual classroom conditions. Curriculum reform literature consistently shows that implementation is influenced by teacher preparedness, professional development, resource availability, workload, institutional support, stakeholder participation, and local context. These factors are particularly important at Masbate National Comprehensive High School (MNCHS), where teachers operate within a large and diverse school community and must translate national curriculum directives into classroom practice. Consequently, this study examines the issues and concerns encountered by MNCHS teachers in implementing the MATATAG Curriculum, its implications for their workload and professional well-being, the instructional practices they adopt, and the support systems necessary for more effective and sustainable implementation.

The MATATAG Curriculum represents a continuing effort to improve Philippine basic education by rationalizing learning competencies and strengthening foundational skills. It seeks to foster global competitiveness while addressing persistent gaps in literacy and numeracy (Department of Education, 2023). However, curriculum reforms do not operate solely through policy directives. Teachers serve as frontline implementers who must interpret curriculum standards, redesign instruction, manage changing responsibilities, and respond to learner needs while working within available institutional resources. At MNCHS, these demands are situated within a specific sociocultural and institutional environment. The school serves a large and diverse student population in Masbate City and operates within conditions in which resource availability, administrative support, professional development, and contextual realities may influence curriculum implementation. Masbate City itself had a population of 104,522 based on the 2020 Census, representing 11.50% of the provincial population and 1.72% of the Bicol Region's population (PhilAtlas, 2020). These conditions make MNCHS an important setting for examining how a national curriculum reform is translated into localized practice. Initial literature already identifies concerns that are relevant to MATATAG implementation. Villaver et al. (2024) emphasized teacher preparedness, support systems, inclusivity, training, and monitoring in the curriculum rollout. Abragan, Abarcas, Aquino, and Bagongon (2022) identified recurring K-12 concerns involving resources, workloads, and implementation difficulties, while Bongco and David (2020) documented the tensions experienced by Filipino teachers as curriculum policy implementers. Together, these concerns indicate that the effectiveness of reform depends not only on curriculum design but also on the conditions under which teachers are expected to implement it. The present study therefore focuses on the experiences of Junior High School teachers at MNCHS during School Year 2024–2025. It examines implementation challenges, effects on workload and professional well-being, instructional adaptations, and teacher-recommended strategies and support systems. Through this localized focus, the study seeks to clarify the relationship between policy expectations and classroom realities.

A dominant theme in the literature is the persistent gap between curriculum policy and classroom implementation. Nerlino's (2023), Pondiscio's (2024), McCulloch's (2024), and Gouëdard, Pont, Hyttinen, and Huang's (2020) works emphasize that successful reform depends on responsiveness to actual learning contexts, teacher capacity, stakeholder engagement, and coherent implementation strategies. Systemic support is equally important: American Progress (2018) stresses quality instructional materials and professional development, while Kara Arundel (2024) highlights evidence-based, context-responsive, and data-informed approaches. Hawick, L., Kitto, S., & Cleland, J. (2016) further demonstrate the importance of socio-cultural conditions, while "Curriculum & Assessment Reform: Learning Loss to Long-Term Resilience" (2020) and "Don't Give Up on Curriculum Reform Just Yet" (2019) by Kane and Steiner emphasize teacher preparation, resources, and systemic support. Labaree (2019) similarly identifies the continuing disconnect between intended curriculum and actual classroom practice. Philippine experiences with earlier reforms provide important lessons for MATATAG. Ongkiko (2013) emphasizes curriculum quality, teacher retraining, and equity, while Pia Lee-Brago, in the article "DepEd issues implementing rules of Kindergarten Act" (2012), highlights inclusivity, foundational learning, and teacher preparation. The Philippine Institute for Development Studies, PIDS, dated March 2012, points to public-private partnerships as a response to infrastructure and resource limitations. The article "YEARENDER: DepEd's K-12 Program goes Full Blast in 2012," Lianne Grace De Vera from the year 2019, and "Education Reform in the Philippines Aims for Better Quality and More Access" (2019) likewise identify system adjustment, shortages in instructional materials, crowded classrooms, professional development needs, and stakeholder communication as recurring concerns. Niyang Bai (2023) further relates educational implementation to poverty, infrastructure limitations, resource scarcity, and policy gaps. Teacher preparedness and instructional adaptation form another major theme. Studies indicate that pedagogical support, instructional quality, and teacher-mediated interaction influence learner experiences and outcomes (Loughlin et al., 2023; Olmeda et al., 2023). Aydin, Ozfidan, and Carothers (2017) stress teacher preparation, diversity, technology, and inclusion, while Wahlström's (2023) and Campbell-Phillips' (2022) works highlight the difficulty of translating curriculum standards into responsive classroom practice. The professional and psychological dimensions of reform are also significant. Pan, Hung, and Truong (2024) link teacher emotions, self-efficacy, collaboration, and learner-centered practices, while Young's (2018) and Wu and Kyungsun's (2022) works show the limitations of reforms that overlook local and psychosocial realities. Participation and organizational conditions further influence reform sustainability. Salonen-Hakomäki and Soini's (2023) research presents curriculum reform as a participatory process, Chimbunde and Moreeng's 2024 study emphasizes teacher participation, and Grgić and Jutzi's (2024) study identifies organizational culture

and teacher empowerment as key factors. VanderJagt (2013) highlights stakeholder perceptions, while Pešková and Spurná (2019) emphasize teacher acceptance, readiness, and professional support. International experiences reinforce the need to balance global goals with local realities. "Curriculum Reform in Indonesia: English Education Toward the Global Competitiveness" (2021) emphasizes competitiveness and contextual adaptation, while "Curriculum Reform in Indonesia: Moving from an Exclusive to Inclusive Curriculum" (2019) stresses equity, inclusion, and teacher preparation. D'Souza's discussion similarly shows the risks of overlooking local inequalities and stakeholder needs, as reinforced by D'Souza (2009). Philippine studies confirm these concerns in the MATATAG and broader K–12 context. Villaver et al., in the study "MATATAG Curriculum Rollout: Understanding Challenges for Effective Implementation"? (2024), emphasize preparation, institutional support, equity, monitoring, and continuous professional development, while (Abragan, Abarcas, Aquino, and Bagongon, 2022) and Zaro et al. (2022) identify broader stakeholder and implementation issues. Palestina, Pangan, and Ancho (2020), Palestina et al. (2020.), and Bongco and David's (2020) works underscore teacher participation and the tensions experienced by curriculum implementers. Cocal and Marcellano (2017), Mohammad's study, "The Perception of the Parents and Students on the Implementation of K–12 Basic Education Program in the Philippines" (2016), the study of Crisol and Alamillo in 2014, Ednave et al. (2018), and Campos (2023) similarly identify preparedness, resources, workload, stakeholder support, leadership, and equity as recurring concerns. Collectively, the literature shows that effective MATATAG implementation depends not only on curriculum design but also on teacher readiness, adequate resources, institutional support, stakeholder participation, and responsiveness to local classroom realities.

At the global level, curriculum reform is widely viewed as a mechanism for improving educational quality, relevance, equity, and responsiveness. However, comparative literature demonstrates that national reforms frequently encounter difficulties when standardized policy prescriptions do not sufficiently consider teachers, communities, organizational cultures, local resources, and contextual differences. Young (2018), Pondiscio (2024) and McCulloch (2024) particularly demonstrate that policy reform can remain disconnected from classroom practice when stakeholder participation and resources are inadequate. Studies by Pan et al. and Wu & Kyungsun (2022) further show the importance of psychological and pedagogical readiness, while Salonen-Hakomäki and Soini (2023) and Chimbunde & Moreng (2024) emphasize participation and relationships among reform actors. Grgić and Jutzi (2024) likewise highlights organizational culture and teacher empowerment, and VanderJagt's (2013) work reinforces the importance of stakeholder perspectives. Southeast Asian experiences represented by "Curriculum Reform: Moving from an Exclusive to Inclusive Curriculum" (2019) and "Toward Global Competitiveness" (2021) similarly demonstrate the need to connect global educational objectives with local realities. Within the Philippine context, previous reforms demonstrate comparable implementation concerns. Ongkiko (2013) and Edralin (2023) describe the substantial institutional and pedagogical adjustments associated with curriculum change. Broader discussions represented by Generalao et al. (2024) and Lin & Wang (2023) also point to infrastructure, instructional, and implementation concerns, although the literature synthesis indicates that these issues have received less detailed investigation from the standpoint of teachers in particular local environments. At the local level, MNCHS provides a distinct context because national curriculum expectations must be implemented within the specific resource, organizational, cultural, and professional conditions of Masbate. The literature suggests that such localized conditions cannot simply be assumed to reflect national averages. Pešková and Spurná (2019) emphasize teacher readiness and acceptance, while D'Souza (2009) demonstrates the broader importance of context-sensitive and inclusive curriculum reforms. The MNCHS setting therefore enables the study to examine how national policy is experienced at the school level and how teachers negotiate curriculum expectations within their actual working environment.

The study is anchored in complementary theories on curriculum design, educational change, teacher well-being, and collaborative adaptation. Tyler's Rationale (1949) emphasizes the alignment of educational objectives, learning experiences, instruction, and evaluation, making it relevant in assessing whether MATATAG Curriculum expectations are reflected in actual teaching practices and outcomes. Fullan's Change Theory (2006) views curriculum reform as a systemic process requiring leadership, collaboration, participation, capacity development, and sustained stakeholder support. Teacher readiness is likewise important because curriculum implementation may be affected by workload, inadequate training, limited instructional materials, and insufficient administrative assistance (Darling-Hammond, 2017). The Job Demands-Resources framework further explains how increased preparation, paperwork, and instructional adjustments may create greater job demands, while training, resources, administrative support, and collegial relationships can lessen their effects on professional well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) complements these perspectives by emphasizing interaction, social context, peer support, collaboration, and shared problem-solving in teaching and curriculum adaptation. Conceptually, the study employs the Input-Process-Output model. Inputs include curriculum changes, teacher characteristics and preparedness, workload, training, resources, professional well-being, and the study's theoretical foundations. The process involves the systematic examination of teachers' experiences and curriculum-related variables, while the outputs include identified implementation challenges, workload and well-being implications, instructional practices, and recommended support strategies. Together, these frameworks connect curriculum requirements, teacher conditions, implementation processes, and practical recommendations.

Despite extensive literature on curriculum reform, several gaps justify the present study. First, much of the available research adopts national, international, historical, or system-wide perspectives. These approaches provide valuable explanations of reform but offer limited evidence about how implementation unfolds in a particular public school and within a geographically and institutionally specific Philippine context. Second, teachers are frequently identified as key curriculum implementers, yet comparatively limited attention is directed toward the combined effects of reform on their workload, professional well-being, instructional adaptation, emotional demands, and coping processes. Existing literature repeatedly identifies teacher preparation, resources, organizational support, and stakeholder participation as important, but these variables require examination in the specific context of MATATAG implementation. Third, the literature identifies a persistent policy-practice gap. National directives may specify curriculum objectives, yet their actual implementation depends on school resources, teacher capacity, leadership, professional development, and classroom realities. The lack of localized evidence makes it difficult to determine whether general implementation problems are experienced in the same way at MNCHS. Fourth, the literature indicates the need for stronger mechanisms through which teacher experiences and feedback can inform continuing curriculum improvement. Teachers do not merely receive reforms; they interpret and operationalize them. Their experiences can therefore provide evidence for refining professional development, resource allocation, administrative assistance, and school-level implementation strategies. The study addresses these gaps by examining the specific challenges experienced by MNCHS teachers, the effects of MATATAG implementation on workload and professional well-being, the instructional practices used to respond to curriculum demands, and the strategies and support systems teachers consider necessary. Its rationale rests on the proposition that sustainable curriculum reform requires understanding not only what policies intend to achieve but also how those policies are experienced and enacted by teachers in actual classrooms.

The study is most directly aligned with SDG 4 – Quality Education because the MATATAG Curriculum is intended to strengthen instructional quality, foundational competencies, and educational outcomes. By identifying implementation barriers and teacher support requirements, the research can contribute evidence relevant to improving the capacity of schools to deliver effective and equitable basic education. The focus on teacher workload, stress, and professional well-being also connects the study with SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-Being. Although the research is educational rather than clinical, its examination of the conditions affecting teachers' professional well-being recognizes that effective education reform should not compromise the welfare of the workforce responsible for implementing it. The study also has relevance to SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth, particularly its decent-work dimension, because teacher workload, professional support, training, resources, and working conditions are central concerns of the investigation. Strengthening these conditions can help sustain teachers' professional effectiveness during periods of institutional change. Finally, the emphasis on cooperation among teachers, school leaders, DepEd, local stakeholders, and other support structures relates to SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals. Curriculum reform is not implemented by teachers alone; its sustainability depends on coordinated institutional and stakeholder support.

The study contributes primarily to educational sustainability by examining the conditions required for curriculum reform to move beyond policy adoption toward sustained and effective classroom implementation. A curriculum becomes sustainable when schools possess the human capacity, instructional resources, professional development mechanisms, and support structures necessary to maintain its intended outcomes over time. It also contributes to institutional and governance sustainability by generating localized evidence that can inform school leadership, DepEd decision-making, resource allocation, professional development, and implementation support. Identifying the gap between national expectations and school-level realities can help institutions develop more responsive and context-sensitive mechanisms for educational change. The investigation of workload and professional well-being further gives the study a workforce and well-being sustainability dimension. Teachers are essential institutional resources, and reforms that continually increase demands without adequate support may weaken professional effectiveness and the long-term capacity of schools to sustain educational improvement. Conversely, adequate training, materials, leadership, collaboration, and administrative assistance can strengthen both teacher resilience and implementation capacity. Finally, the study supports community and social sustainability because effective curriculum implementation ultimately affects learners, families, schools, and the wider community. By centering the experiences of teachers in a localized public-school setting, the research provides a basis for curriculum implementation strategies that are context-responsive, collaborative, and more capable of sustaining educational quality over time.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study used a quantitative descriptive research design to examine the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum and its effects on the professional lives, instructional practices, workload, and well-being of teachers at MNCHS. The design facilitated the systematic collection, measurement, and statistical analysis of numerical data to describe patterns and trends related to the identified variables. Quantitative descriptive research emphasizes quantification, objective measurement, structured data collection, and the use of representative

samples to provide numerical descriptions of phenomena (Team Insights, 2023). Accordingly, the study utilized a structured survey questionnaire and statistical procedures to generate evidence-based findings relevant to the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted at Masbate National Comprehensive High School (MNCHS), particularly its main campus located at Quezon Street, Barangay Centro, Masbate City, Masbate, Philippines. The school has both Junior and Senior High School levels and serves a large student population. The study specifically focused on the Junior High School level, where the MATATAG Curriculum was being implemented during School Year 2024–2025. MNCHS operates within the Masbate City Division and serves a diverse school population within the provincial capital of Masbate. The localized institutional setting provided the context for examining how teachers implement a nationally mandated curriculum under actual school-level conditions.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents were teachers of Masbate National Comprehensive High School who were directly involved in implementing the MATATAG Curriculum for Grade 7 during School Year 2024–2025. Grade 7 was selected because it was the initial grade level covered by the curriculum implementation. Respondents therefore consisted of teachers handling Grade 7 classes and their respective subject areas. The study reports a population of 60 teachers assigned to Grade 7. These teachers represented different subject areas and levels of teaching experience, enabling the study to examine curriculum implementation from varied professional backgrounds.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The required sample was determined from the population of 60 Grade 7 teachers using Slovin's formula, with a 10% margin of error and a 90% confidence level. The computation resulted in an initial sample of 38 teachers. After determining the sample size, purposive sampling was employed to select participants representing different subject areas and levels of teaching experience. This procedure was intended to include teachers who could provide relevant and diverse information concerning the issues and concerns associated with MATATAG Curriculum implementation.

2.5 Research Instrument

The primary research instrument was a structured survey questionnaire designed in accordance with the study objectives and the reviewed literature. The instrument gathered quantitative information on respondent demographics, challenges encountered in curriculum implementation, workload impacts, instructional practices, and recommendations for improving implementation. The questionnaire underwent expert validation and was pilot-tested among 5–10 teachers who were not included in the final sample. Cronbach's Alpha was subsequently used to determine the internal consistency and reliability of the instrument.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to data collection, the researcher secured formal approval from the Schools Division Superintendent of the City Division and the Principal of MNCHS. An orientation was conducted among Grade 7 teachers to explain the purpose, scope, procedures, and ethical considerations of the research. The questionnaire was then developed, validated by experts, and pilot-tested before its final administration. Following participant recruitment, the validated questionnaires were distributed in either printed or digital format, depending on respondents' preferences. Participants were provided with clear instructions and a one-week period to complete the questionnaire. Follow-ups and reminders were conducted when necessary to encourage responses and address participant concerns. After collection, responses were encoded into a digital spreadsheet. The dataset was reviewed and cleaned to identify missing, incomplete, or inconsistent entries before statistical analysis.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The study primarily employed descriptive statistical techniques to summarize and interpret the collected quantitative data. Frequencies and percentages were used to describe categorical variables, including respondents' demographic characteristics and the implementation challenges encountered by teachers. Means and standard deviations were used to analyze variables concerning workload impact and professional well-being. The reliability of the survey questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, with a coefficient of 0.70 or higher considered acceptable for internal consistency. Cronbach's Alpha determines the extent to which items within a scale are correlated and consistently measure the intended construct, as supported by Collins (2007). Data encoding, management, and statistical analysis were performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The results were interpreted in relation to the research objectives and theoretical framework and served as the basis for recommendations concerning the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum at MNCHS.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical safeguards were incorporated into the research process. Formal institutional approval was obtained before data collection, and participants were oriented regarding the purpose and scope of the study. Informed consent

was secured from all respondents, participation was voluntary, and the confidentiality of responses was maintained throughout the research process. The pilot test was also conducted among teachers who were excluded from the final sample to maintain the independence of the main data collection.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Profile of the respondents

3.1.1 Age

Among the 38 respondents, 39% were 20–30 years old, 24% were 41–50 years old, 21% were 31–40 years old, and 16% were 51 years old and above. Thus, the largest proportion consisted of relatively young teachers, although early-career, mid-career, and veteran educators were all represented. The distribution suggests a teaching workforce combining younger teachers who may demonstrate adaptability to curriculum innovation with experienced educators who can provide institutional knowledge and mentoring. The findings support the need for continuous professional development, mentoring, knowledge transfer, and collaboration across age groups to facilitate MATATAG Curriculum implementation.

3.1.2 Gender

Female teachers constituted 84% of the respondents, while male teachers accounted for 16%, indicating that the Grade 7 teaching workforce represented in the study was predominantly female. The predominance of female teachers reflects the manuscript's observation of a wider pattern in basic education. Although gender was not presented as a direct determinant of curriculum implementation, the findings indicate the importance of providing equitable access to professional development, mentoring, and workload management for all teachers while recognizing the value of diverse perspectives within the teaching workforce.

3.1.3 Years of Teaching Experience

The respondents had varied levels of teaching experience. Teachers with 1–5 years of experience comprised 34%, followed closely by those with more than 15 years at 32%. Those with 11–15 years accounted for 18%, while teachers with 6–10 years constituted 16%. The coexistence of relatively new and highly experienced teachers indicates different professional development needs. Early-career teachers may require assistance with lesson planning, classroom management, and curriculum alignment, while experienced teachers may require support in adapting established practices to new curriculum expectations. Mentoring and professional learning communities may therefore facilitate knowledge sharing and curriculum adaptation.

3.1.4 Grade Level Taught

All 38 respondents, representing 100% of the sample, were Grade 7 teachers directly involved in implementing the MATATAG Curriculum. This concentration ensures that the findings specifically represent teachers experiencing the initial implementation of MATATAG at the identified grade level. The homogeneous grade-level coverage allows the study to focus specifically on workload, instructional adjustments, and implementation experiences associated with Grade 7.

3.1.5 Subject Area Taught

Respondents represented several subject areas. Filipino teachers accounted for 18%, English and Values Education each represented 16%, Mathematics and Araling Panlipunan each represented 13%, TLE/TVL accounted for 11%, Science represented 8%, and MAPEH accounted for 5%. The variation in subject representation provides perspectives across disciplines and indicates that curriculum adaptation may differ according to subject requirements. The manuscript consequently emphasizes the importance of considering subject-specific challenges and providing targeted interventions when strengthening implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum.

3.2 Challenges in Implementing the MATATAG Curriculum

3.2.1 Lack of Training on MATATAG Curriculum Implementation

Regarding training, 28.9% of teachers agreed that sufficient training was lacking, while another 28.9% were neutral. The item obtained a mean score of 2.66, interpreted as Neutral, indicating uncertainty among a substantial proportion of teachers regarding their level of preparedness. The finding suggests that inadequate preparation may affect consistency in instructional delivery. Gouëdard et al. (2020) highlight that inadequate professional development is a persistent issue in curriculum reform, emphasizing the necessity of structured training programs and ongoing capacity-building opportunities. Continuous workshops, mentoring, and professional development may therefore strengthen teachers' capacity to translate curriculum objectives into classroom practice.

3.2.2 Insufficient Instructional Materials and Resources

Insufficient instructional materials obtained a mean score of 3.39, interpreted as Neutral, although 44.7% of respondents agreed that this was a challenge and another 15.8% strongly agreed. The relatively high proportion reporting resource deficiencies indicates that curriculum implementation is affected by the availability of

appropriate teaching materials. This finding aligns with Pondiscio (2024), which argue that the availability of high-quality teaching resources is a fundamental determinant of curriculum success. Inadequate textbooks, activity sheets, technology-based materials, and assessment resources may require teachers to improvise or use outdated materials, potentially affecting instructional consistency and learner access.

3.2.3 Increased Workload Due to Curriculum Changes

Increased workload obtained a mean score of 3.00, interpreted as Neutral. A total of 36.8% agreed that curriculum changes increased their workload, while the remaining responses were distributed across neutral, disagreement, and strong disagreement categories. The mixed responses indicate that workload increases were experienced differently among teachers. However, Hawick, Kitto, & Cleland's (2016) research suggests that curriculum changes often lead to increased responsibilities, particularly in lesson planning, adapting to new methodologies, and conducting more comprehensive student assessments. Increased preparation, assessment, and professional development requirements may contribute to stress and reduced job satisfaction, underscoring the value of collaborative planning and administrative assistance.

3.2.4 Difficulty in Aligning Teaching Strategies with New Competencies

Difficulty aligning teaching strategies with new competencies produced a mean score of 2.92, interpreted as Neutral. A total of 36.8% agreed that this was a challenge, while 34.2% disagreed. The findings indicate differing levels of difficulty in shifting instructional practices. According to McCulloch (2024), effective curriculum implementation requires teachers to transition from traditional content-based teaching to more student-centered, competency-based approaches. Teachers accustomed to established pedagogical practices may therefore require instructional coaching and professional development on inquiry-based learning, project-based assessment, and differentiated instruction.

3.2.5 Resistance to Change Among Teachers and Students

Resistance to change recorded a mean score of 2.71, interpreted as Neutral. The largest proportion, 42.1%, remained neutral, while 28.9% disagreed that resistance among teachers and students was a major implementation challenge. The result indicates that resistance was not uniformly experienced but remained relevant during the transition. Salonen-Hakomäki & Soini (2023) argue that teacher resistance is often rooted in a lack of involvement in reform decisions, insufficient training, or concerns about increased workload. Participatory implementation, transparent communication, gradual transition, and professional learning communities may therefore facilitate greater acceptance among teachers and students.

3.2.6 Lack of Administrative and Peer Support

Lack of administrative and peer support obtained the lowest mean score among the identified challenges at 2.45, interpreted as Disagree. This indicates that respondents generally did not regard insufficient support from administrators and colleagues as a major implementation problem. The finding suggests that existing leadership and collegial relationships may be helping teachers adapt to MATATAG. Nevertheless, Arundel (2024) emphasizes that even in well-supported environments, disparities in support structures may still exist. Sustaining administrative guidance, mentoring, peer collaboration, and Learning Action Cell sessions can therefore strengthen implementation further.

3.2.7 Time Constraints in Covering the New Curriculum Content

Time constraints emerged as the most pronounced challenge, obtaining a mean score of 3.76, interpreted as Agree. Half of the respondents agreed that limited time affected curriculum coverage, while 21.1% strongly agreed. The result indicates difficulty balancing curriculum requirements with available instructional time. Labaree (2019) notes that curriculum reforms often introduce new learning objectives without proportionally adjusting teaching schedules, leading to rushed instruction and superficial content coverage. Limited instructional time may reduce opportunities for mastery, especially in cumulative subjects, making realistic alignment between learning objectives and instructional schedules essential.

3.2.8 Challenges in the Assessment and Evaluation of Student Learning

Assessment and evaluation challenges obtained a mean score of 3.47, interpreted as Neutral, although 39.5% agreed and 13.2% strongly agreed that assessing student learning was difficult under the new curriculum. The result reflects the demands associated with assessing competency-based learning. Hawick, Kitto, & Cleland (2020) argue that curriculum and assessment reforms must be aligned to prevent learning loss and promote long-term educational resilience. Performance-based assessments, portfolios, real-world tasks, appropriate rubrics, and assessment literacy may therefore be necessary to complement conventional tests and support the intended competencies.

3.3 Impact of the MATATAG Curriculum on Workload and Professional Well-Being

3.3.1 Impact of Insufficient Training

Lack of training obtained a mean impact score of 3.00. Among respondents, 34.2% reported a moderate impact, 23.7% reported a significant impact, and 7.9% reported a severe impact. The findings suggest that although some teachers were able to adapt, inadequate professional development continued to affect others. The manuscript emphasizes that teachers require continued guidance on methodologies, assessment practices, and competency-based instruction because insufficient preparation can make curriculum requirements more difficult to implement effectively.

3.3.2 Impact of Insufficient Instructional Materials and Resources

Insufficient instructional resources obtained a mean score of 3.32. Moderate and significant impact were each reported by 34.2% of the respondents, while 10.5% reported a severe impact. The findings indicate that limited textbooks, teaching aids, and digital resources can constrain lesson delivery and student engagement. Because MATATAG emphasizes more dynamic learning experiences, the adequacy and accessibility of instructional resources remain important conditions for achieving its intended outcomes.

3.3.3 Impact of Increased Workload

Increased workload obtained a mean score of 3.16. Moderate impact was reported by 36.8% of teachers, while 23.7% reported a significant impact and 13.2% indicated a severe impact. The result indicates that curriculum changes added responsibilities involving lesson modification, professional development, and assessment based on revised standards. The manuscript associates these demands with possible stress, burnout, and dissatisfaction and consequently emphasizes workload management and administrative support to maintain teacher motivation and effectiveness.

3.3.4 Impact of Difficulty Aligning Teaching Strategies with New Competencies

Difficulty aligning instructional strategies with new competencies obtained a mean score of 3.61, interpreted as Agree. A total of 39.5% reported a significant impact, while 18.4% reported a severe impact. This emerged as one of the most substantial concerns affecting teachers. The MATATAG Curriculum requires instructional strategies that develop problem-solving, critical thinking, and collaboration, and the results suggest that adapting established teaching approaches to these competencies can be difficult when teachers have limited training or support.

3.3.5 Impact of Resistance to Change

Resistance to change obtained a mean score of 3.50, interpreted as Agree. A significant impact was reported by 42.1% of respondents, while 15.8% indicated a severe impact. The findings suggest that uncertainty, additional workload, unfamiliar pedagogical practices, and student adjustment may complicate implementation. The manuscript consequently emphasizes clear communication, adequate support, and gradual implementation as mechanisms for improving adaptation to curriculum change.

3.4 Instructional Practices Used to Address MATATAG Curriculum Demands

3.4.1 Use of Digital Tools and Technology

The use of digital tools was the highest-rated instructional practice, with 76% of teachers reporting that they always used technology and 24% indicating that they often used it. The practice obtained a mean score of 4.76, interpreted as Always. The finding underscores the central role of technology in supporting interactive instruction and learner engagement. According to Lin and Wang (2021), integrating technology in classrooms enhances student engagement and learning outcomes, particularly in flipped classrooms where digital tools promote active learning and interaction. Technology therefore serves as an important mechanism for delivering responsive and engaging instruction under the curriculum.

3.4.2 Collaborative Learning and Peer Discussions

Collaborative learning obtained a mean score of 4.32, interpreted as Often. Nearly half of the respondents, or 47%, reported always using the strategy, while 42% reported using it often. The findings indicate extensive use of peer interaction to support learning. According to McCulloch (2024), collaborative learning fosters deeper engagement and helps students grasp complex concepts through peer interactions. Cooperative learning may therefore improve knowledge retention, participation, and motivation while supporting MATATAG's learner-centered orientation.

3.4.3 Differentiated Instruction for Diverse Learners

Differentiated instruction obtained a mean score of 3.95, interpreted as Often. It was always used by 26% of respondents, often used by 45%, and sometimes used by another 26%. The result indicates that teachers generally adapted instruction to varying learner needs. According to Aydin, Ozfidan, and Carothers (2017), differentiated instruction is crucial in diverse classrooms, as it accommodates different learning styles, abilities, and cultural backgrounds. Continuous professional development may further strengthen teachers' ability to differentiate instruction effectively and equitably.

3.4.4 Integration of Real-World Applications

Integration of real-world applications obtained a mean score of 4.39, interpreted as Often. A majority of teachers, 55%, always integrated practical applications into lessons, while 29% did so often. The result indicates that teachers frequently connected theoretical concepts with practical situations. Gouédard et al. (2020) argue that curriculum reforms should emphasize real-world applications to develop students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Contextualized learning can therefore make instruction more meaningful while preparing students to apply knowledge to authentic situations.

3.4.5 Regular Formative Assessment

Regular formative assessment obtained the second-highest mean score of 4.53. A total of 58% always conducted formative assessments, while 37% did so often. The result shows that teachers frequently monitored learning progress and used ongoing assessment during instruction. Hawick, Kitto, and Cleland (2020) discuss how effective curriculum and assessment reform can lead to improved learning outcomes. Regular formative assessment can identify learning gaps and enable teachers to adjust instruction in response to student progress.

3.5 Recommended Support Systems for MATATAG Curriculum Implementation

3.5.1 More Training and Seminars

More training and seminars were recommended by 82% of respondents, reflecting substantial demand for continuing professional development related to MATATAG implementation. The finding demonstrates teachers' need for deeper understanding of curriculum content and instructional approaches. Nerlino (2023) highlighted that making a curriculum effective requires teachers to have comprehensive training, ensuring that they can deliver content in a way that resonates with students. Teacher preparedness therefore remains central to curriculum implementation.

3.5.2 Availability of Updated Instructional Materials

Updated instructional materials received the highest level of support among the identified support systems, with 89% of teachers recommending their provision. This confirms the importance respondents placed on appropriate and current instructional resources. Pondiscio (2024) argued that curriculum reform efforts are often hindered by a lack of suitable materials, which can limit teachers' ability to deliver lessons effectively. Providing high-quality and updated resources can consequently strengthen both curriculum delivery and learning outcomes.

3.5.3 Stronger Administrative Support and Mentoring

Stronger administrative support and mentoring were recommended by 68% of teachers. The finding indicates that teachers value leadership and guidance during curriculum transition. McCulloch (2024) pointed out that educational change is more sustainable when school administrators take an active role in supporting and mentoring teachers, as this reduces resistance and builds confidence in reform efforts.

3.5.4 Collaboration and Sharing of Best Practices

Collaboration and sharing of best practices were recommended by 82% of teachers. The result shows strong support for professional collaboration as a mechanism for addressing implementation difficulties. Gouédard et al. (2020) emphasized that collaboration among teachers is essential for successful curriculum reform, as it allows for the exchange of best practices and continuous professional growth.

3.5.5 Reduction of Non-Teaching Workload

Reduction of non-teaching workload was recommended by 76% of respondents, indicating that many teachers preferred greater opportunity to concentrate on instructional responsibilities and curriculum adaptation. The finding emphasizes the potential effect of administrative responsibilities on teachers' instructional capacity. VanderJagt (2018) noted that excessive administrative and non-teaching responsibilities negatively impact teachers' effectiveness in the classroom. Reducing such responsibilities may therefore provide teachers with more time for lesson planning, assessment, and curriculum implementation.

3.6 Effective Strategies for Addressing MATATAG Curriculum Challenges

3.6.1 Regular Teacher Training and Capacity-Building

Regular teacher training and capacity-building programs were supported by 71.1% of respondents. The result reinforces the need for sustained professional development aligned with changing pedagogical and assessment requirements. According to Garet et al. (2001), professional development is most effective when it is sustained, content-focused, and includes active learning opportunities. Continuous training may therefore enhance instructional quality and teachers' preparedness for curriculum reform.

3.6.2 Provision of Sufficient Instructional Materials and Resources

The provision of sufficient instructional materials received support from 89.5% of teachers, making it one of the highest-rated strategies. The result confirms that resource availability remains a major implementation priority. A study by Orodho (2014) highlights that the availability of learning resources significantly affects student

achievement and teacher efficiency. Adequate textbooks, teaching guides, and digital tools can thus facilitate more effective classroom delivery.

3.6.3 Strengthening Administrative and Peer Support Systems

Strengthening administrative and peer support systems was recommended by 71.1% of respondents. The result demonstrates the importance teachers attach to shared responsibility and collegial assistance. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) argue that teacher collaboration and professional learning communities (PLCs) create a network of support that improves teaching effectiveness. Strong administrative and peer networks can therefore enable teachers to share practices and jointly address curriculum-related problems.

3.6.4 Implementing Flexible Teaching Strategies

Flexible teaching approaches were supported by 89.5% of respondents, making them another highly endorsed strategy for responding to curriculum change. The finding indicates that teachers recognize the importance of adapting instruction to changing requirements and learner diversity. Research by Tomlinson (2014) underscores the benefits of differentiated instruction, which promotes student-centered learning and accommodates varying abilities. Flexible strategies such as differentiated, scaffolded, and project-based instruction may therefore improve engagement and comprehension.

3.6.5 Reducing Non-Teaching Workload

The manuscript reports that 5.3% of respondents explicitly identified the reduction of non-teaching workload as an effective strategy. Although identified by a relatively small proportion in this part of the results, the manuscript considers workload reduction important because administrative responsibilities may reduce teachers' time for lesson preparation and learner engagement. A study by Kinman et al. (2011) found that excessive non-teaching duties contribute to teacher burnout and reduced job satisfaction. Task delegation and workload adjustment may consequently strengthen both professional well-being and instructional effectiveness.

3.6.6 Other Strategies

Other strategies were proposed by 5.3% of respondents. The manuscript indicates that these may include technology-enhanced learning or policy advocacy intended to strengthen implementation frameworks. These alternative approaches may complement the major strategies identified by respondents and provide additional mechanisms for responding to emerging implementation challenges. Because the original chapter provides no supporting in-text citation for these alternatives, no additional literature-based interpretation is introduced here.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study concludes that the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum at Masbate National Comprehensive High School (MNCHS) is influenced by teachers' preparedness, availability of instructional resources, workload, capacity to align teaching strategies with new competencies, and institutional support. The predominantly young and female workforce, together with varying levels of teaching experience, underscores the importance of professional development and mentoring. Curriculum implementation has increased teachers' responsibilities and raised concerns regarding stress and professional well-being; however, teachers have responded through the extensive use of technology, collaborative learning, formative assessment, differentiated instruction, and real-world applications. Overall, effective implementation requires sustained teacher preparation, adequate resources, administrative support, collaboration, and manageable workloads to improve instructional delivery and student learning outcomes.

The study recommends strengthening targeted professional development and mentorship for both novice and experienced teachers, conducting regular and comprehensive MATATAG Curriculum training, and ensuring the availability of updated instructional materials and teaching resources. School administrators should address workload and professional well-being by redistributing tasks, streamlining administrative processes, minimizing non-teaching responsibilities, and providing appropriate support personnel. Continued support for technology integration, collaborative learning, formative assessment, and other innovative instructional strategies should also be provided through adequate technological infrastructure and digital resources. Furthermore, administrators and stakeholders should actively involve teachers in decision-making, sustain mentoring and collaborative learning communities, and provide the necessary institutional support to improve instructional quality and curriculum implementation.

The study was limited to the experiences of Junior High School teachers at MNCHS during School Year 2024–2025, specifically those directly involved in implementing the MATATAG Curriculum. It did not include the perspectives of students, parents, or administrators and was geographically confined to MNCHS in Masbate City. Consequently, the findings reflect the specific institutional and local conditions of the school and may not be fully generalizable to other schools, divisions, or regions with different contextual circumstances.

5. Compliance with ethical standards

The authors declare no conflict of interest. The study observed ethical standards for human-participant research through informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and secure handling of responses. Necessary institutional approvals were obtained prior to data collection, and participants were informed of the study's purpose and their right to withdraw at any time without consequence.

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