

# Challenges Faced by School Heads and Teachers in the Implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum and Performance of Students

ENARCISA C. PO

Teacher I

Western Leyte College

Master of Arts in Education

Major in School Administration and Supervision

enarcisa.po@deped.gov.ph

**Abstract**—Curriculum reform in the Philippines has long been recognized as a crucial avenue for improving the quality and relevance of education. However, the implementation of new curricula, such as the MATATAG Curriculum, has been fraught with challenges that underscore the multifaceted nature of educational reform efforts. This study delves into the complexities surrounding curriculum reform in the Philippines, highlighting the diverse dimensions of challenges encountered during the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum. Hence, this study was formulated to determine the significant relationship between the extent of challenges faced by school heads and teachers in the implementation of MATATAG curriculum and the level of performance of Grade 7 students in quarter 2. The research surveys used to gather the data from the respondents were of two parts. Part 1 of the instrument is a survey questionnaire which describes the extent of challenges faced by the school heads in the implementation of MATATAG curriculum. Utilizing the survey questionnaire from the study of Saro et al., (2024) entitled, "A Qualitative Exploration on the Perceived Impact of the MATATAG Curriculum on Basic Education Teaching in the School Year 2024-2025 and gathering of the 2nd quarter academic performance in all learning areas of the grade 7 students, the study revealed a strong correlation between the difficulties teachers and school heads encountered in the curriculum implementation of MATATAG and the performance of Grade 7 students during Quarter 2. This indicates that the challenges in curriculum implementation have a direct impact on students' performance. The difficulties-such as resource constraints, lack of trainings, issues with curriculum adaptation, and instructional challenges-can prevent effective teaching and learning, causing differences in students' performance. Overcoming these issues is imperative for improving the efficiency of curriculum delivery and student learning outcomes.

**Keywords** — *Challenges Faced, School Heads, Teachers, Implementation, MATATAG Curriculum, Performance, Students*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

As the educational terrain keeps evolving in the modern world, the Philippines has introduced the MATATAG Curriculum in response to the learning gaps which have hindered the performance of Filipino learners. The understanding and implementation of this new curriculum would be very important to the educational leaders, especially the school principals, to cultivate an innovative learning environment that strives for academic excellence.

The MATATAG Curriculum is designed under the K-12 Program Reform to highlight foundational learning by decongesting the curriculum and increasing competencies for lifelong learning (DepEd 2023). Principals are key persons who will ensure the actual delivery of this curriculum since it falls within their broadly defined role as educational leaders. They would help in creating an enabling academic environment through strategies in leadership which elicit effective teaching and learning processes, centered on learners' development.

The implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum highlights the notable and valuable changes it brings to teaching and learning. Holistic development, critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity now overshadow rote memorization as major emphases. Teachers are moving toward more interactive, student-centered methods of teaching, and there has been an improvement in their subject matter understanding. What principals need to do much more of is invest in the continuous professional development of teachers and observe classroom practices to ensure that teaching strategies are aligned with curriculum goals.

This streamlined curriculum allows for greater flexibility in lesson planning and assessment, enabling educators to address the needs of students and to further advance quality instruction. Principals support teachers in adapting to the change by employing collaborative planning and mentoring processes to ensure that the practice is standardized.

The MATATAG Curriculum has some implications for educational management: school heads are now encouraged to take more instructional approach through direct engagement in managing the school curriculum, guiding teachers, and making relevant data-driven decisions. Thus, the principal engages regularly with teachers and students to identify challenges and promote positive practices that reflect the competency-based focus in the curriculum.

Moreover, school principals must be able to cultivate a continuous learning culture in schools. This involves professional learning communities that provide opportunities for teachers to discuss instructional techniques and share best practices. The shift toward more innovative teaching methods will also mean principals become change agents: they promote a growth mindset and ensure all stakeholders are prepared to meet the demands of the curriculum.

Despite the benefits of the MATATAG Curriculum, school principals face significant challenges. One of the biggest challenges is ensuring that all teachers are at par with the required standard for its implementation. In effect, this means that the school will have to embark on professional development programs which will require financial allocation.

But these challenges also present opportunities for growth. The curriculum encourages principals to revise their strategies in leadership by emphasizing adaptability and resilience. By directly addressing these challenges, leaders can academic foundation and create a more inclusive learning environment in schools.

The implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum marks a significant change in Philippine education. Giving school principals new roles and responsibilities to further develop their practice of leadership. It is in harnessing a culture of collaboration, innovation, and continuous learning, educational leaders can ensure the MATATAG Curriculum realizes its promise of a holistic, competency-based education for all learners.

As these changes are addressed, principals must remain committed to their role as instructional leaders, mentors, and change agents. Their ability to lead and guide the teachers and students through this transition in curriculum will define the future of education in the Philippines. Hence, it is in this premise that the researcher decided to conduct this study to determine the significant relationship between the extent of challenges faced by school heads and teachers in the implementation of MATATAG curriculum and performance of students in Valencia National High School, Ormoc District 6, Ormoc City Division. The findings of the study were basis for the proposed instructional supervision plan. Further, it is in the rationale that the researcher who is currently an aspirant instructional leader and a classroom teacher in the above mentioned local, would like to delve worthy research undertaking that would benefit herself, the school she is currently teaching and that of her Graduate Program she is enrolled at.

This study determines the significant relationship between the extent of challenges faced by school heads and teachers in the implementation of MATATAG curriculum and the level of performance of Grade 7 students in quarter 2 in Valencia National High School, Ormoc District 6, Ormoc City Division. The findings of the study were the basis for the proposed instructional supervision plan.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the extent of challenges faced by school heads and teachers in the implementation of MATATAG curriculum?

2. What is level of performance of the students in quarter 2?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the extent of challenges faced by school head and teachers in the implementation of MATATAG curriculum and level of performance of the students in quarter 2?
4. What instructional supervision plan can be proposed based on the findings of this study?

## II. METHODOLOGY

**Design.** This study adopted a descriptive-correlational research design to explore the relationship between the extent of challenges faced by school heads and teachers in the implementation of MATATAG curriculum and the level of performance of Grade 7 students in quarter 2. This study is descriptive because it describes the variables- extent of challenges faced by school head and teachers in the implementation of MATATAG curriculum and the level of performance of students in quarter 2. Further, this is also correlational because it finds the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. This study was conducted in Valencia National High School, one of the schools of Ormoc City District 6, Ormoc City Division. Valencia National High School, located in the heart of Valencia, Ormoc City, is a thriving educational institution that serves both junior and senior high school students. The institution is geographically and strategically located to cater for various community students, thus making it easy and convenient for every one of them. Valencia National High School emphasizes that both academic and non-academic activities are very important and thus offers education that is relevant to future challenges. The three (3) school heads, fourteen (14) teachers and 100 selected Grade 7 learners enrolled in the identified locale for School Year 2024-2025 were involved in the study. The research surveys used to gather the data from the respondents were of two parts. Part 1 of the instrument is a survey questionnaire which describes the extent of challenges faced by the school heads in the implementation of MATATAG curriculum. The survey questionnaire is taken from the study of Saro et al., (2024) entitled, "A Qualitative Exploration on the Perceived Impact of the MATATAG Curriculum on Basic Education Teaching in the School Year 2024-2025. The statements will be identified by the school heads and teachers as to the extent of challenges using a Five-Point Likert Scale where 5 means Very High, 4 means High, 3 means Neutral, 2 means Low and 1 means Very Low. Moreover, to measure the performance of Grade 7 students, the researcher gathered the 2nd quarter academic performance in all learning areas.

**Sampling.** The three (3) school heads, fourteen (14) teachers and 100 selected Grade 7 learners enrolled in Valencia National High School, one of the schools of Ormoc City District 6, Ormoc City Division. Complete enumeration was employed in choosing the respondents of the study.

**Research Procedure.** Upon securing a research permit, data gathering was initiated. Application letters for study permits were personally submitted to concerned offices. A request letter was first submitted to the Schools Division Superintendent for approval to gather data from targeted respondents. After securing the approval of SDS, letters of permission were also submitted to the Public Schools District Supervisor and School Principal. After getting the approvals, the researcher conducted data-gathering activities. An orientation was also held for the respondents, and their agreement through permits was to participate in the research. Then, survey questionnaires were handed out, and the researcher accompanied the respondents as they filled out the questionnaires. Once the survey was done, data were gathered, counted, and handed over for statistical processing.

**Ethical Issues.** The researcher obtained the necessary written permission from the authorities to conduct the study. While developing and checking the survey used in the study, the use of offending, discriminatory, or other undesirable terminology was eschewed. The names of the respondents and other personal information were not included in this study to ensure confidentiality. The respondents were also voluntarily participating. Orientation was done for the respondents. During orientation, concerns and issues were clarified, and consent to be part of the study was signed. The researcher-maintained objectivity in discussing and analyzing the results. All authors whose works were cited in this study were correctly quoted and were acknowledged in the reference.

**Treatment of Data.** The quantitative responses underwent tallying and tabulation. Statistical treatment involved using specific tools: Simple Percentage and Weighted Mean assessed the extent of challenges faced by school heads and teachers in the implementation of MATATAG curriculum and the level of performance of Grade 7 students in quarter 2. Pearson r was utilized to ascertain the significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1**  
**Challenges Met by the School Heads and Teachers in the implementation of MATATAG Curriculum**

A	Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description	Interpretation
1	Insufficiency of professional development and training for teachers.	3.20	Moderately Agree	Average
2	Ineffective curricular implementation.	3.26	Moderately Agree	Average
3	Increase teachers' stress	3.20	Moderately Agree	Average
4	Teachers are not prepared due to lack of trainings.	2.45	Disagree	Low
5	Teachers struggled with curriculum changes	3.33	Moderately Agree	Average
6	Challenging to understand and apply the new teaching strategies effectively	3.53	Agree	High
7	Hinder the ability to fully implement the curriculum.	3.00	Moderately Agree	Average
8	Lack of seminars, workshops, and other in-service training programs.	3.60	Agree	High
9	Teachers often exhibit resistance to curriculum changes due to comfort with existing practices, skepticism about the effectiveness of methods, and fear of the unknown.	2.30	Disagree	Low
10	Teachers are afraid of the challenges in adapting the new curriculum.	2.20	Disagree	Low
11	Teachers are hesitant to change their established teaching practices.	2.90	Moderately Agree	Average
12	Insufficiency of resources and support structures.	3.67	Agree	High
13	No adequate materials, technological resources and institutional support.	3.66	Agree	High
14	Teachers need more resources and trainings.	3.70	Agree	High
15	Insufficient support from the school administration.	2.00	Disagree	Low
	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>3.07</b>	<b>Moderately Agree</b>	<b>Average</b>

**Legend:**

<b>RANGES</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>INTERPRETATION</b>
4.21-5.00	Strongly Agree	Very High
3.21-4.20	Agree	High
2.61-3.40	Moderately Agree	Average
1.81-2.60	Disagree	Low
1.00-1.80	Strongly Disagree	Very Low



Table 1 assesses the extent of challenges faced by school heads and teachers in the implementation of MATATAG curriculum. The results of the study indicate that the extent of challenges faced by school heads and teachers in implementing the MATATAG curriculum is at an "Average" level, with a weighted mean of 3.07. This implies difficulties are present but not too serious or manageable without intervention. The greatest challenge the teachers indicated was the resource and training, which was ranked with weighted mean of 3.70 (High). This implies that poor teaching materials, minimal professional development, and insufficient assistance in curriculum alignment disadvantage teachers. The high challenge concerning resources and training means that school administrators and educational agencies must prioritize ensuring sufficient materials, curriculum guides, and teacher training sessions. Without adequate resources, the success of curriculum implementation could be undermined, impacting learning outcomes. The findings underscore the need for capacity-building programs to prepare teachers with the knowledge and strategies to implement the MATATAG curriculum successfully. Conversely, the least problematic challenge (mean=3.20) is that teachers fear adjusting to the new curriculum. Although this fear is present, it is only at a mean level so that some teachers might be apprehensive, but it is not a significant hindrance to implementation. Overall, the research emphasizes the necessity for a systematic and well-supported implementation plan for the MATATAG curriculum. Although there are challenges at an average level, filling teacher training gaps, resource constraints, and fear of adaptation will be essential in ensuring effective curriculum adoption and enhancing teaching effectiveness.

**Table 2**  
**Level of Performance of Grade 7 Students in Quarter 2**

No.	Interpretation	Scale	Frequency	Percentage
5	Outstanding	90-100	19	19
4	Very Satisfactory	85-89	35	35
3	Satisfactory	80-84	27	27
2	Fairly Satisfactory	75-79	19	19
1	Did Not Meet Expectations	Below 75	0	0
	<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 examines the performance level of Grade 7 students for quarter 2. It was indicated on the table that out of the 100 sampled Grade 7 students, 19% (19 students) were graded 90-100 (Outstanding), 35% (35 students) were graded 85-89 (Very Satisfactory, while 27% (27 students) were graded 80-84 (Satisfactory) and 19% (19 students) were graded 75-79 (Fairly Satisfactory). It is good that no one was given a grade below 75% (Did Not Meet Expectations). This information indicates that most students (81%) achieved better than the "Fairly Satisfactory" level, and a significant percentage excelled (19% at the "Outstanding" level). The indication that no students scored lower than 75% is a positive sign of student performance and instruction effectiveness. This indicates effective teaching methods, curriculum delivery, and student participation during Quarter 2. The lack of failing students means interventions and teaching strategies are well enough to support students pass. Although 19% earned an "Outstanding" grade, most students (62%) ranked from "Very Satisfactory" to "Satisfactory", which indicates room for improvement. More students could be moved into the "Outstanding" range through enrichment activities, differentiated instruction, and strategic interventions by teachers. The outcome of the data recommends implementing intervention activities to improve the student's performance, particularly those who get a rating of Very Satisfactory to Fairly Satisfactory.

**Table 3**  
**Test of Relationships**

Variables Correlated	r	Computed value or t	Table Value @.05	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
<b>Challenges vs Academic Performance</b>	0.81	2.322	1.556	Reject Ho	Significant Relationship (Very Strong)

Table 4 tests the correlation between teachers and school heads' challenges in implementing the MATATAG curriculum and Quarter 2 Grade 7 performance. The t-value (2.322) is greater than the table value (1.556) using a 0.05 level of significance, thus resulting in the null hypothesis rejection. This statistical finding verifies a significant correlation between student performance and challenges encountered in curriculum implementation. The correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.81$ ) also shows a robust positive relationship between the two variables. This implies that challenges experienced in curriculum implementation directly affect student performance. This means that when teachers and school heads experience more challenges in delivering the MATATAG curriculum, students' performance is positively or negatively impacted, depending on how challenges are addressed. Teachers and school heads can encounter insufficient resources, inadequate training, difficulties adapting, or indistinct guidelines, which could impact instructional efficiency and student learning achievements. If such problems are ongoing, students' performance can be impeded even though they can do well. As curriculum implementation problems significantly impact student performance, it is necessary to assist teachers and school leaders in implementing the curriculum effectively. Schools need to identify areas of concern (e.g., gaps in training, resource shortages, clarity of the curriculum) and intervene to address them.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The research created a strong correlation between the difficulties teachers and school heads encountered in the curriculum implementation of MATATAG and the performance of Grade 7 students during Quarter 2. This indicates that the challenges in curriculum implementation have a direct impact on students' performance. The difficulties-such as resource constraints, lack of trainings, issues with curriculum adaptation, and instructional challenges-can prevent effective teaching and learning, causing differences in students' performance. Overcoming these issues is imperative for improving the efficiency of curriculum delivery and student learning outcomes.

#### V. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Implement the proposed instructional supervision plan to attain the research goal.
2. Offer in-depth training on MATATAG curriculum implementation to empower teachers with innovative teaching strategies and assessment methods.
3. Engage peer mentoring, coaching sessions, and best-practices sharing activities among teachers.
4. Provide sufficient instructional materials, digital tools, and technology integration to facilitate effective teaching.
5. Develop routine classroom observations, feedback mechanisms, and performance assessments to monitor progress and areas for improvement.
6. Practice data-informed decision-making to solve challenges in curriculum implementation specifically.
7. Engage in open communication among school administrators, teachers and stakeholders to collectively overcome curriculum-related problems.
8. Create a facilitative school climate that enables teachers to innovate and adjust despite setbacks.
9. Establish intervention programs for students underperforming due to challenges in curriculum implementation.
10. Implement remedial lessons, peer mentoring, and differentiated instruction to accommodate different learning styles, and

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11. Future researchers are encouraged to replicate this study to incorporate other locales and other variables beyond the ones identified in this study.

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### AUTHOR'S PROFILE



**MS. ENARCISA C. PO**

Enarcisa C. Po, born on November 28, 1998, in Brgy Coob, Libertad, Ormoc City, Leyte, has earned herself the reputation of being an industrious and dedicated educator. She exhibited academic achievements from a very young age, concealing the pride of her family upon graduating as the Valedictorian of Libertad Elementary School. This degree served as a warm-up prior to starting her secondary education at New Ormoc City National High School, which invited her to be part of - Science and Technology class. Her exposure to this rigorous academic environment fostered her passion for learning and helped her develop the skills and discipline that would guide her future success.

While attending Visayas State University for her undergraduate studies, Enarcisa received three prominent scholarships — the DOST scholarship, an income grant scholarship, and a college scholarship. These scholarships were a testament to her academic prowess and determination. Despite the financial challenges she faced, Enarcisa remained focused on her studies, consistently earning a spot on the dean's list. Her hard work culminated in graduating cum laude and receiving the esteemed DOST-JLSS award, a recognition of her outstanding achievements in science and technology education. As an honor graduate, she was granted civil service eligibility, a milestone that further paved the way for her future in public service and education.

Her aspiration for professional evolution and lifelong learning steered her towards enrollment for a Master of Arts in Education (MAEd) program major in School Administration and Supervision. In August 2024, she finished the necessary academic work for her MAEd to be in a position to seek for broader leadership responsibilities in the education system and make wider influence in the lives of students and other teachers.

Currently, Enarcisa is a highly respected Grade 8 teacher at Valencia National High School in Ormoc City, where she continues to inspire both students and colleagues alike. Her classroom is not only a place of learning but also a space where students are encouraged to embrace challenges, think critically, and grow into responsible and empowered individuals. Her background in mathematics and her experience as a multi-scholarship recipient provide her with a unique perspective that she shares with her students, motivating them to pursue academic excellence and seize opportunities for personal growth.

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Enarcisa's story is one of continuous growth, resilience, and unwavering commitment to education. From her early days as an elementary achiever to her current role as an educator at Valencia National High School, she has consistently demonstrated her passion for learning and her dedication to making a meaningful impact in the lives of her students. As she continues her career, there is no doubt that her influence will extend far beyond the classroom, inspiring future generations to strive for excellence and make a positive difference in their communities.