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An Assessment of Teaching Strategies in Multigrade Classrooms: Basis for An Intervention Plan

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ABSTRACT

Embracing a variety of teaching strategies fosters deeper understanding and ensures that learning is inclusive, engaging, and enduring. This research assessed the implemented teaching strategies in teaching multigraders and their performance of learners in the District of Valencia, Division of Bohol, as a basis for an intervention plan. A mixed-method design, combining quantitative descriptive-correlational and qualitative approaches, was employed. Data were gathered from 21 multigrade teachers through a survey questionnaire using complete enumeration. Findings revealed that there is no significant relationship between the respondents' perception of how frequently certain teaching strategies were used, specifically group-based learning, integration of technology, and classroom management, and the average academic performance of learners. This suggests that while these strategies may be commonly employed, their usage alone does not necessarily translate into improved student outcomes. In contrast, the study found a moderate and statistically significant relationship between differentiated instruction as a teaching strategy and learners' academic performance. This indicates that when teachers tailor their instruction to meet the diverse needs of students, it can positively influence academic achievement. Challenges identified include time constraints, complex curricula, limited resources, diverse learner profiles, and emotional demands. Despite these challenges, multi-grade teachers reported positive outcomes when strategies were thoughtfully applied, enhancing engagement and learning experiences. The results highlight the potential of multi-grade teaching when supported by well-designed strategies, underscoring the need for an intervention plan focused on strengthening differentiated instruction and addressing teachers' challenges.

Keywords: *Teaching Strategies, Multigrade Teaching, Challenges, Group-based Learning, Integration of Technology, Classroom Management, Differentiated Instruction, Time Constraints, Complex Curricula, Limited Resources, Diverse Learners, Emotional Demands*

INTRODUCTION

The teaching and learning process is a dynamic exchange of knowledge between educators and students. It involves a structured approach in which the teacher defines learning goals, designs appropriate instructional materials, and applies effective strategies to facilitate student understanding and engagement (Munna & Kalam, 2021). Educators should employ a variety of instructional strategies to accommodate the diverse ways in which students learn and process information (Abulhul, 2021). The greater the variety of teaching strategies the teachers employ, the more assured and impactful their teaching becomes, leading to more meaningful and lasting student learning (Killen & O'Toole, 2023). Thus, by embracing this diversity, teachers not only foster deeper understanding but also ensure that learning is inclusive, engaging, and

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enduring. Teaching strategy refers to a carefully planned method or approach used by educators to facilitate learning, achieve instructional goals, and enhance student performance (Müller, 2025). It entails the deliberate planning and arrangement of instructional activities, resources, and interactions that are suited to the specific learning environment and the unique needs of students. According to Naparan, et.al, (2021), there are several successful techniques that multigrade teachers use to enhance the abilities and skills of the learners that bring them to compete in big schools, which include classroom management, collaborative learning, using differentiated instruction, connecting the teaching to real-life situations, integrating technology, and the flexibility of the teacher. These teaching strategies can be more beneficial not only to the teacher but also to the learners.

Several teaching strategies are used across classes to promote effective instruction. One of which is Cooperative learning, which involves students working collaboratively in small groups to support each other's learning and enhance their academic performance (Adl-Amini et al., 2023). Cooperative learning fosters peer interaction, enabling more knowledgeable students to support and share information with those who need additional help, thereby enhancing learning for all (Erbil, 2020). A study by Nguyen and Oanh (2025) indicates that cooperative learning significantly improves student engagement across cognitive, emotional, and behavioral domains.

Another classroom strategy is differentiated instruction, also known as DI. DI is a teaching method in which educators intentionally adapt content, teaching techniques, materials, and learning tasks to meet the varied needs of individual learners and small groups, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to succeed (Pozas et al., 2019). Differentiated learning is an instructional approach that adapts teaching methods to students' readiness levels, interests, and learning preferences to optimize educational outcomes (Qorib, 2024). Therefore, DI is an adaptive teaching approach that addresses diverse learner needs by modifying content, methods, and tasks to ensure all students achieve success.

One significant educational innovation to improve methods of instruction and education in the twenty-first century is the use of technology in the classroom (Backfisch et al., 2021). The swift advancement of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) has turned students into digital learners, prompting educators to incorporate technology into their teaching methods, an effort that greatly depends on teachers' attitudes, knowledge, and technical skills for successful implementation (Akram et al., 2022). Technology has been widely recognized as an essential component of modern education, helping to improve student learning outcomes and the quality of instruction (Zhao et al., 2024). Thus, technology integration has become a vital educational innovation in the 21st century, enhancing instructional quality and student learning outcomes, while requiring teachers' positive attitudes, knowledge, and skills for effective implementation. In a multigrade classroom, technology is highly applicable because it supports individualized, flexible learning, which is essential in a setting where students of different grade levels and abilities learn together. In addition, technology aids classroom management by enabling independent learning while the teacher focuses on another group.

On the other hand, students cannot learn if they are not engaged and paying attention to the instruction. Therefore, successful classroom instruction is essential for effective classroom management to maintain appropriate student behavior, engagement, and, subsequently, academic achievement (Gage & MacSuga-Gage, n.d.). Effective classroom management is a reflection of teachers' multifaceted, highly regarded ability to create and uphold in their classroom acceptable norms of productive communication between teachers and students, to inspire students to collaborate with one another, and to successfully apply the best teaching practices in accordance with each student's unique learning needs (Koutrouba, 2020). In essence, effective classroom management serves as the foundation for meaningful teaching and learning, fostering an environment where student engagement, cooperation, and academic success can thrive.

Education should equip students with the skills they need to lead healthy, productive, and meaningful lives (World Development Report, 2018). The right to education seeks to guarantee that everyone has access to quality learning opportunities throughout their lifetime. Despite significant progress

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over the last decade, millions are still denied their right to education, and learning opportunities remain unequally distributed (UNESCO, 2017). The multigrade program was launched as a systematic and viable means of meeting the goal of education and providing Education for All (Scribd & Cervantes, 2011). UNESCO (2015), meanwhile, has defined Multigrade teaching as the teaching of learners from different grade levels and diverse age groups, cultures, and abilities. In addition, Saifuddin et al. (2024) refer to Multigrade teaching as the practice of instructing students from two or more grade levels within the same classroom, a method commonly employed in both developed and developing countries.

According to Membreve (2019), many newly hired teachers are often assigned to multigrade classrooms, even though they did not encounter this setup during their teacher training. Naparan & Castaneda (2021) observed that some teachers are still not prepared in teaching multigrade classes, multigrade allowances may not be enough to compensate for expenses, stressful work environments due to the physical condition of the classrooms and buildings, language barriers, difficulties in classroom management, lack of needed materials and resources, risks in travelling to school assignments, workload, absenteeism, lack of stakeholders' support, and lack of trainings. This can present unique challenges for both teachers and students, as teachers need to manage the varying needs and abilities of students across different grade levels while still delivering a high-quality education.

Another challenge faced by multigrade teachers in far-flung schools is difficulty with classroom and time management, failure to consider the diversity of learners, inadequacy in teaching multiple grades, and burnout in teaching (Rondero & Casupanan, 2024). A study conducted by Daga (2021) revealed that multigrade teachers are experiencing challenges in multigrade teaching, particularly in lesson planning, utilizing resource materials, assessment of learning, management of teaching-learning experiences, monitoring of learning performance, and submitting reports.

This study was initiated, in part, due to the researcher's personal and professional background in multigrade education. As a graduate of a multigrade education program and a current multigrade teacher with experience teaching across multiple grade levels, the researcher has developed a deep understanding of the unique challenges and dynamics of teaching multiple grade levels simultaneously. Motivated by a desire to enhance student learning outcomes, she seeks to investigate the relationship between the extent of teaching strategy use and learners' academic performance. The findings of this study will serve as a foundation for developing an intervention plan to improve instructional practices in multigrade classrooms. Furthermore, the researcher is driven by a commitment to engage in meaningful research that not only supports her professional growth but also contributes positively to the school where she currently teaches and fulfills the academic requirements of her graduate program.

Theoretical Background

This study presumes that multigrade classrooms with mixed-age learners can foster meaningful learning when teachers adopt strategies that promote active engagement, collaboration, and learner independence. Such classrooms thrive when students are given opportunities to participate in diverse activities, explore their surroundings, and learn from one another, leading to deeper understanding. Additionally, a 2024 study in the Philippines reported that differentiated instruction, collaborative learning, and flexible groupings were perceived by teachers as highly effective and strongly correlated with students earning "Very Satisfactory" GPAs (Ares-Ferreirós et al., 2025). By acknowledging learners' varied strengths and preferences, educators who design adaptable, inclusive lessons are better equipped to address these differences. Additionally, through planning that provides multiple ways to access content and demonstrate learning, and by tailoring instruction to different ability levels, multigrade settings can become supportive environments where all students succeed.

The assumption is grounded in constructivist principles and learner-centered approaches. Drawing from Vygotsky and Bruner's emphasis on social interaction and exploration, as well as Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory, it is assumed that students in multigrade settings benefit from active learning

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strategies, varied tasks, and opportunities for peer teaching (Olwan, 2025). These approaches allow learners to construct knowledge through collaboration and personal engagement while accommodating diverse cognitive strengths. Furthermore, the inherent diversity in multigrade classrooms aligns with Tomlinson's Differentiated Instruction framework, suggesting that proactive planning and flexible teaching methods can address individual differences effectively (Tomlinson, 2001). Therefore, when teachers integrate constructivist strategies, multiple intelligences-based activities, and differentiated instruction, multigrade classrooms are likely to become inclusive environments that enhance student engagement and achievement.

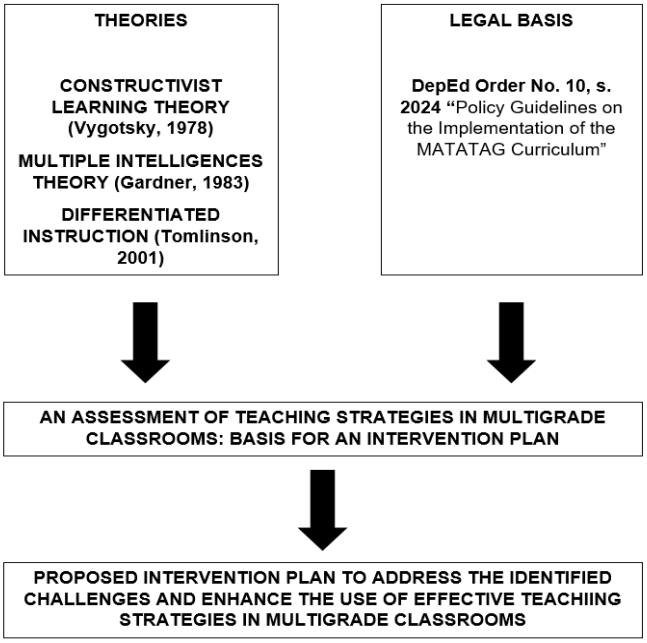

Figure 1. Schematic Diagram of the Theoretical Background

Classrooms with mixed-age groups align with the ideas of influential thinkers like Vygotsky and Bruner, who emphasized that people develop knowledge and understanding through social interactions and by exploring the environments around them with curiosity (Parfitt et al., 2025). According to constructivist learning theory, students actively create their own knowledge via interactions and experiences and learning is viewed as a process of individual interpretation of the world that is influenced by social context, past knowledge, and active participation (Suhendi et al., 2021). A study emphasizes active learning, varied assignments, and peer teaching in rural multigrade science classes, all of which are essential components of constructivist design (De Borja et al., 2020).

In addition, Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory proposed that human intelligence is not a single, fixed trait but a pluralistic collection of distinct intelligences, each representing different ways of processing information and solving problems (Kornhaber, 2019). Everybody has strengths and limitations in different intelligences; thus, teachers should choose the most effective way to teach the content based on the subject matter and each student's unique learning style. Building learning centers around multiple intelligences allowed students to work autonomously and actively participate (Bagay, 2025). Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory supports a flexible, inclusive, and learner-centered environment that accommodates diverse age groups and learning needs within a single classroom, making it applicable to multigrade teaching.

Moreover, the multigrade classroom structure naturally facilitates Differentiated Instruction (DI), with Tomlinson's (2001) framework playing a crucial role in accommodating varying skill levels. DI is a

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pedagogical approach designed to address individual differences within the classroom (Qorib, 2024). This approach allows teachers to proactively plan and adjust their teaching methods, content, and assessments to meet students' diverse learning needs, interests, and abilities. In a multigrade setting, this means offering varied levels of challenge and support, ensuring that all learners can access and engage with the curriculum meaningfully. By doing so, teachers create an inclusive learning environment where each student can thrive, regardless of their grade level or prior knowledge.

These theories are aligned with DepEd Order No. 10, s. 2024, entitled "Policy Guidelines on the Implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum." As stated in DO no. 10, s. 2024, the MATATAG Curriculum shall uphold inclusive education as the core principle of the K to 12 Basic Education Program. Inclusivity is reinforced by other curriculum principles and standards such as learner-centered methodologies, developmentally appropriate practices, cultural sensitivity, relevance, gender sensitivity, and contextualized approaches. These elements embody the constructivist approach, encouraging active, experiential learning. By addressing students' varied needs, backgrounds, and readiness levels, the curriculum supports differentiated instruction and embraces multiple intelligences by recognizing and valuing diverse ways of learning and expressing understanding.

Therefore, integrating mixed-age groups in multigrade classrooms creates an environment that supports active, collaborative, and meaningful learning. Students benefit from opportunities to engage in varied tasks, explore their surroundings, and learn through peer interaction, which promotes deeper understanding and knowledge construction (Parfitt et al., 2025). Flexible and inclusive strategies, such as differentiated instruction and activities that cater to diverse learning strengths, further enhance engagement and achievement (Tomlinson, 2001). These approaches reflect the principles outlined in DepEd Order No. 10, s. 2024, which emphasizes inclusivity, learner-centered methodologies, and contextualized practices as core elements of the MATATAG Curriculum, ensuring equitable and quality education for all learners (Department of Education, 2024).

This study assessed the teaching strategies used in multigrade classrooms and their relationship to learners' academic performance in the District of Valencia, Bohol Division, for School Year 2024–2025. It described the profile of respondents and examined the extent of teaching strategies such as group-based learning, differentiated instruction, technology integration, and classroom management. The study also determined learners' academic performance, identified challenges encountered by teachers, and analyzed the relationship between teaching strategies and performance. Based on the findings, an intervention plan was proposed to enhance effective teaching practices in multigrade classrooms.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a mixed quantitative and qualitative research design, which was considered suitable for the investigation. The design involved conducting a normative survey via Google Forms to collect personal data from respondents and assess their teaching strategies. Moreover, an open-ended survey questionnaire was also utilized to identify the challenges they face as multigrade teachers. The aim was to reduce the burdens they experience as multigrade teachers in their respective schools. The qualitative aspect of the research involves exploring the problems respondents encounter when implementing teaching strategies in multigrade classrooms. Themes were identified in participants' responses to the short-answer survey.

Flow of the Study

The study followed an Input–Process–Output (IPO) framework. The input included respondents' profiles, teaching strategies (group-based learning, differentiated instruction, technology integration, and classroom management), challenges encountered, and learners' academic performance. The process

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involved securing permissions, distributing online survey questionnaires, collecting data, and analyzing patterns and relationships. The output was a comprehensive assessment of teaching practices and challenges, leading to the development of an intervention plan aimed at improving teaching effectiveness and learner outcomes in multigrade classrooms.

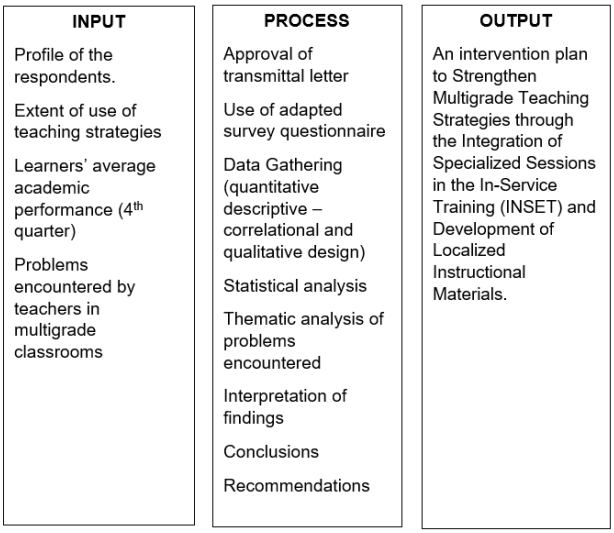

Figure 2. Flow of the Study

Environment

This research was conducted in all multigrade schools within the District of Valencia, under the Division of Bohol. Valencia is a municipality in the southern part of Bohol, characterized by its mountainous, rural terrain. Most multigrade schools in this district are located in upland communities, where access to educational resources and infrastructure is often limited. These schools typically operate with minimal facilities, usually having only three classrooms, each shared by two different grade levels. This setup reflects the realities of rural education, where limited teaching staff and classroom space require teachers to manage multiple grade levels simultaneously. The study's focus on these schools is particularly important, as it aims to assess the teaching strategies used in such challenging environments and to develop an intervention plan that addresses the unique needs of multigrade teachers and learners in geographically isolated, resource-constrained settings.

Respondents

The respondents of this study were 21 multigrade teachers from eight elementary schools in the District of Valencia, Division of Bohol. These schools, located in upland communities, implement multigrade teaching as a practical approach to address limited resources and small student populations. Specifically, Adlawan, Botong, and Tausi-on Elementary Schools each contributed 2 teachers (10%), while Anoyon, Limokon, Pangi-an, Taculing, and Tipasak Elementary Schools each provided 3 teachers (14%). This distribution ensured that all multigrade schools in the district were represented, thereby offering a comprehensive perspective on the teaching strategies employed and the challenges encountered. The full participation of all multigrade teachers (100%) in the district strengthened the study's reliability and provided a solid basis for assessing current practices and formulating an intervention plan responsive to the needs of multigrade classrooms.

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Research Instrument

This academic investigation utilized a four-part, structured questionnaire, adapted from the study titled "Challenges Met and Coping Mechanisms of Teachers in Teaching Multigrade Classes and Performance of Pupils" by Onde (2023), to gather comprehensive data from multigrade teachers. Part I collected the respondents' profiles, including demographic and professional information such as age, gender, educational attainment, years of teaching experience, grade levels handled, and IPCR rating, which helped contextualize their responses. Part II was focused on teaching strategies, using descriptive statistics to analyze the frequency, variety, and effectiveness of teaching strategies employed in multigrade classrooms. Part III collected the learners' average performance in the 4th quarter of the school year 2024-2025, using the Pearson r Correlation Coefficient to assess the significant relationship between the teaching strategies and learners' performance. Part IV explored the challenges of multigrade teachers, allowing them to share personal experiences, difficulties, and innovative practices, using Thematic Analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006) to analyze the data gathered in this section.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher furnished a transmittal letter signed by the thesis adviser, then secured a letter of intent to conduct the study signed by the school's district supervisor of the District of Valencia. Afterward, a letter of intent for the respondents was attached to the survey questionnaires and signed by the researcher, the adviser, and the school heads. After securing the letter for approval, the researcher prepared the approved survey questionnaires in Google Forms. A research questionnaire and an open-ended survey were used to collect the data via Google Forms. The researcher respectfully obtained the names of the teachers assigned to multigrade classes from the assistant to the school district supervisor. The questionnaire was distributed to all participants via Facebook Messenger. Part I data pertaining to participant profiles were processed using descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage. The data obtained in Part II were computed using descriptive statistics. In Part III, the data obtained were computed using the Pearson r Correlation Coefficient. In Part IV, the data gathered were transcribed and analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) Thematic Analysis procedure.

Treatment of Data

Frequency count. Simple frequency distribution table is used to describe the profile of the respondents.

$$\text{Weighted Mean} = \frac{\text{Sum of (data point * weight)}}{\text{Sum of weights}}$$

To determine the significant relationship between the extent of teaching strategies use and the learners' performance, the Pearson r Correlation Coefficient was used having the formula:

$$r = \frac{n(\sum xy) - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2]\,[n\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

Where:

N	=	number of pairs of score
$\sum xy$	=	sum of the products of paired score
$\sum x$	=	sum of x scores
$\sum y$	=	sum of y scores
$\sum x^2$	=	sum of squared x scores
$\sum y^2$	=	sum of squared y scores

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Scoring Procedure

The responses to the sets of questionnaires in sections one to three were tallied and tabulated. In section II, weights are assigned to the questionnaire scale for strategies used by teachers handling multigrade classes. The frequencies and percentages of responses on each scale were recorded. The following weights are assigned:

Weights	Range	Scales	Description
5	4.20 – 5.00	Very Frequently Used	The strategy is implemented between 80 - 100% of the time in teaching sessions, with consistent and intentional use.
4	3.40 – 4.19	Frequently Used	The strategy is used between 60 - 80% of the time in teaching sessions, though not always consistently or across all contexts.
3	2.60 – 3.39	Sometimes Used	The strategy is applied between 40 - 60% of the time in teaching sessions, depending on the lesson or classroom situation.
2	1.80 – 2.59	Rarely Used	The strategy is used between 20 - 40% of the time in teaching sessions or may only appear in specific or exceptional cases.
1	1.00 – 1.79	Not Used	The strategy is not used at all or 0 % of the time and is completely absent from teaching practices.

However, the data from open-ended survey questions were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) Thematic Analysis procedure, which involved transcribing and coding the data. The coded data were used to generate themes for review. The themes were used to create sub-themes to obtain the full meaning of the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile of The Respondents

The demographic context is essential for understanding the effectiveness of teaching strategies in multigrade settings and can serve as a foundational aspect in developing a targeted intervention plan to enhance educational outcomes in these unique classroom environments. As such, ongoing analysis of these demographic elements will be a critical component in assessing the efficacy and adaptability of instructional strategies tailored for multigrade classrooms.

Additionally, demographic data facilitate the detection of recurrent behaviors and trends within given groups, which, in turn, provides researchers with important information to decide which interventions and policies should be implemented.

Age and Gender

Age and gender are critical demographic variables that can influence teaching practices and professional experiences in multigrade classrooms. Age often correlates with years of teaching experience, which may affect a teacher's confidence, adaptability, and proficiency in implementing strategies such as differentiated instruction and technology integration. Similarly, gender can shape perspectives on classroom management, collaboration, and workload distribution, potentially impacting instructional approaches and learner engagement.

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Table 1. Age and Gender of the Respondents

Age (years old)	Gender				Total	
	Male		Female			
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
21 – 30	1	4.8	10	47.6	11	52.4
31 – 40	0	0	2	9.5	2	9.5
41 – 50	1	4.8	2	9.5	3	14.3
50 Above	1	4.8	4	19.0	5	23.8
Total	3	14.3	18	85.7	21	100
Average	35.4524					
Standard Deviation	13.00183					

Table 1 presents a comprehensive cross-tabulation of the respondents' demographic characteristics, specifically age and gender. The data indicate a notable gender disparity: 85.7% of respondents identify as female, highlighting the predominance of women in this sample. This imbalance may reflect broader societal trends in education and teaching professions, where female representation is often higher.

Furthermore, an examination of the age distribution reveals that 52.4% of the respondents fall within the age range of 21 to 30 years, suggesting a youthful cohort that may bring innovative perspectives to educational practices. Upadyaya et al. (2021) argues that young adults exhibit strong dedication, enthusiasm, and deep involvement in their work, reflecting a high level of maturity and responsibility. This dedication is seen in how deeply they engage with their tasks, suggesting that they are not just working for external rewards but are genuinely invested in what they do. Furthermore, their engagement tends to develop alongside overall well-being, indicating that they are well-equipped to balance both personal and professional demands effectively.

The overall average age of the respondents is 35.45 years, with a standard deviation of 13.00 years. This standard deviation indicates a relatively diverse age range among respondents, encompassing both younger and more experienced educators. The implications of this age diversity can be significant, as it may influence the teaching strategies employed in multigrade classrooms, thereby necessitating tailored approaches to meet the varied educational needs and preferences of both teachers and students.

Highest Educational Attainment

Highest educational attainment is a significant determinant of teacher effectiveness and instructional quality in multigrade classrooms. Research suggests that teachers with advanced academic qualifications possess stronger pedagogical knowledge, curriculum design skills, and the ability to implement evidence-based strategies that cater to diverse learners (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). By examining this factor, the study aims to understand how academic preparation influences teaching practices and learner outcomes, highlighting the importance of continuous professional development for multigrade educators.

Table 2. Highest Educational Attainment

Indicator		Frequency	Percent
	Bachelor's Degree	7	33.3
	Master's Degree (in progress)	13	61.9
	Master's Degree (completed)	1	4.8
	Total	21	100.0

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Table 2 presents a comprehensive overview of the educational attainment levels of the respondents in the study, indicating a significant inclination towards advanced academic achievement. Notably, 61.9% of respondents are actively pursuing a Master's degree, indicating a robust commitment to furthering their education and enhancing their professional competencies. Teachers pursue graduate education primarily to enhance their personal and professional growth and to establish academic careers (Sevim and Akın, 2021). This pursuit not only underscores the value placed on higher education in multigrade classrooms but also suggests that these educators are seeking to refine their pedagogical strategies and deepen their understanding of instructional methodologies. Following this, 33.3% of respondents hold a Bachelor's degree, indicating a foundational level of education that provides essential qualifications for teaching. This level of attainment demonstrates that a substantial number of educators possess the necessary credentials to conduct instructional activities and support diverse learners in a multigrade setting.

Conversely, a smaller segment of the respondents, comprising 4.8%, have achieved the highest level of educational attainment by obtaining a Master's degree. While this percentage may appear minimal compared to the previous categories, it is crucial to recognize that individuals at this educational level often possess specialized knowledge and expertise that can significantly influence instructional practices and the implementation of effective teaching strategies in multigrade classrooms.

Years of Teaching with Multigraders

Years of teaching experience in multigrade classrooms significantly influence a teacher's ability to manage diverse learners and implement effective instructional strategies. Experienced teachers often develop stronger classroom management skills, adaptability, and proficiency in differentiated instruction, which are essential in handling multiple grade levels simultaneously (Borko & Putnam, 2020). By examining this factor, the study aims to determine how accumulated experience impacts teaching effectiveness and learner performance, providing insights into the value of sustained practice and professional growth in multigrade education.

Table 3. Years of Teaching with Multigraders

Years	Frequency	Percent
0 – 5	18	85.7
6 – 10	3	14.3
11 – 15	0	0
21 above	0	0
Total	21	100.0
Mean	2.8571	
Standard Deviation	1.79682	

The quantitative assessment presented in Table 3 provides a comprehensive overview of the teaching experience in multigrade classrooms among the respondents in the study. The data indicate that a substantial majority, comprising 85.7% of the participants, possess relatively limited teaching experience in multigrade settings, specifically within the range of 0 to 5 years. This finding highlights a significant concentration of novice educators who may be in the early stages of developing their pedagogical approach and instructional strategies tailored to the complexities of multigrade teaching environments.

Conversely, a smaller proportion of respondents, encompassing the remaining 14.3%, exhibit a higher level of experience, categorized within the range of 6 to 10 years. This stratum of educators may possess a more nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities inherent in multigrade classrooms, which often necessitate innovative instructional strategies that cater to diverse learning needs. The disparity in teaching experience among the respondents could inform the development of targeted

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professional development programs that provide support and enhance teaching efficacy across a range of experience levels.

Multigrade Levels Handled

The number and combination of grade levels handled in a multigrade classroom significantly influence instructional complexity and teacher workload. Teachers handling more grade levels often face greater challenges in balancing curriculum requirements, allocating time effectively, and ensuring equitable learning opportunities for all students (Berry & Little, 2020). Understanding this factor is essential for evaluating teaching strategies and identifying support mechanisms that enhance instructional effectiveness in multigrade settings.

Table 4. Multigrade Levels Handled

	Frequency	Percent
Grade 1&2	6	28.6
Grade 3&4	7	33.3
Grade 4&5	1	4.8
Grade 5&6	7	33.3
Total	21	100.0

Table 4 presents a detailed breakdown of the distribution of multigrade levels managed by educators within the study's scope. The data reveal critical insights into the instructional dynamics prevalent in these classroom settings. Specifically, it indicates that educators in Grades 3-4 and 5-6 constitute an equal proportion of 33.3% of the sample, highlighting a significant emphasis on upper primary grade combinations in multigrade teaching. This suggests a possible trend where instructors are tasked with teaching multiple grades simultaneously, which may influence their pedagogical approaches and resource allocation.

Further analysis shows that educators in Grades 1-2 account for 28.6% of the dataset, reflecting another notable cohort within multigrade classrooms. This distribution emphasizes the challenge of addressing varied developmental stages and learning needs, particularly in the foundational years of education. Lastly, the data indicate that the Grade 4-5 combination accounts for only 4.8% of those surveyed, suggesting it is the least common pairing among the presented grade combinations, which may raise questions about curricular coherence and the instructional strategies deployed by teachers in this smaller subset.

Most Recent IPCR Rating

The Individual Performance Commitment and Review (IPCR) rating serves as an essential indicator of a teacher's professional performance and accountability within the education system. It reflects the extent to which teachers meet established standards in planning, instruction, and learner outcomes, making it a valuable measure for evaluating teaching effectiveness. In the context of multigrade classrooms, where instructional complexity is heightened, the IPCR rating provides insight into how well teachers adapt strategies to diverse learning needs and maintain quality education despite challenges. Examining this factor enables the study to establish links among performance ratings, teaching practices, and student achievement, thereby informing targeted interventions to support professional growth and improve classroom outcomes.

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Table 5. Most Recent IPCR Rating

	Frequency	Percent
Outstanding	2	9.5
Very Satisfactory	16	76.2
N/A (Less than 1 year of teaching)	3	14.3
Total	21	100.0

Table 5 presents a comprehensive overview of the respondents' most recent Individual Performance Commitment and Review (IPCR) ratings in the context of this study. The data indicate that a significant majority, amounting 76.2% of the respondents achieved a rating of 'Very Satisfactory' on the IPCR scale. This rating reflects a commendable level of performance among educators, suggesting they meet the prescribed standards efficiently and effectively, particularly within the challenging environment of multigrade classrooms. Additionally, 9.5% of respondents received an 'Outstanding' rating. This subset of educators exemplifies exceptional pedagogical practices that could serve as benchmarks for their peers. The presence of such high achievers is pivotal, as their methodologies could inform targeted interventions to enhance overall teaching efficacy in multigrade settings.

Perceive Extent of Use of the Teaching Strategies in Multigrade Classrooms

The table below presents the weighted mean and standard deviation of respondents' levels of agreement, providing valuable insights into teachers' perceptions of the strategies employed. The weighted mean reflects the overall tendency or central opinion of the respondents, indicating which strategies are generally favored or agreed upon. Meanwhile, the standard deviation indicates the degree of variability or consensus among responses; lower values suggest strong agreement among teachers, while higher values indicate diverse or conflicting views. Together, these statistical measures help the researcher interpret the effectiveness and acceptance of the teaching strategies used, guiding future improvements and decision-making.

Group-based Learning

Group-based learning fosters peer interaction, cooperative problem-solving, and shared responsibility for learning, which are essential for promoting engagement and deeper understanding in diverse settings (Johnson & Johnson, 2019). In multigrade contexts, group-based learning allows teachers to maximize limited resources and time by facilitating activities that encourage students to support one another, thereby enhancing both academic and social development (Berry & Little, 2020). Examining this strategy provides insights into its effectiveness in improving learner performance and its potential to address challenges inherent in multigrade teaching.

Table 6. Group-based Learning

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description
I allow my learners to generate ideas through brainstorming	4.1905	.51177	FU
I group my learners based on their grade level for specific activities	4.2381	.76842	VFU
I rotate group roles to ensure equal participation.	4.3333	.57735	VFU
I apply peer tutoring in my class	4.3810	.58959	VFU
I encourage cooperative learning through group discussions	4.4762	.60159	VFU
Overall	4.32382	0.609744	VFU

Legend: *1.00-1.80-Not Used (NU); 1.81-2.60-Rarely Used (RU); 2.61-3.40-Sometimes Used (STU); 3.41-4.20-Frequently Used (FU); 4.21-5.00-Very Frequently Used (VFU)*

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Table 6 presents a detailed examination of the application of various group-based learning strategies in multigrade classrooms, emphasizing their importance in fostering collaborative learning environments. Notably, the statement "I encourage cooperative learning through group discussions" received the highest mean score among all evaluated strategies, indicating a significant prevalence and effectiveness of this approach in the instructional practices observed. This outcome suggests that educators are not only implementing cooperative learning as a fundamental pedagogical approach but are also doing so with a notable degree of consistency and intentionality across nearly all teaching sessions. The consistent integration of group discussions into the curriculum underscores the vital role of collaborative learning in enhancing student engagement and academic achievement in diverse classroom settings.

Conversely, the strategy articulated as "I allow my learners to generate ideas through brainstorming" garnered the lowest mean score. This finding reflects a more sporadic application of this particular strategy, which, although employed in many sessions, lacks the same level of uniformity and consistency across all teaching contexts. The differential application of brainstorming as a learning strategy suggests opportunities to enhance its integration into regular teaching practices, potentially enabling students to cultivate critical thinking and creativity more effectively.

The overall data summarization reveals a mean score of 4.32382 and a standard deviation of 0.609744. These statistical metrics indicate that, while most responses cluster around high agreement with group-based learning strategies, there is variability in individual perceptions and implementations of specific approaches. The high mean score indicates broad consensus among educators on the effectiveness of collaborative strategies, suggesting that these practices are not only endorsed but also essential components of the instructional framework in multigrade classrooms.

Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated instruction (DI) is a critical pedagogical approach for multigrade classrooms, where learners exhibit diverse levels of readiness, interests, and learning profiles. By adapting content, process, and product to individual needs, DI fosters equitable access to learning and improves academic outcomes in heterogeneous settings (Asriadi et al., 2023). Thus, integrating DI into teaching strategies provides a strong foundation for designing effective intervention plans to improve instructional quality and learner success in multigrade classrooms.

Table 7. Differentiated Instruction

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description
I let my learners work on tasks of varying difficulty but on the same core concept	4.1905	.60159	FU
I group my learners based on their readiness, interests, or learning styles	4.5238	.51177	VFU
I provide varied instructional materials for different learning needs	4.3333	.57735	VFU
I adjust my teaching pace depending on learners' understanding.	4.3810	.58959	VFU
I give alternative assignments/more complex activities to learners who already know the lesson instead of redoing the known material	4.1429	.57321	FU
Overall	4.3143	0.570702	VFU

Legend: *1.00-1.80-Not Used (NU); 1.81-2.60-Rarely Used (RU); 2.61-3.40-Sometimes Used (STU); 3.41-4.20-Frequently Used (FU); 4.21-5.00-Very Frequently Used (VFU)*

Table 7 provides a comprehensive overview of differentiated instruction strategies implemented in multigrade classrooms. Among the instructional approaches evaluated, the statement reflecting grouping learners by readiness, interests, or learning styles received the highest mean score. This significant finding

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indicates that this strategy is not only prevalent but is also executed with a high degree of consistency and intentionality across nearly all teaching sessions. Such a robust implementation suggests that educators are deeply invested in addressing their students' diverse needs, thereby enhancing individual learning experiences and promoting academic success.

Conversely, the strategy articulated as providing alternative assignments or more complex activities to learners who already possess mastery of the lesson content resulted in the lowest mean score. This insight implies that while this differentiated approach is employed in most instructional periods, the level of consistency and application across different contexts remains variable. The implications of this inconsistency may indicate a potential area for professional development and support, ensuring that all students are appropriately challenged and engaged, particularly those who demonstrate advanced understanding.

Overall, the aggregate mean score of 4.3143 coupled with a standard deviation of 0.570702 reflects a strong inclination towards effective differentiation practices in teaching. The calculated average suggests a favorable perception of the implemented strategies, aligning with the notion that these instructional methods are both essential and effective in supporting diverse learner needs in multigrade classroom settings. The data indicate that the predominant deployment of these strategies positions educators to maximize student engagement and learning outcomes through targeted and adaptable instructional practices.

Thus, the findings in Table 8 not only underscore the importance of differentiated instruction in fostering inclusive educational environments but also highlight the need to reinforce and refine certain strategies to optimize their application. This assessment serves as a foundational element for the upcoming intervention plan to enhance teaching efficacy and student achievement in multigrade classrooms.

Integration of Technology

The integration of technology strengthens the effectiveness of teaching strategies in multigrade classrooms by enabling personalized, flexible, and engaging learning experiences. In multigrade settings where resources and time are often limited, technology provides scalable solutions for individualized pacing and multimodal content delivery, fostering equity and inclusion. By incorporating technology into the assessment and intervention plan, the study aligns with 21st-century educational standards and offers practical, sustainable strategies for improving instructional quality and learner outcomes.

Table 8 presents result on differentiated instruction in multigrade classrooms, specifically highlighting the efficacy of various teaching strategies as assessed by their mean scores. Notably, incorporating educational videos and multimedia into lessons achieved the highest mean score. This finding indicates that such a strategy is not merely a supplementary tool but, in fact, a fundamental component of the instructional approach educators uses in these settings. The consistent and intentional application of multimedia resources suggests a strong alignment with contemporary pedagogical practices, which advocate for multimodal learning experiences to enhance student engagement and comprehension.

Table 8. Integration of Technology

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description
I use online quizzes and assessments	3.1905	1.12335	STU
I use digital tools (e.g., tablets, computers, television) to support instruction.	4.4762	.74960	VFU
I incorporate educational videos or multimedia in lessons.	4.6190	.49761	VFU
I use technology to assess learners' performance.	4.3333	.73030	VFU
I use AI Tutoring tools like Khan Academy or lessonplanner.ph in designing lesson plans or instructional materials	3.2857	1.00712	STU

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Overall	3.98094	0.821596	FU

Legend: *1.00-1.80-Not Used (NU); 1.81-2.60-Rarely Used (RU); 2.61-3.40-Sometimes Used (STU); 3.41-4.20-Frequently Used (FU); 4.21-5.00-Very Frequently Used (VFU)*

In contrast, the strategy of using online quizzes and assessments yielded the lowest mean score, suggesting its implementation is sporadic, contingent on the specific lesson objectives or unique classroom dynamics. This fluctuation in application may reflect educators' cautious approach to online assessments, perhaps linked to varying levels of student access to technology or differing pedagogical priorities in multigrade environments. The overall mean score of 3.98094, accompanied by a standard deviation of 0.821596, provides a quantitative assessment that further contextualizes the application of these teaching strategies. This average score indicates that differentiated instruction is a prevalent practice in most instructional sessions. However, the relatively modest standard deviation suggests some variability in implementation consistency across contexts and lessons, suggesting an opportunity for targeted intervention. Thus, the analysis of these instructional strategies reveals that while multimedia integration is a well-entrenched practice within the teaching framework, there remains a need to increase the frequency and consistency of its application, particularly in online assessments. Such insights can serve as critical benchmarks for developing an intervention plan to optimize teaching methodologies in multigrade classrooms, ensuring that all strategies are used effectively to meet diverse learner needs.

Classroom Management

In multigrade settings, where students of varying ages and abilities share the same space, strong management practices help maintain structure, minimize disruptions, and facilitate smooth transitions between activities. This allows teachers to implement flexible grouping, individualized tasks, and technology-based interventions without compromising instructional time. Ultimately, classroom management serves as the foundation for achieving equity, engagement, and improved learning outcomes, making it a critical component of any intervention plan for multigrade education. The data in Table 9 provide a comprehensive overview of classroom management strategies used in multigrade classrooms, highlighting the efficacy of various pedagogical approaches. Notably, the item pertaining to the establishment of clear rules and routines for multigrade learners garnered the highest mean score, indicative of its widespread and effective implementation across teaching sessions. This finding suggests that educators prioritize creating a structured, predictable environment, which is critical for fostering student engagement and promoting a sense of security among learners at diverse academic levels.

Table 9. Classroom Management

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description
I establish clear rules and routines for multigrade learners.	4.6667	.48305	VFU
I manage transitions between activities smoothly.	4.3810	.49761	VFU
I use positive reinforcement to encourage good behavior.	4.6190	.49761	VFU
I maintain learner engagement across different grade levels.	4.5714	.50709	VFU
I handle disruptions effectively while continuing instruction.	4.3810	.58959	VFU
Overall	4.52382	0.51499	VFU

Legend: *1.00-1.80-Not Used (NU); 1.81-2.60-Rarely Used (RU); 2.61-3.40-Sometimes Used (STU); 3.41-4.20-Frequently Used (FU); 4.21-5.00-Very Frequently Used (VFU*

In contrast, the item addressing the management of transitions between activities recorded the lowest mean score. This outcome implies potential challenges in the seamless execution of transitions, a vital component in maintaining instructional momentum and sustaining learner focus. Effective

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transitioning is particularly crucial in multigrade settings, where diverse learner needs must be addressed with agility to maximize instructional time and ensure that all students, regardless of grade level, feel included and supported in the learning process.

The overall average score of 4.52382, with a standard deviation of 0.51499, reflects a generally positive perception of the implementation of classroom management strategies in these educational contexts. This high average suggests that, while specific areas may require attention, such as improving transition management, there is a sustained commitment to employing classroom management strategies that facilitate learning. The relatively low standard deviation indicates consistent responses, suggesting that practitioners across the board are effectively utilizing these strategies with considerable uniformity.

Summary Data on Perceived Extent of Use of the Teaching Strategies in Multigrade Classrooms

Table 10 presents data on the perceived extent of use of teaching strategies in multigrade classrooms across all domains.

Table 10. Perceived Extent of use of the Teaching Strategies in Multigrade Classrooms

Domains	Mean	Standard Deviation	Verbal Description
Group-based Learning	4.32	0.610	VFU
Differentiated Instruction	4.31	0.571	VFU
Integration of Technology	3.98	0.822	FU
Classroom Management	4.52	0.515	VFU

In the analysis of the identified domains, classroom management emerged as the most frequently employed practice, with a weighted mean of 4.52, indicating "very frequently used." Conversely, the domain centered on the "integration of Technology" had the lowest weighted mean of 3.98, indicating less frequent use than the other areas of focus.

Average Performance of Learners 4th Quarter S.Y 2024-2025

Table 11 presents a detailed analysis of learners' academic performance in multigrade classrooms, specifically during the fourth quarter of the 2024-2025 academic year. From the compiled data, a noteworthy observation is the distribution of learner performance across various achievement levels.

Table 11. Average Performance of Learners

	Frequency	Percent
Outstanding (90-100)	3	14.3
Very Satisfactory (85-89)	17	81.0
Satisfactory (80-84)	1	4.8
Total	21	100.0

The findings indicate that 81% of learners achieved an average performance score within the range of 85-89. This range is classified as "very satisfactory," suggesting not only a commendable level of understanding of the subject matter but also indicating effective instructional strategies employed in the classroom. Such results may reflect the efficacy of tailored pedagogical methods designed to meet learners' diverse needs in a multigrade setting. These strategies could include differentiated instruction and collaborative learning experiences, which are paramount in addressing the varied learning paces and styles found in multigrade classrooms.

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Furthermore, 14.3% of the learners attained average performance scores ranging from 90 to 100, categorizing this cohort as "outstanding." This figure indicates a pronounced level of academic achievement that surpasses expectations. Such high-performance rates may be attributable to specialized intervention strategies or enrichment activities that are integrated into the learning environment, thereby fostering an atmosphere conducive to academic excellence.

Additionally, a smaller proportion, specifically 4.8% of learners, demonstrated average performance scores in the range of 80-84, categorized as "satisfactory." While this group demonstrates adequate understanding of the material, their modest performance suggests a potential need for supplementary instructional support or interventions to enhance their academic outcomes. Recognizing and addressing the instructional needs of this subset of learners is crucial, underscoring the need for an inclusive approach that supports all learners in achieving their full potential.

Relationship Between the Respondents Perception of Extent Teaching Strategy Use and Average Performance of Learners

The analysis presented in Table 12 examines the relationship between instructional strategies and learners' performance, revealing significant insights into how these strategies correlate. The coefficient of correlation (r) indicates the strength of the relationship, while the corresponding p-value helps determine the statistical significance of the correlation.

Table 12. Relationship Between the Respondent's Perception of Extent Teaching Strategy Use and Average Performance of Learners

Learners' performance	Coefficient of correlation, r	Interpretation	P-value	Decision	Interpretation
Group-based Learning	0.260	Weak	0.254	Accept H0	No significant relationship
Differentiated Instruction	0.451	Moderate	0.040	Reject H0	Significant relationship
Integration of Technology	0.410	Weak	0.065	Accept H0	No significant relationship
Classroom Management	0.178	Very weak	0.440	Accept H0	No significant relationship

Group-based Learning shows a correlation coefficient of 0.260, indicating a weak relationship with learner performance. The p-value of 0.254 exceeds the 0.05 critical level, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis (H0). This result suggests that there is no significant relationship between group-based learning and academic performance. Although collaborative learning environments can foster interaction, they may not always translate into measurable performance gains depending on the context and peer dynamics involved Gbollie & Keamu, 2017).

Differentiated Instruction, on the other hand, exhibits a correlation coefficient of 0.451, categorized as moderate. The p-value of 0.040 is below the critical threshold of 0.05, allowing us to reject the null hypothesis. This finding infers that differentiated instruction plays a significant role in enhancing learner performance. Research supports this conclusion, showing that tailoring instruction to diverse learner needs can improve academic outcomes and engagement (Taş & Minaz, 2024). Differentiated instruction accommodates individual learning styles and paces, making it a pivotal strategy for maximizing student performance.

The Integration of Technology presents a correlation coefficient of 0.410, which is interpreted as weak. The p-value of 0.065, while above 0.05, approaches significance, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. This outcome underscores the need for further exploration of the effective integration of technology into educational practices. Prior studies have noted that while technology can enhance learning

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experiences and engagement, its impact on performance often depends on the instructional context and the quality of its implementation (Wu et al., 2020).

Classroom Management shows a very weak correlation (r = 0.178) and a high p-value (0.440), leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. This indicates that there is no significant relationship between classroom management practices and learner performance. However, effective classroom management remains crucial for creating an environment conducive to learning. Research suggests that strong classroom management strategies can enhance student engagement and safety, consequently contributing to improved academic outcomes (Ahmed & Pierre, 2024; Cristo & Ching, 2023).

The varying coefficients of correlation and p-values across the strategies suggest important implications for educational practice. While differentiated instruction stands out as a significant factor influencing academic performance, strategies like group-based learning, technology integration, and classroom management warrant further investigation to understand their roles more comprehensively in learner achievement. As educators contemplate these strategies, fostering a blend of methods tailored to specific contexts and student needs will likely yield the most beneficial outcomes.

Issues and Concern Encountered in Implementing Teaching Strategies in Multigrade Classroom

Challenges encountered in the multigrade teaching context

Participants' responses regarding their perceptions and opinions of encountered challenges in the multigrade teaching context were analyzed to address the first research question. The analysis yielded five major themes, as presented in Table 13.

Table 13. Challenges Encountered in the Multigrade Teaching Context

Themes	Sub-themes	Most frequent codes
Time Constraints	Insufficient time to meet diverse instructional demands	congested schedules and limited time per subject in every grade level, difficulty balancing instructional time across multiple grade levels, time constraints hinder lesson preparation and delivery
Curriculum Complexity	Overwhelming planning demands due to multiple curricula	preparation of separate lessons for different grade levels, balancing multiple curricula, aligning activities with varies learning competencies, comprehension difficulties
Resource Limitations	Lack of instructional materials and professional support	lack of references and learning resources, absence of professional development opportunities tailored to multigrade teaching
Learner Diversity	Challenges in addressing varied student needs	difference in academic levels, learning paces, and maturity, need for a differentiated instruction and flexible approaches
Emotional Demands	High levels of stress and need for adaptability	teaching multigrade classes require patience, adaptability, and strategic planning, complexity and volume of tasks, difficulty in maintaining classroom disciplines across diverse age groups

This table has illuminated the intricate and multifaceted challenges faced by multigrade educators, revealing five interrelated thematic domains: time constraints, curriculum complexity, resource limitations, learner diversity, and emotional demands. Central to these findings is the pervasive issue of time constraints, which significantly impairs instructional planning and delivery.

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As articulated by P9,
"Time management, lack of time to accomplish the scheduled class program," and reinforced by P7,
"Too many skills to develop in a quarter despite time allocation being too short for two classes,"
The data underscore the urgent need for more efficient scheduling frameworks and institutional mechanisms that support equitable time distribution across grade levels.

Subsequently, the theme of lesson planning and curriculum complexity reflects the pedagogical burden of managing multiple curricula simultaneously. Teachers must design differentiated lesson plans that align with diverse competencies and remain accessible to learners at different developmental stages.

P20 aptly described this challenge, stating,
"Preparing daily lessons that cater to varied learning levels and competencies takes more time and effort," while P9 emphasized that *"Balancing multiple curricula for different grades is complex and time-consuming."*
These insights highlight the need for curriculum integration strategies and instructional planning tools tailored to multigrade contexts.

Meanwhile, the theme of resource limitations further compounds these instructional challenges. P5 noted,

"Lack of grade-specific materials such as teaching aids and textbooks are not available at the moment," and P9 added, *"Multigrade teachers lack access to professional development and peer collaboration."*
These statements reveal systemic gaps in resource allocation that hinder instructional quality and teacher capacity.

Moreover, the theme of learner diversity highlights the complexity of addressing heterogeneous student populations. Teachers must navigate a wide spectrum of academic abilities, learning paces, and maturity levels.

As P9 observed,
"Students are at different academic levels, requiring differentiated instruction and activities," and P18 remarked, *"Learners have a slow performance in reading comprehension that can bother the level of learning."*
These findings emphasize the need for adaptive teaching models and diagnostic tools that support inclusive and responsive instruction.

Finally, the theme of emotional demands captures the cumulative stress and psychological strain that multigrade teachers experience. The constant need to adapt, manage diverse classroom behaviors, and maintain instructional rigor contributes to professional fatigue.

P13 shared, *"One of my biggest challenges I've faced is managing my time and attention between different grade levels,"* while P14 stated, *"My main challenges in multigrade teaching are differentiating instruction, managing time, and maintaining discipline."*

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These reflections underscore the importance of providing emotional support systems, mentorship, and institutional recognition of the unique demands inherent in multigrade teaching roles.

Strategies for overcoming multigrade teaching challenges

Multigrade educators employ a diverse array of adaptive strategies to navigate the pedagogical complexities inherent in teaching across multiple grade levels. These strategies are articulated through six interrelated themes, such as time management, differentiated and integrated instruction, technology utilization, collaborative engagement, learner-centered approaches, and reflective practice. All collectively underscore the ingenuity, resilience, and professional agency of multigrade teachers. The data analysis is presented in Table 14.

Table 14. Strategies for Overcoming Multigrade Teaching Challenges

Themes	Sub-themes	Most frequent codes
Time Management	Strategic scheduling and task distribution to maximize instructional efficiency	Time management, instructional prioritization
Differentiated and Integrated Instruction	Pedagogical adaptation through flexible grouping and thematic teaching	Differentiated instruction, Integrated teaching
Technology Utilization	Leveraging digital tools and platforms for instructional support	Use of online resources and technology, participation in webinars and online learning
Collaborative Engagement	Building professional networks and sharing strategies	Peer collaboration and mentoring
Learner-Centered Approaches	Designing instruction around student needs and autonomy	Independent learning and flexible grouping, reading level-based instruction
Reflective Practice	Continuous improvement through planning and research	Lesson planning and reflection, instructional innovation

The themes of time management and instructional prioritization emerged as foundational mechanisms for coping with instructional overload. Teachers demonstrated strategic scheduling and task distribution to optimize limited instructional time.

> As P1 succinctly noted,
> *"Through time management,"* and P4 elaborated,
> *"Handle other subjects on the next day if 8 subjects*
> *are not covered on that day."* Moreover, P19 emphasized
> the importance of *"a flexible daily schedule with clear*
> *routines for each grade group,"*

thereby illustrating the critical role of temporal organization in sustaining instructional continuity.

Furthermore, the theme of differentiated and integrated instruction reflects a sophisticated pedagogical response to learner heterogeneity. Teachers employed flexible grouping, tiered assignments, and thematic integration to address varied academic levels within a single instructional framework.

> P7 described teaching *"at the same time for the same*
> *competency with different levels of difficulty in assessment*
> *and activity,"* while P10 advocated for *"integrating*
> *subjects through thematic or cross-curricular approaches."*

These approaches not only enhance instructional efficiency but also promote equitable learning experiences.

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In addition, the strategic utilization of technology and online resources emerged as a pivotal enabler of instructional innovation and professional development. Teachers leveraged digital platforms to access materials, attend virtual workshops, and engage in continuous learning.

> As P2 stated, *"Use of available online resources and technology,"* and P5 shared, *"I attended free webinars focused on multigrade or differentiated instruction."*

These practices exemplify how digital engagement can mitigate resource constraints and enrich pedagogy.

Equally important is the theme of collaborative engagement, which highlights the significance of professional networks and peer support. Teachers actively sought collegial connections to exchange strategies and foster a sense of shared responsibility.

> P5 remarked, *"I connect with other multigrade teachers (online or locally) to share resources and strategies,"* and P11 emphasized the value of *"peer mentoring."*

Such collaborative practices contribute to a culture of mutual learning and professional solidarity.

Moreover, the theme of learner-centered approaches underscores a commitment to instructional designs that prioritize student autonomy and differentiated engagement. Teachers implemented independent learning stations, activity menus, and performance tasks to accommodate diverse learner needs.

> P14 explained, *"I use activities that allow learners to work independently while I assist others,"* and P19 recommended, *"Prepare activity menus so pupils can work independently."*

These strategies reflect a pedagogical orientation that is both inclusive and responsive.

Lastly, the theme of reflective practice and instructional innovation reveals a proactive stance toward continuous improvement. Teachers engaged in deliberate lesson planning, action research, and creative instructional design.

> P14 emphasized, *"Planning my lessons carefully and setting a routine,"* while P16 shared, *"Developed interventions through Action Research (BERF)."*

These practices exemplify a reflective and research-informed approach to teaching.

Supports needed to improve multigrade teaching

Table 15 presents the thematic synthesis of participants' responses to the pedagogical and systemic imperatives essential to advancing multigrade instruction. Five principal domains emerged from the data, including specialized professional development**,** instructional resources**,** curriculum adaptation**,** administrative support, and leadership and collegial support. These domains collectively underscore the multifaceted nature of multigrade teaching and the requisite institutional scaffolding to ensure its efficacy.

Foremost, the imperative for specialized and sustained professional development was unequivocally articulated. Respondents consistently advocated for capacity-building initiatives that are explicitly tailored to the complexities of multigrade pedagogy.

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Table 15. Supports Needed to Improve Multigrade Teaching

10	Sub-themes	Most frequent codes
Professional Development	Need for specialized and sustained capacity-building initiatives	LAC sessions and seminar/workshops, professional development trainings tailored to multigrade teaching contex
Instructional Resources	Demand for contextualized, ready-to-use, and curriculum-aligned materials	Ready-made lesson plans and references, multi-leveled textbooks and workbooks, access to appropriate teaching and learning materials
Curriculum Adaptation	Need for flexible and simplified curriculum structures	Curriculum reconstruction, shared planning tools/templates
Time and Administrative Support	Need for protected planning time and reduced non-teaching workload	Time for lesson planning, minimized reporting duties, SHA allocation for all MG teachers
Leadership and Collegial Support	Importance of mentoring, collaboration, and institutional backing	Mentoring and collaboration, leadership support

> As P14 asserted, *"I need more training and workshops that are really focused on multigrade teaching strategies,"* and P17 emphasized the necessity for *"Specialized training on multigrade classroom management, lesson planning, and differentiated instruction."*

These sentiments, echoed across multiple responses (P1, P12, P18, P20), underscore the critical need for structured, context-sensitive training programs that equip educators with the competencies for differentiated instruction and thematic integration.

Equally salient is the theme of instructional resources and materials, which reflects a pervasive demand for ready-to-use, curriculum-aligned teaching tools. Participants underscored the importance of having access to differentiated lesson plans (DLPs/DLLs), multi-level textbooks, and localized learning aids.

> P3 and P5 emphasized, *"adequate and contextualized learning materials"* and *"complete books, PPTs,"* while P21 noted, *"DLL and learning materials must be ready."*

These responses (P2, P3, P7, P16, P21) reveal a systemic deficiency in resource provision that directly impinges upon instructional quality and learner engagement.

The theme of curriculum adaptation and planning tools further elucidates the need for pedagogical flexibility. Teachers advocated reconfiguring curricula into thematic or topic-based formats to facilitate more coherent, focused instruction.

> P8 proposed, *"Make it a topic not a competency… they can focus on one topic only,"* and P5 recommended the use of *"shared planning tools or templates designed for multigrade teaching."*

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These insights suggest that curriculum reform, coupled with collaborative planning mechanisms, is indispensable for streamlining instructional preparation and enhancing pedagogical coherence.

Moreover, the themes of time allocation and administrative support highlight the urgency of protected instructional planning time and the minimization of non-teaching responsibilities. Respondents emphasized the need for institutional adjustments to enable dedicated lesson preparation and equitable workload distribution.

> P9 recommended,
> *"Proper time management, minimize reports/provide a school clerk,"* while P5 stressed the importance of *"allocated time for lesson planning and preparation."*
> Additionally, P16 advocated for equitable resource allocation, stating,
> *"SHA must be allocated to all teachers in MG regardless of being pure or mixed MG schools."*

Finally, the theme of leadership and peer support underscores the foundational role of institutional backing and collegial engagement. Teachers expressed the need for consistent mentorship, collaborative planning opportunities, and supportive leadership structures.

> As P11 articulated, *"Consistent support from school leadership, including mentoring and collaborative planning time, would ease the workload."*

This sentiment, echoed by P14, reinforces the value of professional solidarity and administrative responsiveness in sustaining multigrade teaching efficacy.

Findings

As to the profile, it was found that a notable gender disparity exists, with 85.7% of respondents being female, reflecting the common predominance of women in the teaching profession. Age distribution shows that 52.4% are between 21 and 30 years old, indicating a youthful cohort likely to bring innovative approaches to instruction. The average age of 35.45 years, coupled with a standard deviation of 13.00, suggests a diverse mix of younger and more experienced educators, which may impact classroom strategies and adaptability. In terms of educational attainment, 61.9% are pursuing a Master's degree, demonstrating strong commitment to professional growth, while 33.3% hold a Bachelor's degree and 4.8% have completed a Master's degree, signifying advanced expertise among a small segment. Teaching assignments show that educators handling Grades 3–4 and 5–6 each account for 33.3%, while Grades 1–2 represent 28.6%, and Grade 4–5 is least common at 4.8%, highlighting varied instructional demands. Performance ratings further indicate that 76.2% of respondents achieved a "Very Satisfactory" IPCR rating, and 9.5% earned "Outstanding," reflecting commendable teaching effectiveness in multigrade settings.

Furthermore, the analysis reveals that cooperative learning through group discussions is the most emphasized strategy in multigrade classrooms, fostering collaboration and engagement, while brainstorming is less consistently applied, indicating potential for improvement in promoting creativity and critical thinking. Differentiated instruction is widely practiced, particularly grouping learners by readiness, interests, or learning styles, though providing alternative or advanced activities for those who have mastered content remains less common, suggesting a need for targeted professional development. Additionally, multimedia integration, especially educational videos, is a core component of teaching practices, enhancing engagement and comprehension, whereas online quizzes and assessments are less frequently used, likely due to technological constraints. Overall, these findings underscore the importance of collaborative, differentiated, and multimedia strategies while highlighting areas for refinement to maximize student learning outcomes.

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In the fourth quarter of S.Y. 2024–2025, most students in multigrade classrooms performed well, with many earning very satisfactory grades. A portion reached the outstanding level, and only very few were in the satisfactory range. Overall, these results indicate that multigrade instruction is effective, but there are still areas for improvement.

Regarding instructional strategies, findings showed that differentiated instruction has a moderate and significant relationship with learners' academic performance, supporting its effectiveness. In contrast, group-based learning, technology integration, and classroom management show weak, non-significant correlations. While these strategies may influence the environment, they do not have a direct, measurable effect. Consequently, these results highlight the importance of tailoring instruction to individual needs.

In addition, the findings highlight five main challenges in multigrade teaching, namely: time constraints, complex curricula, limited resources, diverse learners, and emotional demands. These issues are closely connected and illustrate the complexity of multigrade instruction. Teachers often struggle to divide their time among different grade levels, plan lessons for various curricula, and find enough teaching materials. They also need to meet the diverse academic and developmental needs of their students while managing the emotional stress of their responsibilities and maintaining classroom order. These challenges highlight the need for additional support, including targeted professional development, flexible curricula, and increased recognition of the unique demands on multigrade teachers.

CONCLUSIONS

The results emphasize that effective multigrade teaching requires a strategic balance between classroom management and differentiated instruction, with the latter proving most influential in enhancing learner performance. This finding aligns with Tomlinson's (2001) framework, which advocates for proactive planning to address diverse readiness levels, interests, and learning styles, an approach naturally suited to multigrade settings. By tailoring content, methods, and assessments, teachers create inclusive environments where all students can engage meaningfully. These practices also reflect the principles of the MATATAG Curriculum under DepEd Order No. 10, s. 2024, which prioritizes inclusivity, learner-centered methodologies, and contextualized approaches grounded in constructivist theory. The identified challenges, such as time constraints and emotional demands, further underscore the need for professional development, adequate resources, and administrative support to fully realize these theoretical and policy-driven goals and ensure equitable, high-quality education in multigrade classrooms.

Recommendations

The Department of Education should provide learning resources such as textbooks and curriculum guides with lesson alignment for the paired grades.

The school administrators must see to it that teachers are provided with necessary trainings and seminars particularly tailored with the multigrade teaching context to ensure that there is a continuous professional development.

The multigrade teachers must be resilient in facing challenges in teaching multigrades, and apply different teaching strategies including differentiated instruction and integrating lessons across different subject areas.

The future researchers should consider conducting further studies on different teaching strategies in multigrade teaching context to strengthen the implementation of multigrade instruction.

The learners should improve their learning habits and must continuously studay hard for it is an investment in their future selves.

The parents should support their children and support the DepEd's vision and mission for the betterment of both teachers and learners.

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OUTPUT OF THE STUDY

Rationale

While multigrade education is an effective solution for small or remote communities, it demands a high level of organization, adaptability, and skill from teachers to ensure that all students receive quality education tailored to their needs. To address the diverse needs of learners, the Department of Education (DepEd) has made Differentiated Instruction (DI) a fundamental teaching strategy within the K to 12 Basic Education Program, as established by Republic Act 2013. A study by Joseph et al. (2013) revealed that most students in differentiated classrooms showed a solid understanding of the key concepts covered in the curriculum studies course. Thus, differentiated instruction makes it easier for learners to understand key ideas by adjusting teaching methods, materials, and assessments to fit each person's learning needs and readiness. This approach keeps students engaged and helps everyone learn at their own pace, leading to a deeper understanding and more meaningful outcomes.

A study by Rondero and Casupanan (2024) found that multigrade teachers face challenges due to a lack of instructional materials, ready-made lesson plans, and other key resources. Additionally, the absence of ready-made lesson plans forces teachers to spend extra time preparing multiple sets of lessons, which can be overwhelming and time-consuming. This lack of support also extends to other key resources, such as teacher guides and assessment tools, which limit teachers' ability to implement diverse and inclusive teaching strategies. As a result, managing a classroom with learners at different levels becomes more complex, potentially affecting both teaching quality and student outcomes.

Thus, it urges the researcher to propose a plan for Strengthening Multigrade Teaching Strategies through the Integration of Specialized Sessions in the In-Service Training (INSET) and Development of Localized Instructional Materials.

Objectives

The following objectives are expected to be realized and achieved upon the implementation of the proposed plan to strengthen multigrade teaching strategies through INSET integration and the development of localized instructional materials.

1. To integrate a dedicated session on multigrade teaching strategies into the INSET program to enhance teachers' instructional competence in managing multigrade classrooms.
2. To improve teachers' capacity to implement different multigrade teaching strategies effectively, ensuring that learners across multiple grade levels receive appropriate and engaging learning experiences.
3. To develop and produce localized instructional materials that are culturally relevant and aligned with the learning needs of multigrade students in the community.
4. To promote collaboration among educators in designing and sharing multigrade teaching resources, fostering a supportive professional learning community.

Scheme of Implementation

A copy of the proposal and findings of the study will be submitted to the school's district supervisor of Valencia District to raise awareness and integrate multigrade teaching strategies during in-service trainings and develop localized instructional materials for multigrade instruction based on the proposal's stipulated provisions, which address the challenges of multigrade teachers.

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Strengthening Multigrade Teaching Through Integration of Specialized Sessions in the In-Service Training (Inset) and Development of Localized Instructional Materials

Areas of Concern	Objectives	Activities /Strategies	Timeline	Expected Result/ Outcome	Person Involved	Budget	Accomplish-ment	Remarks
INSET sessions enhancement	To integrate a dedicated session on multigrade teaching strategies into the INSET program to enhance teachers' instructional competence in managing multigrade classrooms. To improve teachers' capacity to implement different multigrade teaching strategies effectively, ensuring that learners across multiple grade levels receive appropriate and engaging learning experiences.	Conduct training needs assessment Design and deliver specialized INSET module on multigrade strategies	Quarter 2 and Quarter 4	Teachers gain improved skills and confidence in handling multigrade classes	School heads, INSET trainers, multigrade teachers	10,000.00		
Instructional materials development	To develop and produce localized instructional materials that are culturally relevant and aligned with the learning needs of multigrade students in the community.	Develop localized instructional materials Pilot materials in selected multigrade classrooms Revise based on feedback	Annually	Availability of culturally relevant and level-appropriate materials for multigrade learners	Multigrade teachers, administrators	50,000.00		

	To promote collaboration among educators in designing and sharing multigrade teaching resources, fostering a supportive professional learning community.							

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