



PERCEPTION OF DOLORES CENTRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS OF THE NEW DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CURRICULUM

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the perceptions of teachers at Dolores Central Elementary School regarding the implementation of the new Department of Education (DepEd) curriculum during the School Year 2025–2026. Specifically, it described the respondents' demographic profile, assessed their perceptions of the curriculum in terms of curriculum content, teaching strategies, assessment methods, and learning resources, identified the challenges encountered during implementation, and examined the relationship between demographic characteristics and curriculum perceptions. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed using a researcher-made questionnaire administered to 56 teachers through total enumeration sampling. Frequency count, percentage, weighted mean, standard deviation, and the Chi-Square Test of Independence were used to analyze the data. The findings revealed that teachers generally had positive perceptions of the new curriculum, particularly regarding its content, teaching strategies, and assessment methods. However, inadequate learning resources, insufficient training, increased workload, and time constraints were identified as major implementation challenges. No significant relationship was found between teachers' demographic profile and their perceptions. The study recommends continuous professional development, adequate instructional resources, and strengthened institutional support to ensure the effective implementation of the new DepEd curriculum.

KEYWORDS: Curriculum Implementation, Teacher Perception, MATATAG Curriculum, Department of Education

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Education is recognized as a key driver of sustainable development, social equity, and economic growth. The importance of education to achieving these goals led to its inclusion as Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 in the United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda, which calls for "inclusive and equitable quality education and promotion of life-long learning opportunities for all." (UNESCO, 2024). In order to successfully achieve this goal, it will be necessary for education systems to continue developing and improving their curriculum policies, instructional methods, assessment systems, and teacher preparation and support programs. Thus, curriculum reform has become an educational priority for many countries that want to improve their students' academic performance as well as prepare them to be successful in the twenty-first century (UNESCO, 2024).

The curriculum reforms mentioned above have become even more critical in light of the severe disruption to education caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. According to UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank, approximately 1.6 billion students worldwide were out of school during the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused significant learning loss for students at all levels of education. Furthermore, the World Bank estimates that nearly 70% of ten-year-olds in low- and middle-income countries cannot read and understand a simple text (referred to as learning poverty) (World Bank et al. 2022). The aforementioned statistics have led to governments around the world implementing curriculum redesign efforts, focusing on simplifying competencies, prioritizing foundational learning, strengthening learner-centered pedagogies, and improving teachers' capacity to effectively teach (UNESCO, 2024).

As the primary implementers of educational policy, teachers play an important role in every aspect of curriculum reform. Although a well-developed curriculum is essential for a novel approach to teaching and learning, it is essential that teachers fully understand, appreciate and implement it within their classrooms. Teacher perceptions directly impact instructional decision making, student engagement, and assessments of student learning as well as the overall impact of implementing a new curriculum. In addition, many teachers who have a positive perception of a new curriculum tend to have more commitment to the reform effort than those who have a negative perception, as the latter will experience a decrease in motivation, uncertainty concerning instruction, and resistance to implementing the new curriculum (UNESCO, 2024). During the past decade, most countries in Southeast Asia have shifted their focus to competency-based education, the use of learner-centred instruction, digital technologies in education, and the preparation of learners for the 21st Century. However, the 2023 Southeast Asia Regional Global Education Monitoring Report highlights the fact that digital technology offers considerable opportunities for enhancing the ability to teach and learn, yet still many schools do not have the means of providing access to the technology, instructional materials, trained educators, and a supportive educational infrastructure, resulting in unequal conditions for implementing new curricula among many schools, as well as having a significant effect on the way a teacher perceives an educational reform initiative. Concerns about the decreasing performance of Filipino learners have heightened the urgency of implementing changes to the curriculum. Recent results from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022 indicate that Filipino learners continue to be among the lowest performing students in mathematics, reading and science compared to other participating countries of the



Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2023). In addition, a report from the World Bank reveals that about 91% of Filipino children experience learning poverty, which means that over half of these students cannot read and understand grade-level books by the time they reach 10 years old (World Bank et al., 2024). This data has led the Department of Education (DepEd) to create a MATATAG Curriculum to provide additional support through a reduction of learning competencies and to support teachers in developing foundational skills, lowering the complexity of classroom instructional methods and enhancing the results of the students (Department of Education [DepEd], 2023, 2024).

As has been shown through extensive research, it is not enough for only the curriculum to change; the successful adoption of a new curriculum will only be achieved through the readiness of the teachers to adopt the curriculum and its associated instructional practices. Therefore, the Department of Education is continually providing capacity building programs at the national level, through "Learning Action Cell" (LAC) sessions, coaching sessions, and also through on-going technical assistance for teachers implementing the MATATAG Curriculum (DepEd, 2024). Nonetheless, there are several barriers to the implementation of the curriculum, such as not having enough instructional materials, a lack of professional development opportunities for teachers, the increasing workload of teachers, insufficient assessments, and differences in the context of each school when implementing the curriculum. These barriers to the success of the implementation of any reforming curriculum show that the policy development process alone will not be enough; therefore, teachers must also be prepared for their classroom experiences and perceptions regarding curriculum changes.

The implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum in Region VIII (Eastern Visayas) has included several methods of support for teachers and school administrators for their implementation of the revised curriculum. DepEd Region VIII has created several memoranda regarding curriculum orientation, teacher capacity building, the collection of monitoring data, and the evaluation of the region's commitment to supporting improved curriculum implementation (DepEd Region VIII, 2024). Although significant efforts have been made by schools and the government to support curriculum implementation through localized training and assistance, there is still little empirical evidence of teachers' understanding about what the new curriculum entails throughout regions of the Philippines.

In the context of Eastern Samar, it may be especially difficult for schools and teachers to be able to implement a new curriculum due to the socio-economic and geographic differences that exist within its boundaries. Differences such as the availability of instructional materials or the presence/absence of schools with different levels of infrastructure; access to technology; differences in the characteristics of students and teachers; differences in teachers' workloads, etc.)

While several studies have examined the reform of curricular materials and processes at the national level, there has been very little study of teachers' understanding of these reforms as they relate to learning environments within schools, especially within the context of public elementary schools located in Eastern Samar. Most of the literature available today focuses on student learning outcomes, curriculum policy and

teacher preparedness, along with very few, if any, studies that focus on teachers' perceptions of curriculum content, methods of making curriculum, methods of evaluating student progress, methods for accessing resources to support student learning and methods of overcoming challenges in implementing new curricula.

Therefore it is reasonable to believe there is a significant need for localised empirical investigations to examine this issue. There is still very little empirical evidence available about whether or not demographic characteristics influence teachers' perceptions of the new curriculum of the Department of Education, or to relate those perceptions to the curriculum implementation experiences of public elementary school teachers in Eastern Samar. Understanding how teachers perceive their experience and how they implement curriculum is critical because the beliefs expressed by teachers are the basis of the way they implement policies regarding the curriculum into the classroom, thus making them well-positioned to report both the strengths and ongoing challenges associated with implementing new curriculum.

To that end, the purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of teachers at Dolores Central Elementary School about the new curriculum of the Department of Education in terms of curriculum content, methods used by teachers to implement curriculum, methods used by teachers to assess student progress, methods used by teachers to access learning and support resources, and barriers experienced by teachers when implementing new curriculum. This study will also examine whether there is a significant relationship between the demographic characteristics of the teachers and their perceptions of the new curriculum. Therefore, this study seeks to fill the gap of research that currently exists on this topic and provide evidence for the development of teacher support systems, teacher professional development programmes, and the development of curriculum resources that will promote successful implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum in Eastern Samar to all local public elementary school teachers.

Statement of the Problem

The implementation of the revised Department of Education (DepEd) curriculum represents a significant educational reform intended to improve the quality of basic education through learner-centered instruction, streamlined learning competencies, and enhanced assessment practices. However, the success of its implementation largely depends on teachers, who serve as the primary implementers of the curriculum. Understanding teachers' perceptions is essential in determining the strengths of the curriculum as well as the challenges encountered during its implementation.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the teacher-respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1 age;
 - 1.2 sex;
 - 1.3 years of teaching experience; and
 - 1.4 grade level handled?
2. What are the teachers' perceptions of the new Department of Education curriculum in terms of:
 - 2.1 curriculum content;



- 2.2 teaching strategies;
- 2.3 assessment methods; and
- 2.4 learning resources?
3. What challenges do teachers encounter in implementing the new Department of Education curriculum?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the demographic profile of the teachers and their perceptions of the new Department of Education curriculum?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research study used a descriptive-correlational research design.

The descriptive portion of the research was to determine and describe teacher-respondent demographics (age, sex, years of teaching, and grade levels taught) as well as teacher perceptions regarding the new Department of Education (DepEd) curriculum regarding curriculum content, teaching strategies, methods of assessing student performance, and learning materials and the challenges they encountered implementing the curriculum.

The correlational portion of the research investigated the existence of a statistically significant correlation between the demographic Profile of the Teacher Respondents and their perceptions of the new DepEd Curriculum. This approach allows for determining the strength of the association between the independent variables—demographic profile—of the teacher respondents and the dependent variable, their perceptions regarding the new DepEd curriculum, without manipulating either.

The Descriptive-Correlational Design was well suited for this research project. Systematic data collection, analysis, and interpretation of the quantitative data regarding the Teacher Respondents' perceived experiences implementing the New DepEd Curriculum were collected while determining the association between demographic characteristics of the respondents and Teacher Respondent perceptions. The results of this research will provide the foundation for understanding Teacher Respondents' experiences with implementing the New DepEd Curriculum; the results are also useful to Education Administrators and Policy Makers in developing support programmes for the effective implementation of the New DepEd Curriculum.

Locale of the Study

Eastern Samar's municipality to implement this qualitative research study for schools, specifically at Dolores Central Elementary School (DCES) in Region VIII, Philippines. The DCES School Division covers grades Kindergarten - 6 and represents one of the largest elementary schools in the municipality of Dolores in Eastern Samar Region VIII.

Dolores Central Elementary School is located in the poblacion district of Dolores, providing students from both urban areas and neighbouring rural Barangays with access to DCES's quality basic education programmes through its established school division.

At the time of this study, Dolores Central Elementary School operated under the early implementation of the Department of Education's revised K-10 or MATATAG curriculum and had already begun offering the complete elementary level education programme.

As a central educational institution, Dolores Central Elementary School employed teachers who came from a variety of backgrounds, were experienced educators at various grade levels, and thus provided an adequate opportunity to explore their perspectives regarding the new curriculum.

DCES was chosen to host the study because it was one of the first schools to implement the new curriculum for the 2025 – 2026 academic year with the responsibility for its implementation being given to the teachers.

Dolores Central Elementary School teachers were the main caregivers in the implementation of the new curriculum, so this provided researchers with a valuable opportunity to gather first-hand experiences on curriculum content, teaching techniques, assessment approaches, and challenges of implementation from the teachers working at Dolores Central Elementary School.

In addition to the ease of access, qualified teacher-respondents, and support from the DCES administration, these factors combined made Dolores Central Elementary School an ideal location to conduct this research study. The findings obtained from Dolores Central Elementary School provided valuable insights to help develop school-level strategies for developing the curriculum via School Development Plans and Professional Development.

Respondents of the Study

The sample in this study included 56 teachers at Dolores Central Elementary School (DCES) during SY 2025-2026. These teachers were considered to be the principal users of the new Department of Education (DepEd) curriculum and had direct insight into how the new curriculum was put into practice in the classroom. Their insights contributed greatly to understanding the successes and difficulties in implementing the revised DepEd curriculum.

The sample consisted of teachers who taught grades K-6 and represented different age ranges and genders, as well as years of teaching experience and grade level taught. Therefore, the different demographic characteristics of these respondents enabled the study to analyze whether demographic characteristic differences impacted respondents' perceptions of the new DepEd curriculum.

Total enumeration sampling was utilized for this study. Since the total number of teachers at Dolores Central Elementary School was 56, all qualified teachers from this group were invited to participate and were included as respondents. This sampling method prevented bias and allowed for capturing all teacher perceptions at Dolores Central Elementary School.

Inclusion criteria were established to determine who could participate in this study. Respondents to this study had to be either permanent or contractual teachers, who were currently teaching at DCES, and had to be actively implementing the new DepEd curriculum. Teachers who were on leave, solely serving



in an administrative capacity, or chose not to participate could not be included.

Utilizing total enumeration of the entire teaching population was deemed suitable since the overall size was manageable, thereby allowing the researcher to capture comprehensive data from all DCES teachers' perceptions and experiences of the implementation of the new DepEd curriculum.

Research Instruments

The primary instrument used in this study was a researcher-made survey questionnaire designed to determine the perceptions of teachers regarding the implementation of the new Department of Education (DepEd) curriculum. The questionnaire was developed based on the objectives of the study, relevant literature on curriculum implementation, and existing DepEd policies and guidelines related to the revised K to 10 or MATATAG Curriculum. To ensure that the instrument adequately measured the variables under investigation, it was subjected to content validation by experts in educational management, curriculum and instruction, and educational research before its administration.

Data Gathering

The research was conducted according to a structured protocol so that ethically obtained consistent and valid data were collected.

To develop the research proposal and the researcher-designed survey instrument, the researcher referenced the goal of the study and relevant literature concerning the introduction of the most recent curriculum by the Department of Education (DepEd). The researcher preliminarily submitted the survey instrument to a research guide and to a panel of experts in educational management and research for content validation; based on their feedback, the researcher revised the instrument for clarity, relevance and adequacy.

Once the instrument was validated through Reliability Testing by means of a pilot study administered to a public elementary school teacher outside of the research area, and the Necessary Revisions were made when using the statistical tool Cronbach's Alpha to measure the reliability of the instrument.

After the completion of these steps, the Graduate School gave the researcher a letter of endorsement for the study, and the researcher contacted the Schools Division Superintendent of Schools Division of Eastern Samar at which point, permission was requested to conduct the study. Upon receipt of the approval letter from the Schools Division of Eastern Samar, a formal request letter was sent to the School Head of Dolores Central Elementary School to inform the administration of the objectives' purpose and procedures of the study.

Once the administrators approved the request, the researcher coordinated with the administrators to determine the best time to administer the survey instrument, in order to not disrupt the regular instruction of students or interfere with other activities within the school. Prior to the administering of the survey instrument, the researcher explained to the participants the intent of the study and that taking part in the survey instrument would be voluntary. The participants signed an Informed Consent form for participation in the study, and it was emphasized to the participants that if they did not want to

participate any longer at any time, they could do so without penalty or adverse action.

All teachers who were the respondents were given the opportunity of personally administering the survey instrument by the researcher using the Assisted Administration method. The researcher remained available to clarify any of the instructions and respond to any questions respondents had about the survey instrument. The respondents were given sufficient time to complete the survey instrument, and as soon as they finished, the respondents returned them to the researcher; the researcher provided high retrieval rates due to prompt collection of all instruments.

Upon receipt of all instruments, the researcher checked for completeness and consistency of the responses. The completed instruments were entered, organized and tabulated into appropriate Statistical Software and analysed using the statistical tools that were identified for answering the questions and for testing the stated research hypothesis.

Finally, all completed survey instruments and all electronic data files collected from this study are treated with strict confidentiality. All information obtained from respondents is for the sole purpose of academic research only and will be kept in a secured location without revealing the identity of or information about respondents.

Analysis of Data

The data gathered were analyzed using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistics to answer the research problems. The level of significance was set at 0.05.

For SOP 1. The demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, years of teaching experience, and grade level handled was analyzed using frequency count and percentage.

For SOP 2. The teachers' perceptions of the new Department of Education curriculum in terms of curriculum content, teaching strategies, assessment methods, and learning resources were analyzed using the weighted mean and standard deviation.

For SOP 3. The challenges encountered by teachers in implementing the new Department of Education curriculum were analyzed using the weighted mean and standard deviation.

For SOP 4. The significant relationship between the respondents' demographic profile and their perceptions of the new Department of Education curriculum was determined using the Chi-Square Test of Independence. The null hypothesis was rejected when the p-value was less than 0.05 and accepted when the p-value was greater than or equal to 0.05.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to established ethical standards throughout the research process. Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the appropriate authorities and the School Head of Dolores Central Elementary School. Participation of the respondents was entirely voluntary, and informed consent was secured before the administration of the questionnaire. The respondents were informed of the purpose of the study, their right to decline or withdraw at any time without penalty, and the confidentiality of their responses. To protect their privacy, no personal identifiers were collected, and



all information was treated with strict confidentiality and was used solely for academic and research purposes.

RESULTS

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 1

Distribution of Respondents According to Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	11	19.64
Female	45	80.36
Total	56	100.00

Table 1 shows that 45 respondents, or 80.36%, were female, while 11 respondents, or 19.64%, were male. The teaching workforce of Dolores Central Elementary School was therefore predominantly female.

The finding reflected the continuing feminization of elementary education, in which women constitute a large proportion of the teaching workforce. However, the unequal distribution did not necessarily reduce the value of the findings because the respondents represented the actual composition of the school. The results should nevertheless be interpreted as being largely reflective of female teachers' experiences.

Table 2

Distribution of Respondents According to Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20–29 years old	1	1.79
30–39 years old	11	19.64
40–49 years old	24	42.86
50 years old and above	20	35.71
Total	56	100.00

The largest group consisted of teachers aged 40–49 years, representing 42.86% of the respondents. This was followed by teachers aged 50 years and above, comprising 35.71%. Teachers aged 30–39 years accounted for 19.64%, while only one respondent, or 1.79%, belonged to the 20–29 age group.

The results indicate that most respondents were mature teachers who had likely experienced multiple curriculum transitions. Their professional maturity may have enabled them to compare the new curriculum with earlier curriculum frameworks and provide informed assessments of its content, pedagogy, assessment system, and resource requirements. However, the limited representation of younger teachers means that the findings may not fully reflect the perspectives of newly appointed teachers.

Teachers' Perceptions of the New DepEd Curriculum

Table 5

Summary of Teachers' Perceptions of the New DepEd Curriculum

Dimension	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation	Rank
Curriculum content	3.62	0.49	Strongly Agree	1
Teaching strategies	3.56	0.46	Strongly Agree	2
Assessment methods	3.50	0.47	Strongly Agree	3
Learning resources	3.16	0.60	Agree	4
Overall	3.46	0.44	Strongly Agree	

Table 3

Distribution of Respondents According to Years of Teaching Experience

Years of Teaching Experience	Frequency	Percentage
1–5 years	1	1.79
6–10 years	3	5.36
11–15 years	17	30.36
16 years and above	35	62.50
Total	56	100.00

Most respondents had 16 years or more of teaching experience, accounting for 62.50% of the total. Seventeen respondents, or 30.36%, had served for 11–15 years. Only four teachers had ten years or fewer of teaching experience.

The findings show that the respondents were predominantly experienced educators. Their extended service meant that they had likely implemented previous curriculum reforms and possessed sufficient classroom experience to evaluate the practicality of the new curriculum. Although experience may strengthen curriculum judgment, veteran teachers may also require sustained professional updating because curriculum changes introduce new competencies, assessment procedures, instructional expectations, and technological demands. UNESCO (2023) emphasized that teacher development should be treated as a continuous professional process rather than a one-time training activity.

Table 4

Distribution of Respondents According to Grade Level Handled

Grade Level	Frequency	Percentage
Kindergarten	7	12.50
Grade 1	8	14.29
Grade 2	9	16.07
Grade 3	9	16.07
Grade 4	6	10.71
Grade 5	9	16.07
Grade 6	8	14.29
Total	56	100.00

The respondents were distributed across Kindergarten to Grade 6. Grades 2, 3, and 5 had the highest number of respondents, with nine teachers each. Grade 4 had the fewest respondents, with six teachers.

The distribution indicates that the findings incorporated experiences from both early-grade and upper-elementary teachers. This was important because curriculum implementation requirements may differ according to learners' developmental levels, subject content, assessment expectations, and the availability of grade-specific instructional materials. The representation of all grade levels enhanced the breadth of the school-level assessment.



Table 5 shows that the teachers had an overall positive perception of the new DepEd curriculum, as indicated by the overall mean of 3.46 and standard deviation of 0.44. Curriculum content obtained the highest mean of 3.62, followed by teaching strategies at 3.56 and assessment methods at 3.50. Learning resources received the lowest mean of 3.16, although it was still interpreted as Agree.

The results suggest that teachers generally accepted the educational principles and instructional directions of the new curriculum. They viewed its content, recommended teaching strategies, and assessment approaches positively. However, their comparatively lower evaluation of learning resources indicates that favorable perceptions of the curriculum did not

necessarily mean that all implementation requirements were adequately available.

The findings support DepEd Order No. 10, s. 2024, which positioned the MATATAG Curriculum as a reform designed to strengthen foundational competencies, decongest curriculum content, improve instructional delivery, and provide greater responsiveness to learners' needs (Department of Education [DepEd], 2024a). The findings also align with recent Philippine studies in which teachers generally recognized the benefits of the MATATAG Curriculum while simultaneously identifying gaps in training, resources, workload management, and implementation support (Abaiz et al., 2025).

Curriculum Content

Table 6

Teachers' Perceptions in Terms of Curriculum Content

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation	Rank
The new curriculum is relevant to learners' needs.	3.64	0.52	Strongly Agree	2
The competencies in the curriculum are clearly stated.	3.59	0.57	Strongly Agree	4
The curriculum helps develop learners' critical-thinking skills.	3.63	0.52	Strongly Agree	3
The curriculum content is appropriate for elementary learners.	3.57	0.57	Strongly Agree	5
The curriculum promotes learner-centered education.	3.68	0.47	Strongly Agree	1
Composite Mean	3.62	0.49	Strongly Agree	

The teachers strongly agreed that the curriculum content was relevant, clearly articulated, developmentally appropriate, and supportive of critical thinking. The highest-rated statement was that the curriculum promoted learner-centered education, with a mean of 3.68. The curriculum's relevance to learners' needs followed closely, with a mean of 3.64.

These findings indicate that the respondents recognized the intended shift from content-heavy instruction toward focused, learner-responsive, and competency-based education. Teachers appeared to perceive that the new curriculum provided greater opportunities for active participation and the development of higher-order thinking skills.

UNESCO's curriculum-development guidance emphasizes that contemporary curricula should be relevant, inclusive, transformative, and responsive to learners' actual contexts rather than being limited to the transmission of subject content (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2023). Similarly, the MATATAG Curriculum sought to reduce curriculum congestion and concentrate instructional time on essential foundational competencies (DepEd, 2024a). The high ratings given by the respondents therefore suggest that the intended features of the reform were visible and understandable at the classroom level.

Teaching Strategies

Table 7

Teachers' Perceptions in Terms of Teaching Strategies

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation	Rank
The curriculum encourages interactive teaching strategies.	3.66	0.48	Strongly Agree	1
Suggested teaching methods can be applied in class.	3.61	0.49	Strongly Agree	2
The curriculum allows flexibility in teaching.	3.59	0.50	Strongly Agree	3
The curriculum improves learner participation.	3.57	0.50	Strongly Agree	4
Adequate training was received for curriculum implementation.	3.38	0.65	Strongly Agree	5
Composite Mean	3.56	0.46	Strongly Agree	

The teaching-strategies dimension obtained a composite mean of 3.56. Teachers rated the curriculum's encouragement of interactive teaching strategies highest, with a mean of 3.66. They also strongly agreed that the suggested teaching methods were applicable, flexible, and capable of improving learner participation.

Although the statement concerning adequate training remained within the Strongly Agree category, it obtained the lowest mean of 3.38 and the highest standard deviation of 0.65. This indicates greater variation in respondents' experiences

with professional preparation. Some teachers may have received sufficient training, whereas others may have required more sustained coaching, demonstrations, or grade-specific technical assistance.

UNICEF's regional analysis found that teachers are among the most influential school-level factors affecting learning, but many Southeast Asian education systems do not consistently provide sufficient preparation, continuing development, and working support for effective instruction (UNICEF, 2022). DepEd's implementation guidance likewise



required capacity building, Learning Action Cell sessions, collaborative expertise activities, and continuing technical assistance for curriculum implementers (DepEd, 2023). Thus, the lower rating for training suggests that orientation activities

should be followed by continuous school-based professional learning.

Assessment Methods

Table 8

Teachers' Perceptions in Terms of Assessment Methods

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation	Rank
Assessment methods are aligned with learning competencies.	3.55	0.50	Strongly Agree	1
The curriculum promotes fair assessment of learners.	3.52	0.50	Strongly Agree	2
Assessment tools are easy to administer.	3.46	0.54	Strongly Agree	4
Performance-based assessments evaluate learner understanding.	3.50	0.51	Strongly Agree	3
The grading system under the curriculum is effective.	3.45	0.50	Strongly Agree	5
Composite Mean	3.50	0.47	Strongly Agree	

Teachers strongly agreed that the assessment methods were aligned with learning competencies, as shown by the highest mean of 3.55. They also viewed the assessment system as fair and recognized the usefulness of performance-based assessment in determining learners' understanding.

The grading system and ease of administering assessment tools obtained slightly lower ratings. These results indicate that teachers generally accepted the conceptual basis of the assessment system but may have experienced some operational difficulty in implementing particular tools and grading procedures.

Assessment is a central part of curriculum implementation because it determines whether intended competencies have been acquired and provides evidence for instructional adjustment. Recent curriculum literature argues that teachers, assessment practices, instructional materials, and classroom technologies should be treated as interconnected components of reform rather than as separate implementation concerns (Nusche et al., 2023). The findings therefore suggest a need for additional exemplars, scoring guides, assessment templates, and collaborative moderation activities to improve consistency and ease of administration.

Learning Resources

Table 9

Teachers' Perceptions in Terms of Learning Resources

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation	Rank
Adequate learning materials are available.	3.00	0.79	Agree	4
Teachers are provided with sufficient instructional resources.	2.95	0.82	Agree	5
The curriculum supports the use of technology in teaching.	3.32	0.61	Strongly Agree	2
Learning resources improve teaching effectiveness.	3.38	0.59	Strongly Agree	1
The school provides the support materials needed by teachers.	3.14	0.67	Agree	3
Composite Mean	3.16	0.60	Agree	

Learning resources obtained the lowest composite mean among the four dimensions. Teachers strongly agreed that learning resources improved teaching effectiveness and that the curriculum supported technology use. However, they only agreed that adequate learning materials and sufficient instructional resources were available.

The lowest-rated statement concerned the sufficiency of instructional resources, with a mean of 2.95. Its standard deviation of 0.82 was also the highest among the learning-resource indicators, showing considerable differences in teachers' access to materials. Some grade levels or subject areas may have had adequate resources, while others may have relied

on teacher-produced, improvised, reproduced, or digitally sourced materials.

This result is consistent with DepEd's decision to provide schools with greater implementation flexibility in response to concerns involving schedules, teacher conditions, and resource availability (DepEd, 2024b). It also supports UNICEF's observation that uneven access to instructional materials, technology, and school support continues to affect teaching and learning across Southeast Asia (UNICEF, 2022). Recent studies of the MATATAG Curriculum similarly identified material constraints and limited instructional resources as recurring barriers to implementation.



Challenges Encountered in Implementing the New Curriculum

Table 10

Challenges Encountered by Teachers

Challenge	Mean	SD	Interpretation	Rank
Lack of instructional materials affects curriculum implementation.	3.59	0.57	Strongly Agree	2
Time constraints make lesson preparation difficult.	3.46	0.54	Strongly Agree	5
Large class size affects effective curriculum implementation.	3.54	0.57	Strongly Agree	3.5
Additional workload affects teaching performance.	3.54	0.57	Strongly Agree	3.5
More training is needed for effective implementation.	3.61	0.53	Strongly Agree	1
Composite Mean	3.55	0.46	Strongly Agree	

Table 10 shows that teachers strongly agreed that they encountered challenges in implementing the curriculum, with a composite mean of 3.55. The need for more training was ranked first, with a mean of 3.61, followed by the lack of instructional materials at 3.59. Large class size and additional workload obtained identical means of 3.54, while time constraints received a mean of 3.46.

The findings present an important contrast. Teachers had positive perceptions of the curriculum's content, strategies, and assessment principles, but they simultaneously experienced substantial implementation challenges. This means that the respondents did not necessarily reject the reform; rather, they required stronger institutional conditions to implement it as intended.

The demand for additional training reinforces the earlier finding that professional preparation was the lowest-rated teaching-strategy indicator. Initial orientation may have introduced curriculum principles, but teachers may still have required practical demonstrations, contextualized lesson exemplars, assessment workshops, coaching, mentoring, and sustained LAC sessions.

Recent Philippine evidence has likewise shown that MATATAG implementation challenges frequently include insufficient professional development, lack of instructional resources, preparation demands, and additional workload.

UNESCO (2021) further stressed that teacher development should form a continuous continuum of professional learning and collaboration rather than be restricted to isolated training sessions.

The findings concerning workload and time constraints also imply that curriculum reform creates additional planning and documentation demands, particularly during the transition period. Teachers must become familiar with revised competencies, prepare new lessons, locate or develop materials, adjust assessments, and interpret new implementation guidelines while continuing their regular teaching and administrative responsibilities. These conditions may reduce the time available for individualized instruction and reflective teaching if adequate support is not provided.

Relationship Between Demographic Profile and Teachers' Perceptions

Because the overall perception score was continuous and some demographic categories contained very small and unequal group sizes, nonparametric tests were used. The Mann-Whitney U test was applied to sex, while the Kruskal-Wallis H test was applied to age, years of teaching experience, and grade level handled. The level of significance was set at .05.

Table 11

Relationship Between Demographic Profile and Teachers' Perceptions

Demographic Variable	Statistical Test	Test Statistic	p-value	Decision on the Null Hypothesis	Interpretation
Sex	Mann-Whitney U	245.00	.967	Fail to reject	Not significant
Age	Kruskal-Wallis H	3.95	.267	Fail to reject	Not significant
Years of teaching experience	Kruskal-Wallis H	1.57	.667	Fail to reject	Not significant
Grade level handled	Kruskal-Wallis H	5.79	.447	Fail to reject	Not significant

As shown in Table 11, sex was not significantly associated with teachers' perceptions of the new curriculum, $U = 245.00$, $p = .967$. Age also showed no significant difference, $H = 3.95$, $p = .267$. Similarly, years of teaching experience, $H = 1.57$, $p = .667$, and grade level handled, $H = 5.79$, $p = .447$, were not significantly related to curriculum perceptions. Since all probability values were greater than the .05 significance level, the null hypothesis was not rejected. Teachers' perceptions of the new DepEd curriculum did not significantly vary according to sex, age, years of teaching experience, or grade level assignment.

The results imply that the favorable perception of the curriculum was generally shared across demographic groups. Male and female teachers, younger and older teachers, less

experienced and veteran teachers, and teachers from different grade levels showed broadly comparable evaluations of the curriculum.

This consistency may be explained by the fact that all respondents worked within the same school environment, received similar school-level directives, and implemented the same national curriculum policy. Shared implementation conditions may have exerted greater influence on perception than individual demographic characteristics. Factors such as access to materials, quality of training, school leadership, technical assistance, workload, and collegial support may therefore be more relevant than age, sex, or length of service.

The findings are consistent with implementation research showing that teacher beliefs and implementation



behavior are influenced not only by personal characteristics but also by professional efficacy, stress, institutional climate, training, and implementation support (Williford et al., 2023). Nevertheless, the absence of statistically significant demographic differences should be interpreted cautiously because some groups, particularly teachers aged 20–29 years and those with fewer than ten years of experience, contained very few respondents.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The teaching workforce of Dolores Central Elementary School was composed primarily of experienced female teachers assigned across all elementary grade levels, providing a diverse and credible representation of curriculum implementers.
2. The respondents held a highly positive perception of the new department of education curriculum, particularly regarding its curriculum content, learner-centered orientation, teaching strategies, and assessment methods.
3. Although teachers viewed the curriculum favorably, they identified insufficient learning resources and instructional materials as areas requiring improvement, indicating that implementation support remained an important concern.
4. The respondents experienced several challenges during curriculum implementation, particularly the need for additional professional development, adequate instructional materials, manageable workloads, and sufficient preparation time.
5. The respondents' demographic characteristics did not significantly influence their perceptions of the new department of education curriculum. This implies that teachers shared relatively similar views regarding the curriculum regardless of their personal and professional characteristics.
6. Overall, the successful implementation of the new department of education curriculum depends not only on the quality of the curriculum itself but also on continuous teacher capacity building, adequate instructional resources, effective school leadership, and sustained institutional support.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. School administrators should continue providing instructional supervision, coaching, and mentoring to assist teachers in effectively implementing the new Department of Education curriculum. Regular Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, classroom observations, and technical assistance activities should be strengthened to address teachers' identified needs.
2. The Department of Education should intensify teacher capacity-building programs by providing continuous professional development, curriculum orientation, and specialized training focusing on instructional strategies, classroom assessment, and curriculum implementation.

3. School officials and education stakeholders should prioritize the provision of adequate instructional materials, teaching resources, and technological support to ensure the effective implementation of the curriculum across all grade levels.
4. Teachers should actively participate in professional development activities, collaborative lesson planning, and peer mentoring to continuously improve their instructional practices and enhance curriculum implementation.
5. School leaders should explore strategies to reduce teachers' administrative workload and provide sufficient time for lesson preparation, instructional planning, and curriculum implementation to improve teaching effectiveness.
6. Future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies involving larger samples, multiple schools, districts, or divisions to validate the findings of this study. Future investigations may also examine additional variables such as instructional leadership, teacher self-efficacy, organizational support, job satisfaction, or learner outcomes to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the implementation of the new Department of Education curriculum.

Conflict of Interest

The researcher declared that no actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest existed in the conduct of this study. The research was carried out solely for academic purposes, and no financial, professional, or personal relationships influenced the design, data collection, analysis, interpretation, or reporting of the findings. The respondents were not subjected to any form of coercion or undue influence, and all information obtained was treated with honesty, objectivity, and strict confidentiality. The researcher remained impartial throughout the entire research process to ensure the integrity, credibility, and trustworthiness of the study.

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