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Evaluating Teachers' Perceptions on the First Year of MATATAG Curriculum Implementation among Selected Schools: A Quantitative Analysis

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Abstract

The MATATAG Curriculum is a newly introduced educational reform initiative in the Philippines that aims to enhance foundational skills, promote learner-centered instruction, and streamline learning competencies. Given its phased implementation, understanding the perspectives of key stakeholders is critical for ensuring its effectiveness and sustainability. This study aimed to evaluate the perceptions of teachers on the first-year implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum, focusing on their adaptation, challenges encountered, perceived impact on teaching and learning, and overall implementation effectiveness. A quantitative-descriptive and correlational research design was employed, involving 102 Grade 1, 4, and 7 teachers from nine public and private schools across Misamis Occidental, Lanao del Norte, and Zamboanga del Norte. Data were gathered through a validated researcher-made questionnaire and analyzed using weighted mean, Mann–Whitney U test, Kruskal–Wallis H test, and Spearman correlation coefficient. Results revealed that teachers generally perceived the implementation as mostly effective, with moderate levels of adaptation and perceived impact. However, moderate challenges were noted, particularly in time management, resource availability, and instructional pacing. Significant differences in perception emerged based on type of school, age, and years of experience, while no significant relationships were found between perceptions and teachers' familiarity, training frequency, experience length or grade level taught. The findings suggest that implementation success is shaped by contextual factors beyond individual qualifications, emphasizing the need for system-level support and adaptive implementation strategies.

Keywords: MATATAG Curriculum, teacher perceptions, curriculum implementation, instructional challenges, educational reform

Chapter 1
THE PROBLEM AND A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Curriculum reform has always been a cornerstone of educational improvement, particularly in addressing pressing concerns about the quality and relevance of basic education. In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) introduced the MATATAG Curriculum in 2023 as a significant response to issues such as congested content, low foundational learning skills, and poor international performance rankings among Filipino learners (DepEd, 2023). This new curriculum aims to emphasize foundational literacy, numeracy, and values education while promoting flexibility and decongestion of learning competencies. According to UNESCO (2021), post-pandemic recovery requires education systems to be responsive and equitable, and the MATATAG Curriculum reflects this global call by focusing on learner mastery and teacher support. As the curriculum continues its phased rollout, particularly in Grades 1, 4, and 7 during its first year of implementation, it becomes essential to evaluate how well teachers, the primary implementers, are adapting to and responding to these changes.

Several studies have examined early perceptions of MATATAG implementation, mostly through qualitative inquiry. Saro et al. (2024) explored how teachers viewed the transition, noting a mix of optimism and concern regarding readiness, pacing, and the sufficiency of instructional materials. Amaro et al. (2024) found that History and Geography teachers appreciated the curriculum's focus on critical thinking but encountered challenges in aligning new competencies with existing lesson plans. Similarly, Edera and Purganan (2024) reported that while educators supported the intent behind the MATATAG Curriculum, they experienced inconsistencies in training and resource delivery. These studies revealed emerging themes such as the need for greater institutional support, teacher adaptation to student-centered methodologies, and the pressure to meet learning goals under new competency-based structures. These insights offer a rich foundation, but they remain mostly anecdotal and context-specific.

What remains lacking in the existing literature is a comprehensive, large-scale quantitative analysis that systematically measures teachers' perceptions across key implementation areas. No standardized instrument has yet been developed and tested to capture teachers' experiences based on measurable indicators such as curriculum adaptation, instructional strategies, assessment alignment, and institutional support. Furthermore, current findings are predominantly narrative in nature and do not explore statistical relationships between teacher characteristics and their curriculum perceptions. This gap highlights the need to construct a reliable, validated tool that can be used to assess the implementation process in a manner that is both empirical and scalable.

This study aimed to evaluate teachers' perceptions on the first-year implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum through a structured quantitative approach. Specifically, it gathered data from Grades 1, 4, and 7 teachers in selected public and private schools in Lanao del Norte, Misamis Occidental, and Zamboanga del Norte, where the MATATAG Curriculum has been initially implemented. The study assessed their levels of adaptation, the challenges they encountered, and their views on the curriculum's impact on teaching, classroom engagement, and student learning and engagement, and perceived overall effectiveness of the curriculum implemented. The findings will contribute to the development of a validated instrument and provide empirical data to inform policy refinements, training programs, and the broader rollout of the MATATAG Curriculum in the Philippines.

Review of Related Literature

The MATATAG K–10 curriculum is a recent educational reform in the Philippines introduced in 2023 as

part of the "Bansang Makabata, Batang Makabansa" initiative under then-Education Secretary Sara Duterte (Senate of the Philippines, 2023). This reform was conceived in response to longstanding issues with the K–12 curriculum, including an overloaded content structure, excessive teaching demands within limited time, and generally poor performance of Filipino learners in assessments (Senate of the Philippines, 2023). In Filipino, matatag means steadfast or strong, reflecting the reform's goal to strengthen basic education. The MATATAG curriculum aims to decongest the curriculum by trimming down learning competencies and refocusing on foundational skills—literacy, numeracy, and essential values education (Senate of the Philippines, 2023; Department of Education, 2023). By streamlining content, the Department of Education (DepEd) intended to make learning more mastery-oriented and less overwhelming for both students and teachers.

Several key features characterize the MATATAG curriculum. Firstly, it significantly reduces the number of learning competencies—reports indicate that up to 70% of the competencies from the previous curriculum were removed, retaining only the most essential 30% (Cebu Daily News, 2023). This reduction addresses prior concerns that an overstuffed curriculum hindered students' mastery of fundamental skills (Senate of the Philippines, 2023). The remaining competencies center on core literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional skills, particularly in early grades, thereby prioritizing depth over breadth (Senate of the Philippines, 2023). Secondly, the curriculum reorganizes subject offerings and time allocations. For example, Grade 1 students now study only five subjects—Language, Reading and Literacy, Mathematics, Makabansa or civics, and Good Manners and Right Conduct—instead of seven, making instruction more manageable (DepEd Teachers Club, 2023). Similar adjustments occur at other grade levels to ensure appropriate focus on key disciplines.

Thirdly, MATATAG places a stronger emphasis on values formation and peace education in line with national mandates and integrates "peace competencies" to foster conflict-resolution skills (Presidential Communications Office, 2023). The reform is also being implemented in phases starting from School Year 2024–2025 (with Kindergarten, Grades 1, 4, and 7), allowing for refinement based on pilot feedback before full nationwide adoption (Presidential Communications Office, 2023). Moreover, the design of MATATAG aligns with 21st-century education goals and international standards. DepEd officials have noted that the revised curriculum includes clearer articulation of 21st-century skills and is "at par with international standards" (DepEd Teachers Club, 2023; Presidential Communications Office, 2023).

This means competencies like technological literacy, critical thinking, and collaboration are woven into learning areas, similar to global trends. Internationally, curriculum reforms in recent decades have trended toward exactly these priorities. For instance, many countries have revised their curricula to focus on core competencies and skills for modern society (Voogt & Roblin, 2012). Voogt and Roblin (2012) found that integrating 21st-century skills into curricula improved student outcomes and even teacher satisfaction in various contexts. High-performing education systems such as Finland and Singapore have also reported that new curricula emphasizing critical thinking, problem-solving, and other key skills led to positive shifts in classroom practice and student engagement. The MATATAG curriculum mirrors these global best practices by promoting essential skills and reducing overload, thereby creating a more relevant and future-ready curriculum for Filipino learners. In summary, MATATAG serves as a comprehensive overhaul of the Philippine basic education curriculum, seeking to remedy past shortcomings and align with both local needs and international educational standards.

Teacher Adaptation

Implementing a new curriculum on a large scale requires substantial teacher adaptation. Research across

different countries has consistently shown that teachers' perceptions and sense-making play a critical role in how effectively a curriculum reform translates into classroom practice (Kelchtermans, 2009). In other words, the success of a curriculum change depends greatly on whether teachers understand its objectives, agree with its value, and feel capable of delivering it. Teachers often must adjust their long-established teaching habits, learn new content or methods, and develop new materials to align with a revised curriculum (Johnson & Smith, 2018). Flexibility and professional growth are therefore essential. Johnson and Smith (2018) emphasize that educators need to be willing to modify their strategies to meet new standards and student needs, highlighting the role of teacher adaptability in modern classrooms. Similarly, Fullan (2023) notes that ongoing teacher feedback and learning are crucial during curriculum implementation, as teachers refine their practice through an iterative process of adaptation. These international insights underscore that teachers are not just deliverers of curriculum but co-authors of its successful execution, adjusting their techniques and approaches as needed to bring the curriculum to life.

In the Philippine context, the first-year rollout of the MATATAG curriculum demanded considerable adjustment from teachers. Recognizing this, the Department of Education (DepEd) undertook large-scale training programs to prepare teachers for the new curriculum. By May 2024 (just before the formal nationwide implementation in SY 2024–25), over 267,000 teachers and personnel had been trained on MATATAG's content and methods (EDCOM 2, 2024). This professional development aimed to familiarize educators with the restructured competencies and new teaching guides, and to ensure a smoother transition. Despite this preparation, teachers still needed to internalize and adapt to the changes in real classroom settings. Early reports from the pilot implementation indicate that many teachers were "still adjusting to the new curriculum" even several months into the school year (EDCOM 2, 2024). Adjustments included re-sequencing their lesson plans according to the new competency flow and developing new learning materials or activities aligned with MATATAG's simplified scope. For instance, a Grade 1 teacher now focusing on five subjects had to adapt their daily schedule and integrate content differently than under the old seven-subject setup. These shifts required not only understanding the new curriculum on paper but also experimenting with teaching it effectively in practice.

A recurring theme in local studies is the need for adequate support and time for teachers during this transition. Abaiz, Baluro, Dolotallas, Gimeno, and Pomasin (2025), in a qualitative study of Grade 1 and 4 teachers in Cebu City, found that while teachers were generally positive about MATATAG's goals, they felt additional support, training, and time were necessary for successful implementation. The participants reported that the first year of MATATAG came with increased demands—such as learning new content standards and adjusting to new pacing guides—which could be overwhelming without proper mentoring and resources. This finding is consistent with earlier Philippine research on curriculum change. During the initial K-12 rollout in the 2010s, teachers similarly faced steep learning curves; Oracion (2014) noted gaps in teacher readiness and systemic support in the K-12 reform's early stages. Pascua (2020) also documented significant resource and training gaps from teachers' perspectives during K-12 implementation, which hindered their ability to meet the new curriculum's demands. These historical challenges provided lessons that DepEd aimed to heed for MATATAG. For example, the phased implementation of MATATAG (starting with select grade levels) was designed to avoid overwhelming all teachers at once and to incorporate feedback before scaling up. Nevertheless, the first year remained a period of adjustment. Teachers had to adapt instruction styles, assessment methods, and classroom routines to align with MATATAG's objectives. Their ability to adapt was, and continues to be, crucial: as one analysis pointed out, a curriculum can only be as effective as the teachers who deliver it, and alignment

with teachers' real-world classroom experience is vital for success (Abaiz et al., 2025). In sum, teacher adaptation in the MATATAG curriculum's first year has involved extensive training, on-the-ground adjustments, and a call for ongoing support—reflecting both the challenges and the resilience of educators in embracing curricular change.

Challenges Encountered in the Implementation

No major curriculum reform is implemented without encountering challenges, and the first year of MATATAG was no exception. Globally, education literature notes a common set of hurdles that tend to arise with new curricula. Harrison (2018) observes that teachers often face classroom-level obstacles such as insufficient instructional time to cover new material, a lack of appropriate teaching resources, misalignment of assessment with the new curriculum, and initial resistance to change (Abaiz et al., 2025). These challenges can stem from the curriculum itself (if too ambitious or unclear) or from external factors like inadequate training and support. In many cases, teachers feel pressure to meet new standards quickly, which can lead to stress or superficial implementation. As Fullan (2007) famously argued, "implementation dip" is a temporary decline in performance and confidence that educators experience when a change is first introduced. This dip is a natural part of the change process, but it underscores why robust support systems are needed. Comparative studies have shown that without proper guidance, even well-designed curricula can falter in practice due to these real-world constraints (Desimone, 2023).

During MATATAG's initial implementation in the Philippines, teachers reported several interrelated challenges. A qualitative study of teachers' perspectives highlighted issues with time constraints and pacing, noting that even with fewer competencies, instructors felt pressure to ensure students mastered the essentials within the allotted time (Abaiz et al., 2025). Teachers found that adjusting to the new sequence of topics sometimes required relearning optimal pacing: some underestimated how much time foundational exercises (like intensive phonics or basic math drills) would take under MATATAG, leading to rushed lessons toward the end of the quarter (Abaiz et al., 2025). Additionally, limited resources emerged as a concern. Because MATATAG significantly revamped content, many existing textbooks and teaching materials became partially obsolete or misaligned. Teachers in the first-year pilot had to create or search for new materials appropriate to the revised curriculum, and not all schools had these ready (Abaiz et al., 2025). The need for updated learning materials (e.g., worksheets, visual aids, assessment tools) put extra workload on teachers, especially those in resource-poor schools.

Another challenge was the learning curve for teaching new content or employing new pedagogical approaches recommended by MATATAG. For example, MATATAG encourages more localized and contextualized examples in lessons, but not all teachers felt confident developing localized content on their own without guidance (Herrera, 2025). This aligns with findings by Perez (2022) that teachers transitioning from the old K-12 to MATATAG initially struggled to modify their teaching practices and often required time to experiment and refine their approach (Abaiz et al., 2025).

Beyond the classroom, systemic and stakeholder-related challenges were also observed. Some educators and teachers' groups voiced concern that the curriculum was being rolled out too quickly. In late 2023, a coalition of teachers even urged DepEd to pause the full rollout of MATATAG, arguing that broader consultation with teachers and careful fine-tuning were needed to develop a "more relevant and responsive curriculum" (DepEd Teachers Club, 2023a). This critique implies that not all teachers felt adequately heard or prepared during the development stage. The term "experimental" was used by critics referencing MATATAG, likely alluding to unresolved issues from the previous K-12 program that they feared might carry over if changes were not well-planned (DepEd Teachers Club, 2023b). Such apprehension highlights

a cultural challenge: teacher buy-in. While many teachers welcomed the focus on basics, others were skeptical due to the mixed outcomes of the prior reform. Managing these perceptions and building trust in the new curriculum was thus another implementation challenge for DepEd. Additionally, the logistics of phasing in the curriculum posed difficulties. Some schools had to handle dual curricula (old and new) for different grade levels, which could strain resources and administrative capacity. School leaders and principals had to ensure that teachers of MATATAG grades got the support they needed, without neglecting the teachers handling the still-old curriculum in other grades.

It is worth noting that these challenges are not unique to the Philippines. Past reforms provide context: when the K–12 curriculum was first introduced, schools similarly grappled with resource gaps and transitional issues, and it took time to iron these out (Abaiz et al., 2025). What is promising is that MATATAG's design and rollout plan show that DepEd anticipated many of these issues (hence the reduced competencies, phased implementation, and early training efforts). Indeed, preliminary evaluations have been actively documenting the challenges and opportunities in MATATAG's first year (EDCOM 2, 2024). By identifying pain points like time management difficulties, material shortages, and training needs in the pilot phase, policymakers can respond with adjustments. In fact, DepEd officials have stated they are taking an "iterative" approach, ready to refine the curriculum based on teacher and student feedback from the first year (Presidential Communications Office, 2024). This adaptive management is crucial: addressing challenges such as providing more teaching guides, adjusting pacing calendars, or enhancing teacher training on difficult content areas will be important for the subsequent years of implementation. The literature suggests that when challenges are met with timely solutions, a reform's initial stumbles can be overcome, leading to improved implementation fidelity and outcomes in the long run (Harrison, 2018).Therefore, acknowledging the hurdles faced in Year 1 of MATATAG not only validates teacher experiences but also guides targeted interventions to bolster the curriculum's success in the coming years.

Perceived Impact on Teaching and Learning

One critical aspect of evaluating a new curriculum is understanding its impact on teaching strategies—essentially, how teachers' instructional methods and classroom practices change (or don't change) as a result of the reform. In the case of MATATAG, early indications show a mix of positive adaptations and continuing adjustments in teaching practice. Because MATATAG streamlined the content and clarified the learning competencies per grade, many teachers found themselves refocusing their strategies to deepen student understanding of the basics. For instance, with reading and literacy now given greater emphasis in early grades, Grade 1 teachers reported spending more time on phonemic awareness and reading comprehension exercises than before. This shift was made possible by the reduced number of subjects and topics, which freed up space in the schedule for reinforcing foundational skills. As a result, some teachers observed that they could teach at a more measured pace and use more interactive or mastery-oriented techniques, rather than rushing through an overcrowded curriculum. An official from DepEd Region 7 noted that educators find the revised curriculum "more manageable to deliver instruction" because of the decongestion (DepEd Teachers Club, 2023a). This suggests that teachers are able to plan and execute lessons with greater ease, likely dedicating appropriate time to each competency without feeling the need to skip or skim topics. A more manageable curriculum enables strategies like differentiated instruction (tailoring activities to different ability levels) and formative assessments to check understanding, since teachers are not as pressured to simply cover content. In short, the initial teacher feedback is that MATATAG's simplification of content has had a beneficial effect on instruction, allowing for clearer focus and potentially improved teaching quality (DepEd Teachers Club, 2023a).

Moreover, classroom management practices have been affected, particularly in terms of time allocation and lesson organization. With fewer subjects in the daily program for lower grades, teachers can organize their classes with longer blocks for literacy and math, which may lead to a calmer, more in-depth learning environment. Teachers have remarked that having only five subjects in Grade 1 (versus seven previously) means fewer transitions during the day and less fragmentation of students' attention (DepEd Teachers Club, 2023a). This can improve classroom management by reducing the frequency of refocusing students on new subjects and by allowing teachers to establish consistent routines for core learning areas. Additionally, MATATAG's emphasis on values education (Makabansa and GMRC) provides homeroom advisers with structured content for character education, which can positively influence classroom climate and student behavior. However, it's also noted that adjusting to new time distributions required some experimentation. Teachers had to learn how to optimally use the longer periods for core subjects—for example, balancing between direct instruction, skills practice, and enrichment activities—under the MATATAG guidelines. In the pilot implementation, some educators admitted they were initially unsure how to pace their lessons in the new scheme and needed a few months to fine-tune their daily plans (EDCOM 2, 2024). This is a normal part of adapting teaching strategies: as teachers become more comfortable with MATATAG, one can expect their classroom management (like timing, transitions, grouping of students, etc.) to become smoother.

From a broader perspective, MATATAG's influence on teaching strategies aligns with trends observed in other educational systems undertaking curricular reforms. When curricula are updated to stress competencies and deep understanding, teachers often shift from lecture-heavy approaches to more student-centered pedagogies. International studies document cases where teachers, in response to new national curricula, increased their use of collaborative learning, problem-based learning, and inquiry methods to cultivate critical thinking and other targeted skills (Voogt & Roblin, 2012). In Finland's recent curriculum reform, for example, teachers adopted more interdisciplinary projects and discussion-based lessons, which improved student engagement (Leat et al., 2017). Similarly, the inclusion of 21st-century skills in Singapore's curriculum reforms led teachers to incorporate more ICT (technology) tools and group work in their classes (Koh, 2015). These shifts echo the intent of MATATAG: the curriculum encourages contemporary teaching approaches that move away from rote memorization towards application and analysis. Teacher perceptions from the Philippines suggest some of this is happening. One preliminary assessment found that the MATATAG curriculum "improves teacher instruction," meaning educators are teaching in ways that are considered more effective or pedagogically sound under the new system (EDCOM 2, 2024). Importantly, this was achieved without increasing teachers' working hours or stress levels, as the same study noted no significant change in teachers' reported workload or well-being measures in the pilot year (EDCOM 2, 2024). This is a promising sign: it implies that MATATAG's changes are not overburdening teachers with extra work, but rather are enabling better teaching within the existing workload.

That said, not all impacts on teaching practice have been purely positive; challenges in strategy adaptation were also evident. Some teachers struggled with pacing and delivering the curriculum effectively in the early months, which in turn affected classroom management. The descriptive study by Abaiz et al. (2025) noted that time management was a common concern—teachers found it tricky to judge how quickly to progress through topics, occasionally running short on time for planned activities. This indicates that while the curriculum is leaner, ensuring all students grasp the essentials might still require additional time or new strategies, such as remedial sessions or more efficient instructional techniques. Additionally, a need

for more instructional resources and exemplars was reported. When teachers lack concrete examples or teaching guides for the new content, they may fall back on old methods out of convenience, which can blunt the intended pedagogical shift of the new curriculum. To mitigate this, ongoing professional development is crucial. Effective training can model new teaching strategies (for instance, demonstrating how to teach reading through phonics and storytelling under MATATAG's literacy focus) and thereby help teachers gain confidence in applying them. Encouragingly, DepEd did begin teacher upskilling workshops ahead of the rollout (DepEd Teachers Club, 2023b), and many teachers have been proactively sharing best practices in professional learning communities as the year progressed.

A central rationale for implementing the MATATAG curriculum was to improve student learning outcomes, especially in foundational areas, and to better engage learners in the educational process. After the first year of implementation, stakeholders have been keenly observing how the changes are affecting students in the classroom. Teachers' perceptions provide valuable insight here, as they directly witness student performance and engagement day-to-day. According to teachers involved in the pilot, the MATATAG curriculum has indeed yielded some noticeable benefits for student learning. Many educators reported that students showed improved mastery of fundamental skills under the new curriculum, as more time and emphasis were devoted to core competencies (Abaiz et al., 2025). For example, early grade teachers observed that a higher proportion of their class achieved basic literacy and numeracy benchmarks by year's end compared to cohorts under the old curriculum. This aligns with MATATAG's intent: by drilling down on essentials—like reading fluency or arithmetic operations—and eliminating extraneous topics, students can concentrate on truly grasping the basics. Teacher feedback in one study noted that the curriculum "enhanced foundational skills and mastery" (Abaiz et al., 2025). Such anecdotal evidence suggests that students are benefiting academically from a less crowded curriculum that allows reinforcement of key skills. It's worth remembering that the impetus for MATATAG was alarming national assessment results in reading, math, and science; thus, even small gains in these areas are significant.

In terms of student engagement, the response to MATATAG's first year has been cautiously optimistic. Engagement can refer to both behavioral engagement (participation, attentiveness) and emotional engagement (interest, motivation). During the pilot testing phase in late 2023, there were encouraging reports of positive student feedback. DepEd Region 7 officials mentioned that students themselves responded favorably to the new lessons and activities (DepEd Teachers Club, 2023a). Classrooms piloting MATATAG often introduced fresh materials and pedagogies aligned with the new competencies, which appear to have piqued student interest. For instance, some schools incorporated more local context and examples in teaching—an aspect encouraged by MATATAG for relevance—and students found this relatable and thus more engaging (Herrera, 2025). A report from Cebu noted that even parents perceived their children to be more enthusiastic about what they were learning; parents were "happy knowing about the kind of curriculum" being used and the fact that it was pared down to essentials (Oliverio, 2023). This parental feedback indirectly reflects student reception—if children came home feeling less overwhelmed and more interested, parents would naturally view the change positively. Additionally, the curriculum's inclusion of values education and practical life skills can make learning more holistic and engaging. Teachers have described class discussions on values or community issues (part of the Makabansa subject) that drew active participation from students, indicating higher engagement levels in those areas.

However, when it comes to quantitative measures of learning outcome improvements in the first year, the evidence so far is mixed or modest. A preliminary external assessment by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS), which compared pilot MATATAG schools with those still using the old

curriculum, found no immediate significant difference in the percentage of competencies mastered by students (EDCOM 2, 2024). By the end of the school year, both groups of students—MATATAG and non-MATATAG—had covered roughly 90% of the expected competencies, and students in both groups mastered about 81% of those competencies on average (EDCOM 2, 2024). In other words, in purely quantitative terms, MATATAG did not dramatically boost learning outcomes in its pilot year relative to the status quo. Education experts have offered a few interpretations for this. One explanation is that the prior curriculum had already been streamlined (especially during the pandemic via the MELCs—Most Essential Learning Competencies), so the difference in content load wasn't as drastic by 2023 (EDCOM 2, 2024). Another point is that one year is a short time to observe significant learning gains, especially when only certain grade levels (K, 1, 4, 7) were under MATATAG and others were not. The full impact on student achievement might only become evident as the cohort that started with MATATAG moves up through the grades, consistently experiencing the reformed curriculum. Moreover, standardized tests or large-scale assessments that align with MATATAG would be needed to quantitatively capture improvements in learning, and those might lag a couple of years behind the implementation.

It's also important to consider the qualitative aspects of student learning where immediate numbers don't tell the whole story. Teachers have observed that students in MATATAG classes often display better engagement and confidence during lessons. For example, because the curriculum encourages mastery, teachers can ensure most students have grasped a reading skill before moving on, resulting in fewer children left behind and discouraged. This can build students' confidence and willingness to participate. A scoping review by Herrera (2025) on MATATAG implementation noted that stakeholders anticipate improvements particularly in learners' mastery of fundamental skills and more positive attitudes toward learning as the curriculum takes hold. The focus on essential competencies might also reduce student frustration—when curricula are overloaded, students can feel anxious or disengaged because the content moves too fast. By contrast, MATATAG's lighter curriculum could help students feel more competent and supported, thereby increasing their engagement.

International experiences bolster this idea: countries that have pared down curricula and focused on core skills often see student motivation rise because learners experience success more frequently. For instance, studies in countries like Japan and Poland (which undertook curriculum simplification) found that students became more interested in class when they weren't bombarded with excessive information daily (OECD, 2018). Likewise, integrating new teaching approaches—such as the problem-solving and collaborative tasks encouraged by MATATAG—tends to make lessons more interactive and enjoyable for students, further boosting engagement (Voogt & Roblin, 2012).

Perceived Overall Effectiveness of the Implementation

After one year of MATATAG curriculum implementation, the overarching question is how effective this reform has been, as perceived by teachers and supported by initial studies. Overall, the sentiment among many educators is positive but nuanced. Teachers generally acknowledge that the MATATAG curriculum is a step in the right direction for Philippine basic education. In comparative terms, they see it as an improvement over the previous curriculum in key areas such as content relevance, manageability, and focus (Lagbao, 2024). In Lagbao's (2024) study gathering views of experienced teachers and principals, respondents noted significant positive changes in MATATAG compared to its predecessor, citing the streamlined competencies and localized content as major advantages. These changes were perceived as making the curriculum more attuned to learners' needs and the realities of Philippine classrooms. Likewise, the initial pilot feedback compiled by DepEd indicated that the new curriculum has been

"generally well-accepted among stakeholders," including teachers, students, and parents (EDCOM 2, 2024). Such broad acceptance is a crucial marker of effectiveness in the early phase; it suggests that despite challenges, most stakeholders believe in the value of the reform and are willing to support it. Teachers' buy-in, in particular, improved over the course of the year as they saw their students responding well and realized that the changes were not as daunting as initially feared.

Another measure of overall effectiveness is whether the curriculum is meeting its stated objectives. The MATATAG agenda aimed to boost educational quality by enhancing foundational learning, reducing curriculum overload, and improving the well-being of both learners and teachers (Department of Education, 2023). On these fronts, the first year shows mixed but promising results. Teachers widely agree that foundational learning (especially in early grades) received a boost—they could devote more attention to literacy and numeracy, which should yield better outcomes in those areas moving forward (Abaiz et al., 2025). They also confirm that the curriculum is indeed decongested; for example, unnecessary repetition or trivial topics were pruned, and this efficiency is appreciated. In terms of teacher well-being, the picture is cautiously positive. The PIDS evaluation found no increase in teachers' working hours or deterioration in well-being indicators under MATATAG (EDCOM 2, 2024). This is significant because one risk of any reform is that it might unintentionally overburden teachers. In MATATAG's case, maintaining teacher workload at previous levels while improving instructional quality can be viewed as an effective outcome—essentially doing better without doing more. However, MATATAG did not decrease teacher workload (as some might have hoped a trimmed curriculum would), and many teachers still feel quite busy and pressured, which indicates room for improvement through support systems such as instructional materials or reduced administrative tasks.

Despite the generally favorable view, teachers and studies have identified areas where the implementation fell short of full effectiveness, at least in Year 1. One concern is the adequacy of support and resources during rollout. As noted earlier, teachers called for more training, instructional materials, and time to collaborate on best practices (Abaiz et al., 2025). In some instances, the lack of these supports meant that the curriculum's potential wasn't fully realized—a great curriculum on paper still requires strong execution. For example, a teacher might know that MATATAG emphasizes interactive, learner-centered methods, but if they have class sizes of 50 or limited materials, they may struggle to deliver on that promise. This is why recommendations from early research emphasize augmenting teacher support: Lagbao (2024) recommends additional training for educators and development of comprehensive support materials as priorities moving forward. Another noted issue is the implementation process itself. Some critics argued that the rollout was rushed, which may have constrained effectiveness. If some teachers felt unprepared or some schools lacked resources on day one, the effectiveness in those contexts would naturally be lower. Engaging more stakeholders in planning—as teacher groups urged (DepEd Teachers Club, 2023)—and perhaps piloting longer before full rollout might have improved initial effectiveness. Nevertheless, the phased approach mitigated this to an extent, and DepEd's willingness to refine the curriculum demonstrates a commitment to improving effectiveness iteratively (Presidential Communications Office, 2024).

Looking at the bigger picture, the first-year effectiveness of MATATAG can be characterized as moderately high with clear pathways to become very high. The core elements of the reform have proven sound: curriculum decongestion and foundational focus are widely praised and seem to be working as intended. Any shortcomings observed are less about the curriculum design and more about implementation supports or external factors—issues that can be addressed in subsequent years. The Department of

Education has affirmed that MATATAG is meant to be continuously improved as lessons are learned in practice (Presidential Communications Office, 2024). In August 2024, DepEd stated, "whatever the learnings are from that first year, we will… iterate… we are willing to change as we go along" (Presidential Communications Office, 2024). This adaptive mindset is a strong indicator that the implementation's effectiveness will strengthen over time. It echoes scholarly advice that continuous monitoring and optimization of a curriculum are essential to ensuring it meets its goals (Fullan, 2023; Herrera, 2025). Already, initial monitoring by DepEd and PIDS has pinpointed what works and what doesn't, allowing for data-driven refinements.

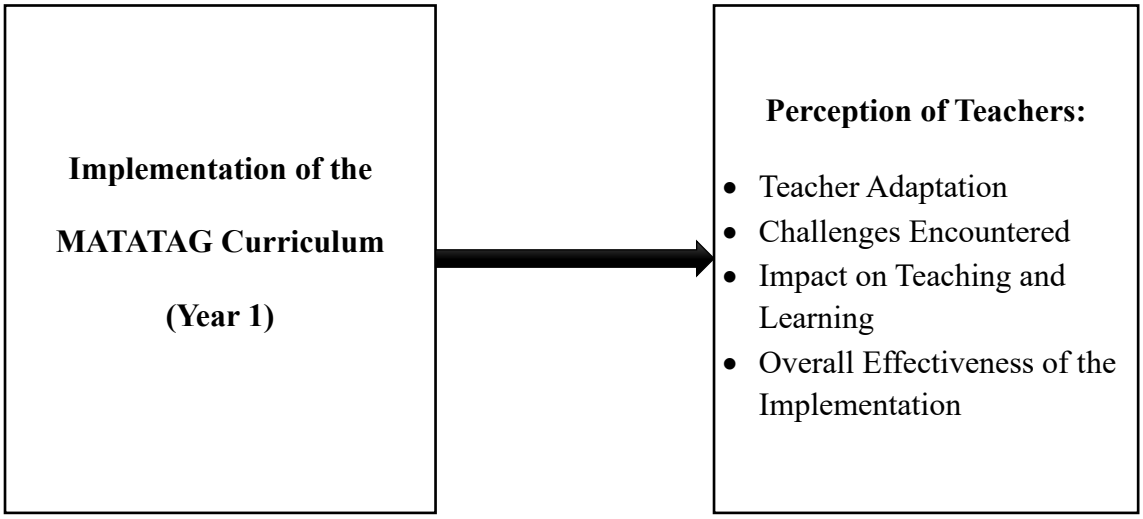
In conclusion, teachers' perceptions and early studies paint MATATAG's first year as a qualified success. The reform is largely meeting its objectives of improving teaching and focusing learning on essentials, with broad support from those involved. At the same time, it has not been a magic bullet—deep-rooted challenges in education mean that gains in achievement and reduced teacher stress will require sustained effort beyond curriculum changes. The literature reviewed supports the notion that MATATAG is on the correct trajectory. By enhancing teacher support systems, providing ample resources, and maintaining an open feedback loop, the DepEd can address the initial shortcomings identified (Lagbao, 2024). This will help ensure that the effectiveness of MATATAG's implementation improves each year, ultimately validating the reform's long-term vision.

Conceptual Framework

This study is focused on the evaluation of the first-year implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum, focusing specifically on the perception of teachers. The conceptual framework is visually represented in Figure 1, which outlines a one-way influence from the independent variable (the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum) to a set of dependent variables collectively representing teacher perceptions across five domains.

Figure 1

Schema of the Study



At the core of the framework is the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum (Year 1), which serves as the independent variable of the study. This variable encapsulates the full scope of the Department of Education's initial rollout of the revised K–10 curriculum in the Philippines. It includes key components such as curriculum design changes, the restructuring and reduction of learning competencies, institutional

support mechanisms, and the phased grade-level deployment that began with Grades 1, 4, and 7. The implementation functions as the central stimulus or intervention whose effects are to be measured through teachers' experiences and responses.

The dependent variable in this study is the perception of teachers, which is operationalized across five interrelated constructs. The first construct, Teacher Adaptation, refers to the extent to which teachers have adjusted their instructional strategies, lesson planning, and assessment practices in response to the new curriculum. It reflects their professional flexibility and responsiveness to reform. The second construct, Challenges Encountered in the Implementation, highlights the various systemic and pedagogical difficulties teachers face during the transition. These may include challenges such as limited instructional materials, time constraints, insufficient training, and large class sizes. The third construct, Perceived Impact on Teaching Strategies and Classroom Management, examines whether and how the MATATAG Curriculum has influenced instructional delivery, time management, pedagogical approaches, and classroom control.

The fourth construct, Perceived Impact on Student Learning and Engagement, focuses on how teachers observe and interpret changes in student outcomes. It particularly considers improvements in foundational skills like literacy and numeracy, as well as changes in classroom participation and motivation. Lastly, Perceived Overall Effectiveness of the Implementation captures the holistic evaluation by teachers on whether the MATATAG Curriculum meets its intended objectives, enhances instructional practices, and is viable for sustained use in Philippine classrooms.

The logic of the framework rests on the assumption that the introduction of a new curriculum leads to a variety of teacher experiences, which subsequently shape their overall perception of the reform's success or failure. Each of the five dependent constructs serves as an indicator of the curriculum's effectiveness as perceived by its frontline implementers—teachers.

Statement of the Problem

The general goal of this study was to evaluate teachers' perceptions of the first-year implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum, focusing on their adaptation, encountered challenges, impact on teaching and learning, and overall curriculum effectiveness.

It sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the demographic profiles of the teachers in terms of:

1.1.Age;
1.2.Gender;
1.3.Highest Educational Attainment;
1.4.Years of Teaching Experience;
1.5.Type of School;
1.6.Number of Trainings Attended Related to the MATATAG Curriculum; and
1.7.Level of Familiarity with the MATATAG Curriculum before Implementation?

2. What are the perceptions of the teachers on the initial implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum in terms of:

2.1.Teacher Adaptation;
2.2.Challenges Encountered;
2.3.Impact on Teaching and Learning; and
2.4.Overall Implementation Effectiveness?

3. Is there a significant difference in teachers' perceptions of the MATATAG Curriculum implementation when grouped according to their demographic profiles?
4. Is there a significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of the MATATAG Curriculum implementation and their:

4.1. Grade Level Taught;
4.2. Level of Familiarity with the Curriculum before Implementation;
4.3. Number of Trainings Attended Related to the Curriculum; and
4.4. Years of Teaching Experience?

Hypotheses

The study has the following hypotheses:

H_{01}: There is no significant difference in teachers' perceptions of the MATATAG Curriculum implementation when grouped according to their demographic profiles

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of the MATATAG Curriculum implementation and their grade level taught, level of familiarity with the curriculum before implementation, number of trainings attended related to the curriculum, and years of teaching experiences.

Scope and Delimitations

This study was focused on evaluating teachers' perceptions of the first-year implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum in selected public and private schools situated in the provinces of Lanao del Norte, Misamis Occidental, and Zamboanga del Norte. These provinces were specifically chosen because the researchers have established professional and institutional linkages with several schools in these areas, which allowed for facilitated access and cooperation during the conduct of the study. he selected schools include: (1) Jimenez Central Elementary School, Jimenez, Misamis Occidental; (2) Carmen Integrated School, Carmen, Jimenez, Misamis Occidental; (3) Felina S. Oaminal National High School, Clarin, Misamis Occidental; (4) Katipunan National High School, Sinacaban, Misamis Occidental; (5) Bacolod Central Integrated School, Poblacion, Bacolod, Lanao del Norte; (6) La Salle University Basic Education Unit, Ozamiz City; (7) Ozamiz City National High School, Bernad Street, Lam-an, Ozamiz City; (8) Faustino Decena Integrated School, Carangan Ozamiz City; and (9) DMC College Foundation, Inc. Integrated School, Dipolog City, Zamboanga del Norte.

The study was delimited to teachers handling Grade 1, Grade 4, and Grade 7 levels, as these were the grade levels initially covered under the phased implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum. Teachers from other grade levels were excluded, as they were still implementing the previous K–12 curriculum at the time of the study. Furthermore, the research was limited to the perspectives of teachers only; inputs from students, parents, school heads, or curriculum developers are outside the scope of this investigation. A quantitative-descriptive research design was employed, utilizing a researcher-made survey questionnaire developed from key themes drawn from existing studies and frameworks related to curriculum implementation. This study did not seek to measure actual student academic performance nor compare implementation effectiveness across regions. Instead, it aimed to gather evidence-based insights into the experiences, challenges, and perceived outcomes of the curriculum from the perspective of its primary implementers—teachers. While the findings may not be generalized to the national level, they are expected to inform future improvements in the rollout of the MATATAG Curriculum, especially in similarly situated educational settings.

Significance of the Study

The results of this study will provide meaningful insights into the initial implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum from the perspective of teachers—the primary agents of curriculum delivery. Specifically, the findings are expected to benefit the following entities:

Department of Education (DepEd)

The study will offer empirical data on the implementation challenges, teacher adaptation levels, and perceived outcomes of the MATATAG Curriculum. These findings can guide the department in making policy adjustments, refining curriculum guidelines, and strengthening teacher training and support systems, especially as implementation progresses nationwide.

School Administrators and Curriculum Planners

Principals, heads of curriculum, and instructional supervisors in public and private schools will benefit from the results as they develop school-based strategies to support teacher adaptation and ensure fidelity to curriculum goals. The findings may inform institutional interventions that enhance classroom management, instructional practices, and student engagement under the MATATAG framework.

Teachers (Particularly Grades 1, 4, and 7)

Teachers who are directly involved in delivering the MATATAG Curriculum will gain awareness of common experiences, challenges, and best practices among their peers. The study encourages reflective teaching and promotes professional discourse on adapting to curriculum reforms effectively.

Teacher Education Institutions

Colleges and universities that prepare future educators can use the study's results to realign their curriculum and training programs with the realities and demands of the MATATAG Curriculum. This ensures that pre-service teachers are better prepared for curriculum transitions and 21st-century instructional expectations.

Local Government Units and Stakeholders in Education

LGUs and education-focused organizations in Lanao del Norte, Misamis Occidental, and Zamboanga del Norte can utilize the findings to understand how local schools are responding to national reforms. This can support collaborative efforts in providing resources, programs, or localized initiatives that respond to specific teacher needs

Students and Their Families

While not directly surveyed, learners and their guardians will ultimately benefit from improvements in curriculum delivery and instructional quality. As teachers become more confident and supported in implementing the curriculum, student learning outcomes and engagement are expected to improve.

Educational Researchers

The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on curriculum implementation, particularly within the Philippine basic education context. Researchers may use the data as a baseline for longitudinal studies or comparative evaluations in other regions.

Chapter 2
METHODOLOGY

This section of the paper presents the research methodologies that were employed in the study. This includes the Research Design, Locale, Respondents, Instruments, Procedure, Statistical Treatment of Data, and Ethical Considerations.

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative-correlational and descriptive research design. The quantitative approach is appropriate because the primary objective of the study is to evaluate and analyze measurable data regarding teachers' perceptions of the first-year implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum. The descriptive component of the study focused on describing teachers' perceptions in Four domains: (1) teacher adaptation, (2) challenges encountered, (3) perceived impact on teaching and learning, (4) overall effectiveness of the implementation. The correlational component investigated whether significant relationships exist between teachers' perceptions of the MATATAG Curriculum and their level of familiarity, number of trainings attended, years of experience, grade level taught, and type of school.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in selected public and private schools located across the provinces of Misamis Occidental, Lanao del Norte, and Zamboanga del Norte. These schools were specifically chosen through convenience sampling, guided by the professional affiliations of the researchers with the institutions. This approach facilitated efficient access to participants, streamlined coordination with school administrators, and ensured smoother data collection processes, particularly given the logistical constraints associated with inter-provincial data gathering

The participating schools were as follows:

(1) Jimenez Central Elementary School, Jimenez, Misamis Occidental;
(2) Carmen Integrated School, Carmen, Jimenez, Misamis Occidental;
(3) Felina S. Oaminal National High School, Clarin, Misamis Occidental;
(4) Katipunan National High School, Sinacaban, Misamis Occidental;
(5) Bacolod Central Integrated School, Poblacion, Bacolod, Lanao del Norte;
(6) La Salle University Basic Education Unit, Ozamiz City;
(7) Ozamiz City National High School, Bernad Street, Lam-an, Ozamiz City;
(8) Faustino Decena Integrated School, Carangan Ozamiz City; and
(9) DMC College Foundation, Inc. Integrated School, Dipolog City, Zamboanga del Norte.

These schools are implementing the MATATAG Curriculum in Grades 1, 4, and 7, which are the grade levels included in the initial phase of the national rollout. The convenience sampling method, while non-random, was deemed appropriate for this preliminary evaluative study, as it enabled access to informed respondents with firsthand experience of the curriculum implementation. This method is also supported in early-stage curriculum research when proximity, resource constraints, and respondent availability are critical factors (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Therefore, the selection of these schools aligns with both the practical and purposive considerations of the research design.

Research Respondents

The respondents of the study were teachers handling Grades 1, 4, and 7 from eight selected public and private schools of the research locales. A total of 102 teacher-respondents participated in the study, representing the teaching personnel from the identified schools.

The respondents were identified through purposive sampling, as they had direct and relevant experience in implementing the MATATAG Curriculum. This non-probability sampling method was employed to ensure that the participants were actively involved in the curriculum's first-year implementation and were therefore in the best position to provide informed responses regarding their adaptation, challenges

encountered, perceived impact on teaching and learning, and overall impressions of the curriculum's effectiveness.

School	Grade Level Taught	Number of Teacher Respondents
Jimenez Central Elementary School	Grade 1	6
	Grade 4	6
Carmen Integrated School	Grade 1	2
	Grade 4	2
	Grade 7	4
Felina S. Oaminal National High School	Grade 7	4
Katipunan National High School	Grade 7	5
Bacolod Central Integrated School	Grade 1	3
	Grade 4	6
	Grade 7	7
La Salle University Basic Education Unit	Grade 7	10
Ozamiz City National High School	Grade 7	17
Faustino Decena Integrated School	Grade 1	4
	Grade 4	6
	Grade 7	4
DMC College Foundation, Inc. Integrated School	Grade 1	3
	Grade 4	4
	Grade 7	9
TOTAL		**102**

Research Instrument

The primary data-gathering tool used in this study was a researcher-made questionnaire developed to evaluate teachers' perceptions of the first-year implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum. The instrument was designed to align directly with the study's research questions and key variables, and it was constructed based on findings from prior related qualitative studies, particularly those of Saro et al. (2024), Abaiz et al. (2025), and Kilag et al. (2024).

The questionnaire consisted of two main parts. Part I gathered demographic information about the respondents, including their age, gender, highest educational attainment, years of teaching experience, grade level taught (Grades 1, 4, or 7), type of school (public or private), number of MATATAG-related training sessions attended, and their self-reported level of familiarity with the MATATAG Curriculum prior to implementation. These variables were included to facilitate analyses of significant differences or relationships across demographic groups.

Part II of the instrument measured teacher perceptions across four core themes: (1) Teacher Adaptation to the MATATAG Curriculum, (2) Challenges Encountered in the Implementation, (3) Perceived Impact on Teaching and Learning, and (4) Perceived Overall Effectiveness of the Implementation. Each theme contained ten Likert-scale items, with responses rated on a five-point scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The interpretation scales for each theme were also structured to reflect the level of agreement and the implied level of adaptation, challenge, or perceived effectiveness.

The content of the items was directly drawn from the literature. For instance, items under "Teacher Adaptation" reflect findings from Saro et al. (2024) and Abaiz et al. (2025) which emphasize instructional flexibility and the need for professional development. Items under "Challenges Encountered" reflect issues of time constraints, material shortages, and support systems reported by Abaiz et al. (2025) and Kilag et al. (2024). The remaining sections—on teaching and learning, and overall implementation—were also guided by recurring themes in these studies, such as curriculum pacing, engagement, and competency-based outcomes.

The questionnaire was subjected to expert validation and pilot testing to ensure content relevance, clarity, and internal consistency prior to full administration. Feedback from the pilot run was used to refine the wording, grouping of items, and sequencing of items. The final instrument served as a comprehensive tool for quantitatively assessing the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum based on actual teacher experiences in the field.

To interpret the responses of the teachers to the themes of the instrument, the following scoring scales were used:

Scoring Scale for the theme 'Teacher Adaptation'

Score	Range	Description	Interpretation
5	4.21-5.00	Strongly Agree	Successfully adapted
4	3.41-4.20	Agree	Mostly adapted
3	2.61-3.40	Neutral	Neither fully adapted nor struggled significantly
2	1.81-2.60	Disagree	Struggled to Adapt
1	1.00-1.80	Strongly Disagree	Did Not Adapt

Scoring Scale for the theme 'Challenges Encountered'

Score	Range	Description	Interpretation
5	4.21-5.00	Strongly Agree	Severely Challenged
4	3.41-4.20	Agree	Moderately Challenged
3	2.61-3.40	Neutral	Experiencing Some Challenges
2	1.81-2.60	Disagree	Minimally Challenged
1	1.00-1.80	Strongly Disagree	No Significant Challenges

Scoring Scale for the theme 'Impact on Teaching and Learning'

Score	Range	Description	Interpretation
5	4.21-5.00	Strongly Agree	Significant Positive Impact
4	3.41-4.20	Agree	Moderate Positive Impact
3	2.61-3.40	Neutral	Limited or Mixed Impact
2	1.81-2.60	Disagree	Negative Impact
1	1.00-1.80	Strongly Disagree	Severely Negative or No Improvement

Scoring Scale for the theme 'Overall Implementation Effectiveness'

Score	Range	Description	Interpretation
5	4.21-5.00	Strongly Agree	Exceptionally Effective Implementation
4	3.41-4.20	Agree	Generally Effective Implementation
3	2.61-3.40	Neutral	Moderately Effective Implementation
2	1.81-2.60	Disagree	Marginally Effective Implementation
1	1.00-1.80	Strongly Disagree	Critically Ineffective Implementation

Research Procedure

The process of conducting the study and collecting data included performing a pilot test before the actual data gathering. This step was necessary as the research instrument contains a set of questions which were researcher-made.

Preliminary Procedures

The questionnaire underwent validation and pilot testing to ensure its content relevance, clarity, and internal consistency prior to full-scale administration. Initially, the instrument was structured around five core themes of perceptions, each comprising ten items:

(1) Teacher Adaptation to the MATATAG Curriculum,
(2) Challenges Encountered in the Implementation,
(3) Impact on Teaching Strategies and Classroom Management,
(4) Impact on Student Learning and Engagement, and
(5) Overall Effectiveness of the Implementation.

The pilot test involved 30 respondents—15 public and 15 private school teachers—from Grades 1, 4, and 7, from selected schools in Dipolog City, who were selected to represent key levels of implementation.

From these responses, reliability test was conducted to check whether the data supported the hypothesized structure and to determine if the items are related to their intended constructs. The analysis results led to revisions in the item groupings under each theme to better reflect the empirically supported factor structure. The revised item distribution was as follows:

- Teacher Adaptation (10 items),
- Challenges Encountered (9 items),
- Teaching Strategies and Classroom Management (2 items),
- Student Learning and Engagement (9 items), and
- Overall Effectiveness of the Implementation (5 items).

However, certain themes were found to contain fewer than five items with strong loading values following the initial analysis. Notably, the theme "Teaching Strategies and Classroom Management" retained only two valid items, which suggests inadequate internal consistency and calls into question the robustness of the original factor structure. In light of these limitations, a re-evaluation of the thematic grouping was necessary.

To address this, the researchers conducted a restructured reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha, which led to the emergence of a more statistically coherent four-factor model. This refined structure conso-

lidated the original five thematic areas into the following revised domains:
(1) Teacher Adaptation (10 items),
(2) Challenges Encountered (11 items),
(3) Impact on Teaching and Learning (9 items), and
(4) Overall Implementation Effectiveness (5 items).
The analysis process ultimately led to the retention of 35 validated items, with revised item allocations across the four themes. The internal consistency of each resulting theme, measured by Cronbach's alpha, is presented.

Cronbach's Alpha of the Resulting Themes of the Final Questionnaire

Perceptions	No. of Items	Mean	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Teacher Adaptation	10	4.09	0.958	Excellent
Challenges Encountered	11	3.38	0.943	Excellent
Impact on Teaching and Learning	9	3.91	0.926	Excellent
Overall Implementation Effectiveness	5	3.89	0.900	Excellent
Overall Cronbach's Alpha	**35 items**		**0.934**	**Excellent**

Legend: >90 – Excellent 0.80-0.89 – Good 0.70-0.79 – Acceptable
0.60-0.69 – Questionable 0.50-0.59 – Poor <0.50 – Unacceptable

The results of the internal consistency and reliability analysis for the regrouped items under each resulting theme of the questionnaire are shown computing Cronbach's alpha values to assess the reliability of each subscale, as well as the overall instrument.
The theme 'Teacher Adaptation' yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.958 with ten items, indicating excellent reliability. Similarly, the theme 'Challenges Encountered in the Implementation' with eleven items demonstrated excellent internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.943. The new theme 'Impact on Teaching and Learning' with nine items also reported an excellent alpha value of 0.926, suggesting a high degree of item consistency within the construct. Lastly, the theme 'Overall Implementation Effectiveness of the Implementation', consisting now of five items, showed a Cronbach's alpha of 0.900, which is also considered excellent.
Overall, the full instrument comprising 35 items demonstrated a Cronbach's alpha of 0.934, which is interpreted as excellent according to established reliability benchmarks (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). These results confirm that the regrouped items under each construct exhibit strong internal consistency and that the instrument is reliable for assessing teachers' perceptions of the MATATAG Curriculum implementation.

Data Gathering

After the pilot testing phase, the finalized and regrouped survey instrument was administered to the identified respondents from the eight participating public and private schools across Misamis Occidental, Lanao del Norte, and Zamboanga del Norte. The actual data gathering was conducted from March to April 2025 and involved Grade 1, Grade 4, and Grade 7 teachers.
To ensure accessibility and ease of response, the survey was administered through Google Forms, enabling

efficient data collection across geographically dispersed schools. The survey link was directly shared with the identified teachers by the researchers, who maintained professional connections with the selected institutions, thereby facilitating the effective dissemination of the instrument to qualified teacher-respondents within their respective schools.

At the beginning of the Google Form, a digital informed consent section was included. This explained the purpose of the study, assured participants of confidentiality and voluntary participation, and asked respondents to indicate whether they agreed to participate or not. Only those who gave their explicit consent were allowed to proceed to the questionnaire. Throughout the data collection period, follow-ups and reminders were sent to encourage participation and ensure that the required number of responses would be obtained from each school. The researchers monitored responses daily and ensured that ethical considerations and data privacy were strictly observed in line with institutional and research ethics protocols. After gathering the necessary number of responses, the completed questionnaires were collected, tallied, and prepared for data analysis and interpretation.

Statistical Treatment of Data

Upon conducting the normality test using the Shapiro–Wilk method, results indicated that the data were not normally distributed. In view of this, the study employed appropriate non-parametric statistical tools to analyze and interpret the gathered data. These tools ensured valid and reliable interpretation despite the deviation from normality assumptions.

Frequency Count and Percentage

This was used to group and categorize the profile of the respondents.

Weighted Mean

This was used to interpret the responses of the teachers in each item of the themes of the instrument.

Mann-Whitney U test

This was used to determine the significant difference in teachers' perceptions of the MATATAG Curriculum implementation when grouped according to their gender and type of school.

Kruskal-Wallis H test

This was used to determine the significant difference in teachers' perceptions of the MATATAG Curriculum implementation when grouped according to their age, educational attainment, years of experience, and number of related trainings.

Spearman Correlation Coefficient

This was used to analyze and interpret the significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of the MATATAG Curriculum implementation and their level of familiarity with the curriculum, number of trainings attended related to the curriculum, teaching experience, and type of school.

Ethical Considerations

This study strictly adhered to ethical principles to ensure the protection of participants' rights and the integrity of the research process. Informed consent and voluntary participation were fundamental to the study. Before answering the survey, all teacher-respondents were presented with a consent statement embedded at the beginning of the Google Form. This section clearly outlined the purpose of the study, the estimated time required to complete the questionnaire, and the assurance that no risk or harm would result from participation. Participation in the survey was entirely voluntary, and respondents were informed that

they could discontinue their participation at any point without facing any form of penalty or consequence. Only those who consented were allowed to proceed with the questionnaire.

To protect the anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents, no personally identifiable information was collected through the Google Form. The system was configured not to record email addresses, and responses were stored anonymously. All data collected were treated with the highest level of confidentiality. Results were analyzed in aggregate form to ensure that no individual participant or school could be identified. This approach guaranteed that all feedback remained private and untraceable to any specific teacher or institution.

Given that data were collected online, careful attention was given to data security and privacy. The survey link was shared only with identified respondents, and the researchers ensured that the Google account managing the form was protected by a strong password and two-factor authentication. All responses were downloaded, stored in encrypted and password-protected files, and backed up in a secure environment. These files were accessible only to the research team. The researchers also committed to retaining the data only for the duration necessary to complete the study and to permanently delete all files upon conclusion of the research.

Chapter 3
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data collected from the respondents. The sequence of presentation is in accordance to the questions stipulated in the statement of the problem.

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 presents the frequency count and percentage distribution of the respondents' profile in terms of age, gender, highest educational attainment, and years of teaching experience.

Table 1
Frequency Count and Percentage Distribution of Respondents' Age, Gender, Highest Educational Attainment, and Years of Teaching Experience

Profile	Frequency	Percent
Age		
20-29 years old	25	24.51
30-39 years old	44	43.14
40-49 years old	21	20.59
50 years old and above	12	11.76
Gender		
Male	12	11.76
Female	90	88.24
Highest Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's Degree	35	34.31
Master's Degree (units earned)	44	43.14
Master's Degree (completed)	22	21.57
Doctorate (units earned)	1	0.98
Years of Teaching Experience		
Less than 1 year	2	1.96

1–5 years	33	32.35
6–10 years	32	31.37
11–15 years	12	11.76
More than 15 years	23	22.55

Note: Sample size, n = 102

In terms of age, the majority of respondents were between 30 and 39 years old, accounting for 43.14% of the total sample. This was followed by those aged 20 to 29 years old (24.51%), 40 to 49 years old (20.59%), and those aged 50 and above (11.76%). The data suggest that most of the participants were in their early to mid-career stages, with relatively fewer respondents in the older age bracket.

With respect to gender, a significant majority of respondents were female (88.24%), while only 11.76% were male. This distribution aligns with national trends in the Philippine education system, where the teaching profession is predominantly occupied by women (Department of Education, 2023).

Regarding highest educational attainment, a plurality of respondents had earned units in a master's degree program (43.14%), while 34.31% held a bachelor's degree. Additionally, 21.57% had completed a master's degree, and 0.98% had earned doctoral units. These figures suggest a high level of graduate engagement, indicating that many teachers are actively pursuing advanced education, which reflects a commitment to continuous professional development.

In terms of years of teaching experience, the largest group had 1 to 5 years of experience (32.35%), followed closely by those with 6 to 10 years (31.37%). Respondents with more than 15 years of experience accounted for 22.55%, while those with 11 to 15 years comprised 11.76%. Only 1.96% of respondents had less than one year of experience. This distribution reflects a balanced representation of novice, mid-level, and experienced teachers, which adds depth and diversity to the analysis of their perceptions.

Table 2

Frequency Count and Percentage Distribution of Respondents' Profile in terms of Grade Level Taught, Type of School, Number of Trainings Attended, and Level of Familiarity with the MATATAG Curriculum

Profile	Frequency	Percent
Grade Level Taught		
Grade 1	25	24.51
Grade 4	30	29.41
Grade 7	57	55.88
Type of School		
Public	76	74.51
Private	26	25.49
Number of Trainings Attended		
None	5	4.90
1-2 sessions	46	45.10
3-4 sessions	11	10.78
5-6 sessions	22	21.57
More than 6 sessions	18	17.65
Level of Familiarity		

Not familiar at all	13	12.75
Slightly familiar	36	35.29
Moderately familiar	38	37.25
Very familiar	9	8.82
Extremely familiar	6	5.88

Note: Sample size, n =102.

Table 2 presents the distribution of respondents according to the grade level taught, type of school, number of trainings attended, and level of familiarity with the MATATAG Curriculum. In terms of grade level taught, the largest proportion of respondents were Grade 7 teachers, comprising 55.88% of the total sample. This was followed by Grade 4 teachers (29.41%) and Grade 1 teachers (24.51%). The distribution suggests that the study captured a broad range of perspectives across key transition points in basic education, particularly in early grades, middle grades, and the beginning of junior high school.

With regard to the type of school, the majority of respondents (74.51%) were teaching in public schools, while 25.49% were from private schools. This reflects the national composition of the Philippine basic education system, in which public school teachers comprise the vast majority (Department of Education, 2023).

For the number of trainings attended related to the MATATAG Curriculum, 45.10% of the teachers reported attending 1–2 training sessions, and 21.57% attended 5–6 sessions. Additionally, 17.65% had attended more than six sessions, while 10.78% had participated in 3–4 sessions. A small group (4.90%) indicated that they had not attended any training. These figures suggest that while most teachers had some level of training, there was variability in training exposure, which may influence their adaptation and understanding of the curriculum.

In terms of level of familiarity with the MATATAG Curriculum prior to its implementation, the highest proportion of teachers identified as moderately familiar (37.25%), followed by slightly familiar (35.29%). A smaller percentage reported being not familiar at all (12.75%), while 8.82% were very familiar and 5.88% considered themselves extremely familiar. This distribution implies that although most respondents had at least some awareness of the curriculum, relatively few felt deeply knowledgeable or highly confident about it prior to implementation. The data suggest that while the respondents represent a diverse teaching population across grade levels and school types, there is a notable concentration in public schools and a varied degree of training and familiarity with the MATATAG Curriculum. These factors are important in interpreting their perceptions of the curriculum's initial implementation.

Perceptions of the Teachers on the Initial Implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum

Table 3

Perceptions of the Teachers on the Initial Implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum in terms of Teacher Adaptation

Teacher Adaptation	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. I have modified my instructional strategies to align with the competency-based approach of the MATATAG Curriculum	4.16	Mostly adapted

2. I have adjusted my classroom management techniques to accommodate the structured pacing and content load of the MATATAG Curriculum	4.14	Mostly adapted
3. I have developed new approaches to assessment to effectively measure student learning outcomes under the MATATAG Curriculum	4.12	Mostly adapted
4. I have adapted my lesson planning to balance structured competencies with flexibility for student needs	4.20	Mostly adapted
5. I have integrated new teaching methodologies, such as play-based and experiential learning, to align with the curriculum's learner-centered approach	4.25	Successfully adapted
6. I have modified my time management strategies to meet the expectations of the curriculum while ensuring effective instruction	4.15	Mostly adapted
7. I have sought additional professional development opportunities to improve my adaptation to the MATATAG Curriculum	4.06	Mostly adapted
8. I have adjusted my use of instructional materials and technology to support student engagement and learning under the MATATAG Curriculum	4.20	Mostly adapted
9. I have collaborated with fellow educators to share best practices and improve our collective adaptation to the MATATAG Curriculum	4.19	Mostly adapted
10.I have adjusted my feedback and grading practices to align with the competency-based and performance-oriented assessment model of the MATATAG Curriculum	4.18	Mostly adapted
Average Weighted Mean	**4.16**	**Mostly adapted**

Legend: 1.00-1.80 Did Not Adapt 1.81-2.60 Struggled to Adapt
2.61-3.40 Neither Fully Adapted nor Struggled Significantly
3.41-4.20 Mostly Adapted 4.21-5.00 Successfully Adapted

Table 3 illustrates the perceptions of teachers regarding their adaptation to the MATATAG Curriculum across ten instructional domains. The overall average weighted mean is 4.16, interpreted as "mostly adapted." This suggests that teachers are actively aligning their instructional practices with the principles of the curriculum, although the adaptation process remains ongoing. The responses reflect a positive orientation toward the reform, indicating that the foundational adjustments necessary for successful implementation are being made.

The highest-rated item, "I have integrated new teaching methodologies, such as play-based and experiential learning, to align with the curriculum's learner-centered approach" (M = 4.25), received a rating of "successfully adapted," highlighting the extent to which teachers are embracing student-centered pedagogies. This aligns with the MATATAG Curriculum's objective to cultivate more engaging, contextualized, and meaningful learning experiences (Kilag et al., 2024; Department of Education, 2023). Saro et al. (2024) also emphasized that experiential learning strategies promote critical thinking and deepen student engagement—an objective central to the curriculum's reform agenda.

Several other items, including "I have adapted my lesson planning to balance structured competencies with flexibility for student needs" (M = 4.20) and "I have adjusted my use of instructional materials and technology to support student engagement and learning" (M = 4.20), were also rated highly. These scores indicate that teachers are attempting to differentiate their instruction and integrate technology to meet the needs of diverse learners. International studies have long emphasized that flexible planning and responsive material adaptation are essential components of competency-based education (Tan & Deneen, 2018; Niemi, 2021).

The lowest-rated item, "I have sought additional professional development opportunities to improve my adaptation to the MATATAG Curriculum" (M = 4.06), although still interpreted as "mostly adapted," suggests that access to or engagement in professional development may be limited. This highlights a potential gap between the curriculum's expectations and the support provided to teachers. According to Garcia and Santos (2023), many public school teachers in the Philippines expressed the need for more localized and sustained training sessions to help them effectively transition to the MATATAG framework. Similarly, international studies such as those by Hall and Wall (2019) and Warren and Miller (2020) have underscored that without sufficient training and institutional support, even well-intentioned reforms risk partial or inconsistent implementation.

Furthermore, other moderately high-rated items such as modifying instructional strategies (M = 4.16), adjusting classroom management (M = 4.14), and developing new assessment approaches (M = 4.12) suggest that while adaptation is evident, the structural and pedagogical shifts required by the MATATAG Curriculum remain complex and time-intensive. These findings mirror observations in the study by Abaiz et al. (2025), where teachers reported challenges in translating theoretical curriculum shifts into daily classroom practices without adequate support mechanisms.

The findings from Table 3 provide an encouraging snapshot of teacher adaptability during the early implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum. Teachers have begun aligning their methods with learner-centered, competency-based, and performance-driven principles. However, the consistently "mostly adapted" ratings also underscore that sustained adaptation will require ongoing investment in professional development, resource accessibility, and collaborative planning. As noted by Kilag et al. (2024), systemic transformation is not solely curriculum-based—it is contingent on the ecosystem of support built around teachers.

Table 4
Perceptions of the Teachers on the Initial Implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum in terms of Challenges Encountered

Challenges Encountered in the Implementation	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. I faced difficulties in adapting to the new curriculum due to time constraints and limited instructional hours	3.84	Moderately Challenged
2. The learning materials provided were insufficient for effective curriculum implementation	3.57	Moderately Challenged
3. The pacing of lessons under the MATATAG Curriculum is too fast for effective instruction and student comprehension	3.69	Moderately Challenged
4. There is a lack of classroom resources (textbooks, modules, teaching aids) that support the new curriculum	3.55	Moderately Challenged

5. The transition to the MATATAG Curriculum was not adequately planned, leading to confusion and inconsistent implementation	3.29	Experiencing Some Challenges
6. The expectations for lesson delivery under the new curriculum are unrealistic within the given timeframe	3.46	Moderately Challenged
7. The curriculum does not sufficiently address the diverse learning needs of students, particularly those requiring differentiated instruction	3.20	Experiencing Some Challenges
8. I have not received sufficient professional development and training to effectively implement the MATATAG Curriculum	3.15	Experiencing Some Challenges
9. Collaboration and peer support among teachers are insufficient to navigate the challenges of implementing the MATATAG Curriculum	3.20	Experiencing Some Challenges
10. Classroom management has become more challenging due to curriculum modifications	3.97	Moderately Challenged
11. The MATATAG Curriculum has increased the amount of time I need to prepare lessons due to its structured competencies and new instructional strategies	3.75	Moderately Challenged
Average Weighted Mean	**3.52**	**Moderately Challenged**

Legend: 1.00-1.80 No Significant Challenges 1.81-2.60 Minimally Challenged
2.61-3.40 Experiencing Some Challenges 3.41-4.20 Moderately Challenged
4.21-5.00 Severely Challenged

Table 4 presents the weighted mean scores for various challenges perceived by teachers in the initial implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum. With an average weighted mean of 3.52, the results indicate that teachers were moderately challenged overall. This finding highlights that while the reform is generally seen as beneficial, its rollout posed several implementation-related difficulties that may hinder full curriculum integration if left unaddressed.

The highest-rated challenge was the statement, "Classroom management has become more challenging due to curriculum modifications" (M = 3.97), suggesting that the structured pacing and increased workload associated with the new curriculum have affected teachers' ability to maintain effective classroom discipline and flow. This reflects the findings of Kilag et al. (2024), who noted that teachers felt overwhelmed by simultaneous adjustments in teaching approaches and classroom dynamics during the MATATAG transition.

Another key concern was the need for increased preparation time, reflected in the item, "The MATATAG Curriculum has increased the amount of time I need to prepare lessons due to its structured competencies and new instructional strategies" (M = 3.75). Teachers are investing more time in instructional planning to meet competency-based and performance-focused requirements. This is consistent with Saro et al. (2024), who emphasized that the MATATAG Curriculum promotes higher-order learning tasks, which require careful and time-intensive preparation. The item, "I faced difficulties in adapting to the new curriculum due to time constraints and limited instructional hours" (M = 3.84), reinforces this concern. It suggests that even as teachers try to align with the new expectations, the limited classroom time available for content delivery poses significant challenges to instructional effectiveness. As noted by Garcia and

Santos (2023), time limitations have been a long-standing issue in Philippine classrooms, exacerbated by condensed curricula and varying student learning levels.

Resource-related issues also emerged as considerable barriers. The statements "The learning materials provided were insufficient for effective curriculum implementation" (M = 3.57) and "There is a lack of classroom resources (textbooks, modules, teaching aids)" (M = 3.55) both point to logistical challenges in curriculum execution. These align with the findings of Abaiz et al. (2025), who reported that teachers, particularly in public schools, often resorted to self-created materials due to delayed or inadequate provision of learning resources. Some of the lowest-rated but still noteworthy items include "I have not received sufficient professional development and training to effectively implement the MATATAG Curriculum" (M = 3.15), and "The curriculum does not sufficiently address the diverse learning needs of students, particularly those requiring differentiated instruction" (M = 3.20). While interpreted as "experiencing some challenges," these responses reveal important systemic gaps. Inadequate training undermines teacher confidence and efficacy, a finding supported by Warren and Miller (2020), who concluded that insufficient teacher preparation is one of the most common reasons for curriculum implementation failure globally. Similarly, the lack of responsiveness to diverse learners highlights a missed opportunity for inclusivity—a concern emphasized in Tan and Deneen's (2018) study on competency-based curriculum reforms in Asia.

The item "The transition to the MATATAG Curriculum was not adequately planned" (M = 3.29) reflects moderate dissatisfaction with the initial rollout strategy. This result points to the need for more coordinated implementation efforts and clearer communication at the school level. Jeffry et al. (2024) similarly noted that the absence of concrete guidelines and staggered support systems during the initial phase led to confusion and inconsistent adoption.

The findings from Table 4 suggest that while teachers are making concerted efforts to implement the MATATAG Curriculum, they are hindered by resource shortages, time constraints, lack of training, and insufficient planning support. These moderately rated challenges could become more severe if unaddressed and may negatively impact the quality of learning outcomes and teacher morale. The study by Kilag et al. (2024) emphasized that teacher adaptation is deeply connected to system-wide support mechanisms. As such, addressing these implementation gaps requires not only policy refinement but also a comprehensive support infrastructure, including sustained professional development, timely provision of materials, and differentiated instructional resources. International evidence supports this; Niemi (2021) advocates for long-term scaffolding and continuous teacher engagement as prerequisites for the successful realization of curriculum reforms.

Table 5
Perceptions of the Teachers on the Initial Implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum in terms of its Impact on Teaching and Learning

Impact on Teaching and Learning	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. Students are more engaged and participative in lessons under the MATATAG Curriculum	3.96	Moderate Positive Impact
2. The new curriculum has improved students' comprehension and mastery of foundational skills	3.84	Moderate Positive Impact

3. The curriculum enhances students' problem-solving and critical thinking abilities	3.94	Moderate Positive Impact
4. The learning materials provided align well with students' abilities and interests	3.78	Moderate Positive Impact
5. The curriculum supports a more interactive and collaborative learning environment	4.03	Moderate Positive Impact
6. The assessment methods used are fair and appropriate for measuring student performance	3.98	Moderate Positive Impact
7. The MATATAG curriculum has encouraged the implementation of more targeted intervention strategies that effectively support struggling learners and enhance their academic progress	4.02	Moderate Positive Impact
8. The MATATAG Curriculum has influenced student motivation by making lessons more engaging and relevant	4.04	Moderate Positive Impact
9. Students are developing better independent learning skills as a result of the curriculum's approach to instruction	3.90	Moderate Positive Impact
Average Weighted Mean	**3.94**	**Moderate Positive Impact**

Legend: 1.00-1.80 Severely Negative or No Improvement 1.81-2.60 Negative Impact
2.61-3.40 Limited or Mixed Impact 3.41-4.20 Moderate Positive Impact
4.21-5.00 Significant Positive Impact

Table 5 presents the weighted mean ratings of teachers' perceptions regarding the impact of the MATATAG Curriculum on student learning and classroom instruction. The overall average weighted mean is 3.94, which is interpreted as having a moderate positive impact. This suggests that teachers recognize favorable shifts in both instructional delivery and student learning behavior during the early phase of the curriculum's implementation.

The highest-rated item is: "The MATATAG Curriculum has influenced student motivation by making lessons more engaging and relevant" (M = 4.04), indicating that the new curriculum design has contributed to increased student interest and classroom participation. This is consistent with findings by Saro et al. (2024), who emphasized that the curriculum's learner-centered and contextualized approach promotes student motivation and relevance in learning tasks. As students perceive lessons to be more meaningful, their intrinsic engagement is expected to increase—a key goal of any modern curriculum reform (Niemi, 2021). Closely following this is the item: "The curriculum supports a more interactive and collaborative learning environment" (M = 4.03), reflecting teachers' positive perceptions of the shift from teacher-centered to more student-centered pedagogies. This is aligned with the core principles of the MATATAG Curriculum, which emphasizes holistic learning experiences, collaboration, and active participation (Kilag et al., 2024). Such instructional approaches foster not only academic performance but also interpersonal skills and learner autonomy.

Additionally, teachers positively rated the implementation of targeted interventions, with the item "The MATATAG curriculum has encouraged the implementation of more targeted intervention strategies that

effectively support struggling learners and enhance their academic progress" receiving a mean of 4.02. This reflects a shift toward more differentiated instruction and inclusive teaching practices. Research by Garcia and Santos (2023) supports this perspective, emphasizing that addressing learner diversity through individualized strategies is a vital component of equitable education under curriculum reforms.

The item "The assessment methods used are fair and appropriate for measuring student performance" also received a strong rating (M = 3.98), suggesting that teachers perceive the performance-based and competency-driven assessments introduced by the curriculum as just and effective. As supported by Tan and Deneen (2018), fair and transparent assessment systems are essential to reinforcing student effort and guiding instructional improvement in competency-based models. Other items that also reflect moderate positive perceptions include improved student engagement (M = 3.96), problem-solving and critical thinking development (M = 3.94), and independent learning skills (M = 3.90). These reflect the intended outcomes of the curriculum's experiential and performance-based structure. Teachers also recognized enhancements in comprehension and foundational skills (M = 3.84), as well as the alignment of learning materials with student needs (M = 3.78)—although the latter is the lowest-rated item, possibly indicating room for improvement in instructional material quality and distribution.

The findings in Table 6 reflect a positive yet still developing impact of the MATATAG Curriculum on both teaching practices and student learning. Teachers acknowledge that the curriculum encourages more engaging, relevant, and inclusive instructional approaches that support academic growth and learner motivation. These results are aligned with the goals set by the Department of Education to promote 21st-century competencies, foundational skill mastery, and equity in the delivery of basic education (Department of Education, 2023). However, the moderate rating also implies that the full impact of the curriculum may not yet be fully realized, especially in areas such as instructional material design and consistency across schools. As Warren and Miller (2020) argue, the success of curriculum reforms depends not only on curriculum design but also on the systemic support structures that enable effective delivery—such as teacher training, learning resources, and institutional leadership. Continued monitoring and teacher feedback are critical to improving areas of weakness and building on current gains. As Kilag et al. (2024) concluded in their study, curriculum reform is a gradual process that requires sustained collaboration among educators, administrators, and policymakers to ensure that its transformative goals are achieved in practice.

Table 6
Perceptions of the Teachers on the Initial Implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum in terms of its Overall Implementation Effectiveness

Overall Implementation Effectiveness	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. The implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum in my school has been effective in achieving its intended goals.	4.07	Generally Effective Implementation
2. Teachers were adequately prepared and supported prior to the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum, contributing to its effective rollout.	3.67	Generally Effective Implementation

3. The MATATAG curriculum meets the needs of both teachers and students	3.80	Generally Effective Implementation
4. The intended learning outcomes of the MATATAG Curriculum are being achieved	3.86	Generally Effective Implementation
5. The transition process from the previous curriculum to MATATAG was effectively managed	3.68	Generally Effective Implementation
Average Weighted Mean	**3.82**	**Generally Effective Implementation**

Legend: 1.00-1.80 Critically Ineffective Implementation
1.81-2.60 Marginally Effective Implementation
2.61-3.40 Moderately Effective Implementation
3.41-4.20 Generally Effective Implementation
4.21-5.00 Exceptionally Effective Implementation

Table 6 presents the weighted mean scores of teachers' perceptions regarding the overall effectiveness of the MATATAG Curriculum's implementation in their respective schools. The results reveal an average weighted mean of 3.82, which corresponds to the interpretation "Generally Effective Implementation." This suggests that, from the perspective of teachers, the initial rollout of the MATATAG Curriculum has been positive, albeit with areas that require further strengthening to ensure consistent, system-wide impact. The highest-rated item, "The implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum in my school has been effective in achieving its intended goals" (M = 4.07), reflects a broadly favorable view of the curriculum's outcomes during its early stages. This is consistent with findings by Kilag et al. (2024), who reported that most educators acknowledged the curriculum's clear direction and relevance to modern educational needs, particularly its focus on foundational skills and learner-centered strategies. Such feedback aligns with the Department of Education's (2023) goals to promote a streamlined and responsive curriculum structure. The second highest-rated statement, "The intended learning outcomes of the MATATAG Curriculum are being achieved" (M = 3.86), further supports the perception that the curriculum has had a meaningful impact on instructional goals. These outcomes include the development of essential competencies, critical thinking, and life skills—attributes emphasized in both local and international curriculum reforms (Tan & Deneen, 2018; Niemi, 2021).

Meanwhile, the item "The MATATAG Curriculum meets the needs of both teachers and students" (M = 3.80) points to a balanced acknowledgment of the curriculum's dual focus. Teachers perceive the curriculum as not only supporting student development but also aligning with their own instructional capacities. However, this score—while still positive—implies that further adjustments may be needed to fully address differentiated needs, resource availability, and classroom realities, as highlighted by Garcia and Santos (2023) in their review of MATATAG implementation gaps. Two items received relatively lower but still "generally effective" ratings: "Teachers were adequately prepared and supported prior to the implementation" (M = 3.67) and "The transition process from the previous curriculum to MATATAG was effectively managed" (M = 3.68). These results suggest that professional development and change

management processes may not have been uniformly implemented across schools. Saro et al. (2024) emphasized that while some educators received robust orientation and support, others reported confusion and insufficient training. This inconsistency has been a recurring issue in curriculum transitions globally, where early-stage implementation often reveals disparities in readiness and access to capacity-building initiatives (Warren & Miller, 2020).

The findings in Table 6 indicate that the MATATAG Curriculum's implementation has been perceived as generally effective, particularly in achieving intended learning outcomes and aligning with institutional goals. However, the slightly lower ratings in teacher preparation and transition management point to critical areas for policy and administrative attention. For the MATATAG Curriculum to reach its full potential, a more systematized and equitable implementation plan is essential—one that includes sustained professional development, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and responsive support systems. As Kilag et al. (2024) concluded, curriculum transformation cannot be viewed in isolation; it must be embedded in a culture of collaboration, resource availability, and continuous improvement. Additionally, Tan and Deneen (2018) argue that successful curriculum reform requires ongoing teacher engagement, ownership of the change process, and institutional flexibility—all of which must be reinforced through supportive educational leadership.

Difference in teachers' perceptions of the MATATAG Curriculum implementation

Table 7

Difference in Teachers' Perceptions of the Matatag Curriculum Implementation as Grouped to their Demographic Profile

Demographic Profile		*n*	statistic	p-value	Interpretation
Gender*	Male	12	500	.681	Statistically Not Significant
	Female	90			
Type of School*	Public	76	465	<.001	Statistically Significant
	Private	26			
Age**	20-29 years old	25	11.2	.011	Statistically Significant
	30-39 years old	44			
	40-49 years old	21			
	50 years old and above	12			
Highest Educational Attainment**	Bachelor's Degree	35	4.40	.221	Statistically Not Significant
	Master's Degree (units earned)	44			
	Master's Degree (completed)	22			
	Doctorate (units earned)	1			
Years of Teaching Experience**	Less than 1 year	2	11.6	.021	Statistically Significant
	1–5 years	33			
	6–10 years	32			
	11–15 years	12			
	More than 15 years	23			
Grade Level Taught**	Grade 1	25	7.72	.173	
	Grade 4	30			

	Grade 7	57			Statistically Not Significant
Number of Trainings Attended**	None	5	3.41	.492	Statistically Not Significant
	1-2 sessions	46			
	3-4 sessions	11			
	5-6 sessions	22			
	More than 6 sessions	18			
Level of Familiarity**	Not familiar at all	13	8.85	.065	Statistically Not Significant
	Slightly familiar	36			
	Moderately familiar	38			
	Very familiar	9			
	Extremely familiar	6			

Note: * Used Mann-Whitney U Test; **Used Kruskal-Wallis H Test
Test difference at .05 level of significance.

Table 7 presents the results of inferential statistical tests conducted to determine whether there are significant differences in teachers' perceptions of the MATATAG Curriculum implementation when grouped according to their demographic profile. The Mann–Whitney U Test was used for variables with two categories, while the Kruskal–Wallis H Test was used for variables with more than two categories. The results show that type of school, age, and years of teaching experience were significantly associated with differences in perception, while gender, educational attainment, grade level taught, number of trainings attended, and familiarity with the curriculum were not statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

A statistically significant difference was found based on the type of school ($U = 465$, $p < .001$), with public school teachers reporting higher mean perceptions compared to their private school counterparts. This could be attributed to the fact that the MATATAG Curriculum was initially rolled out more intensively in public schools, where alignment with Department of Education policies and access to related support systems are more structured. This finding is consistent with Garcia and Santos (2023), who noted that public school teachers often receive more centralized orientation during curriculum reforms, contributing to more coherent implementation experiences.

Another significant difference was observed based on age ($H = 11.2$, $p = .011$). Post hoc trends suggest that older teachers reported higher perception means than younger ones. This may reflect the greater depth of experience, confidence, and pedagogical flexibility among veteran educators, which supports their ability to adapt to new instructional frameworks. As Kilag et al. (2024) emphasized, experienced teachers tend to navigate curriculum shifts with more resilience and insight, particularly when they have witnessed prior reforms.

Similarly, years of teaching experience was significantly associated with teachers' perceptions ($H = 11.6$, $p = .021$), where those with longer tenure reported higher mean perceptions. This aligns with the finding on age and reinforces the idea that veteran teachers may perceive the curriculum more positively due to familiarity with similar shifts and accumulated instructional competence. According to Saro et al. (2024), years in service is a strong predictor of successful curriculum implementation, as seasoned educators are more adept at aligning instructional strategies with new policy expectations.

In contrast, no statistically significant differences were found for gender ($p = .681$), highest educational attainment ($p = .221$), grade level taught ($p = .173$), number of trainings attended ($p = .492$), and level of familiarity with the MATATAG Curriculum ($p = .065$). Although teachers' familiarity approached significance, the result suggests that perception may be influenced more by practical classroom experience

than by formal exposure or self-reported familiarity alone. These findings mirror international observations by Warren and Miller (2020), who argued that demographic factors like training frequency or academic credentials may not be as predictive of curriculum adaptation as experience and contextual application.

The findings in Table 7 highlight the importance of teaching experience, age, and institutional setting in shaping teachers' perceptions of curriculum implementation. As the MATATAG Curriculum continues to be deployed nationwide, these variables should inform capacity-building strategies. Support for younger or less experienced teachers—particularly those in private schools—must be prioritized through mentoring, structured training, and collaborative planning. The absence of significant differences based on training frequency and familiarity further suggests that one-time orientation may not be sufficient; rather, continuous, practice-based support is necessary for sustained curriculum alignment. The effectiveness of MATATAG implementation is not solely dependent on knowledge or training exposure, but rather on practical experience, institutional context, and professional maturity, echoing findings from both local and international curriculum studies (Tan & Deneen, 2018; Niemi, 2021).

Table 8

Relationship between Teachers' Perceptions of the MATATAG Curriculum Implementation and their Level of Familiarity with the Curriculum before Implementation, Number of Trainings Attended, and Years of Teaching Experiences

Factors	statistic	p-value	Interpretation
Perceptions of MATATAG Curriculum Implementation and Level of Familiarity	-.124	.214	Statistically Not Significant
Perceptions of MATATAG Curriculum Implementation and Number of Trainings Attended	.025	.802	Statistically Not Significant
Perceptions of MATATAG Curriculum Implementation and Years of Teaching Experiences	.084	.399	Statistically Not Significant
Perceptions of MATATAG Curriculum Implementation and Grade Level Taught	0.55	.582	Statistically Not Significant

Note: Test difference at .05 level of significance.

Table 8 presents the Spearman correlation results examining the relationship between teachers' perceptions of the MATATAG Curriculum implementation and three independent variables: (1) level of familiarity with the curriculum before implementation, (2) number of trainings attended related to MATATAG, and (3) years of teaching experience. The test was conducted at the 0.05 level of significance, and all three correlation coefficients were found to be statistically not significant. As such, the null hypotheses were not rejected for all variables, indicating no significant monotonic relationships between the independent factors and teachers' overall perceptions of the MATATAG Curriculum implementation.

The correlation between teachers' perceptions and their level of familiarity with the curriculum prior to its implementation resulted in a Spearman's rho of –0.124 with a p-value of .214, suggesting a non-significant

negative relationship. This implies that a higher or lower degree of prior familiarity with the curriculum did not substantially affect teachers' perceptions of its implementation. As noted by Garcia and Santos (2023), familiarity alone may not translate into readiness or positive perception unless supported by contextual application and hands-on involvement during the implementation process.

Similarly, the relationship between teachers' perceptions and the number of trainings attended yielded a Spearman's rho of 0.025 with a p-value of .802, also statistically non-significant. This finding supports earlier claims by Saro et al. (2024), who emphasized that the quality and relevance of training may be more impactful than frequency. Training sessions that are one-off or disconnected from classroom realities may have minimal influence on how teachers perceive curriculum implementation.

The correlation between teachers' perceptions and their years of teaching experience showed a Spearman's rho of 0.084 and a p-value of .399, again indicating no significant association. Although experienced teachers may offer different insights or practices, the number of years in service alone did not predict perceptions of the MATATAG Curriculum in a consistent direction. As Kilag et al. (2024) argue, experience must be supported by clear institutional guidance and adequate resources to meaningfully influence curriculum-related attitudes.

Lastly, the correlation between teachers' perceptions of the MATATAG Curriculum implementation and the grade level taught (Grades 1, 4, or 7) resulted in a statistic of 0.055 with a p-value of .582, indicating a statistically non-significant relationship. This implies that the specific grade level a teacher handled during the first year of MATATAG implementation did not significantly influence their overall perceptions of the curriculum.

Although grade-level distinctions may involve different content loads, pedagogical strategies, and pacing requirements, the result suggests that teachers across Grades 1, 4, and 7 shared relatively similar perspectives on the curriculum's impact and challenges. This finding aligns with those of Kilag et al. (2024), who observed that while instructional adjustments vary by grade level, the broader themes of adaptation, resource concerns, and training needs are consistently experienced by teachers across levels.

The lack of a significant correlation also indicates that perceptions about the curriculum were likely shaped more by institutional support, teacher training quality, and school context than by the actual content or developmental demands of the grade level taught. Consequently, the null hypothesis is not rejected for this variable, and the analysis supports the conclusion that grade assignment alone does not predict a teacher's perception of the curriculum implementation.

These results suggest that prior familiarity, training frequency, and years of service do not individually predict teachers' perceptions of the MATATAG Curriculum implementation. This underscores the multifaceted nature of perception formation, which likely involves complex interactions between leadership support, peer collaboration, school culture, and the availability of instructional resources. As noted by Tan and Deneen (2018) and Niemi (2021), successful curriculum reforms require more than technical inputs—they necessitate ongoing, iterative support systems that empower teachers as active agents in the change process. For the MATATAG Curriculum to succeed in future phases, these relational and systemic factors must be further addressed and integrated into implementation strategies.

Chapter 4
SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section of the study presents the summary of the whole conduct and evaluation, significant findings gathered from the data, conclusions drawn from the analyses, and recommendations offered for future purposes.

Summary

The study aimed to evaluate teachers' perceptions of the first-year implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum across four core domains: teacher adaptation, challenges encountered, impact on teaching and learning, and overall implementation effectiveness. It employed a quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design and involved 102 Grade 1, 4, and 7 teachers from nine conveniently selected public and private schools in Misamis Occidental, Lanao del Norte, and Zamboanga del Norte. Data were gathered using a researcher-developed questionnaire, which was subjected to pilot testing for reliability and internal consistency test. The finalized 35-item instrument demonstrated excellent reliability (Cronbach's α = .934). Data collection was conducted via Google Forms with informed consent, and responses were analyzed using weighted mean, Mann–Whitney U, Kruskal–Wallis H, and Spearman correlation to determine significant differences and relationships across demographic variables and perception domains.

Findings

Following a comprehensive analysis of the collected data, the study has the following major findings:

1. On the profile of the respondents, majority were within the younger to middle-aged brackets, with fewer teachers belonging to older age groups. Most participants were female with highest educational attainment generally at the master's level, either completed or in progress. In terms of teaching experience, a substantial portion had between one to ten years of service, with a smaller group having over fifteen years of experience. In terms of grade level taught, teachers were evenly distributed across Grades 1, 4, and 7, the target levels of the MATATAG Curriculum implementation. The majority were teaching in public schools. Most respondents had attended one to two training sessions related to the MATATAG Curriculum, although a smaller group reported no training at all. Teachers' familiarity with the curriculum ranged from moderate to slightly familiar, with only a few reporting very high or no familiarity, indicating varied levels of preparedness at the start of the implementation.
2. On the perceptions of the teachers on the initial implementation of the Matatag Curriculum:

In terms of Teacher Adaptation, teachers generally reported that they had mostly adapted to the new curriculum, with the highest levels of agreement found in the integration of new methodologies and lesson planning adjustments. While adaptation in assessment, feedback, and collaboration also received positive ratings, some areas like seeking professional development showed slightly lower levels of adaptation.

In terms of Challenges Encountered in Implementing the Curriculum, results indicated that teachers were moderately challenged during implementation, particularly in areas such as time constraints, classroom management, and the fast pacing of lessons. Issues concerning insufficient learning materials and unrealistic lesson expectations were also identified. Although the curriculum encouraged preparation and engagement, respondents expressed concern about inadequate professional development, lack of differentiated instruction, and poor planning during the transition phase.

In terms of its Perceived Impact on Teaching and Learning, teachers perceived a moderate positive impact of the MATATAG Curriculum on teaching and learning. They reported improvements in student engagement, collaboration, and independent learning. The curriculum was viewed as supportive of

critical thinking and problem-solving. Assessment practices were generally seen as fair, and intervention strategies were noted to be more targeted.

Lastly, in terms of its Overall Implementation Effectiveness, it was generally perceived as effective by the teachers. The curriculum was viewed as meeting its goals and addressing the needs of both teachers and students. Teachers believed the intended learning outcomes were being met, though opinions on the sufficiency of preparation and management of the transition process were slightly less favorable. Nonetheless, overall responses indicated that the curriculum rollout was on track from the perspective of field implementers.

3. On the difference in teachers' perceptions of the Matatag Curriculum implementation as grouped to their demographic profile, statistically significant differences in perceptions were found based on the type of school, age, and years of teaching experience. Public school teachers, older teachers, and those with longer teaching tenure reported more favorable perceptions of the curriculum implementation. No significant differences were observed in terms of gender, educational attainment, grade level taught, number of trainings attended, or self-reported level of familiarity.
4. On the relationship between teachers' perceptions of the Matatag Curriculum implementation and their level of familiarity to it, number of trainings attended related to it, years of teaching experience, and grade level taught, no statistically significant correlations were found. These results suggested that individual background factors did not linearly influence perceptions, and that more complex or institutional factors may be contributing to how teachers viewed the curriculum's implementation.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the first-year implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum was generally perceived positively by teachers across various domains, including adaptation, teaching and learning impact, and overall effectiveness, despite the presence of moderate challenges. The results imply that teacher perceptions were not significantly influenced by familiarity with the curriculum, training frequency, teaching experience, or grade level taught in a linear manner. However, contextual factors such as school type, age, and teaching tenure were associated with perceptual differences, suggesting that implementation experiences varied among teacher subgroups. Overall, the curriculum was viewed as moderately effective, and teacher responses indicated a collective movement toward embracing the reform, albeit with ongoing needs in system-level support and consistency across educational settings.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion, the study following are recommended:

1. **Department of Education (DepEd)** is encouraged to strengthen the provision of sustained, differentiated, and context-specific professional development programs that go beyond one-time orientations. These should be designed to address specific classroom realities and equip teachers with practical strategies for delivering the MATATAG Curriculum across diverse school settings.
2. **School Administrators and Curriculum Planners** can ensure consistent monitoring and instructional support mechanisms to address the challenges faced by teachers, particularly in terms of resource adequacy, lesson pacing, and classroom management. They can also foster collaborative planning sessions among teachers to facilitate experience sharing and joint problem-solving during curriculum rollout.

3. **Teachers, particularly those in Grades 1, 4, and 7,** are encouraged to continuously engage in professional learning communities that promote reflective practice, resource sharing, and adaptive teaching strategies aligned with the MATATAG Curriculum's competency-based approach.
4. **Teacher Education Institutions** are recommended to align pre-service training programs with the principles and frameworks of the MATATAG Curriculum. This alignment will help ensure that future teachers are adequately prepared for curriculum reforms and capable of delivering learner-centered instruction upon entry into the profession.
5. **Local Government Units and Stakeholders in Education** should actively participate in resource mobilization to address gaps in instructional materials and classroom support. Their involvement is vital in ensuring equitable access to teaching aids, infrastructure, and technology necessary for implementing the new curriculum.
6. **Students and Their Families** are encouraged to support learning at home by fostering environments that value engagement, independent learning, and cooperation with teachers. Parental awareness and involvement are essential to reinforce the values and goals embedded in the MATATAG Curriculum.
7. **Educational Researchers** should undertake longitudinal and mixed-method studies to further explore the long-term effects and classroom-level implications of the MATATAG Curriculum. Future studies may focus on student outcomes, teacher workload, and system-level readiness to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the curriculum's impact and scalability.

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