



# Teachers’ Practices and Institutional Support in Multigrade Teaching of the Schools Division of Quirino

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## Abstract

## Review Article

In small, remote schools, one teacher often manages students from multiple grade levels within a single classroom. To ensure that these students receive a quality education, effective teaching methods and solid support from the institution are crucial. This research focused on the teaching practices and the level of support available in multigrade classrooms within the Schools Division of Quirino. The study explored various aspects of teachers' backgrounds, including their education, training, and experience. It also assessed their teaching strategies in key areas and examined how these practices related to the support they received. Data came from 117 multigrade teachers, who responded to a well-crafted survey. Results showed that teachers frequently excel in key teaching areas such as preparation, lesson delivery, classroom control, and providing extra help or challenges for students. Generally, they felt supported by their schools, particularly in leadership, resources, professional growth opportunities, and community ties. Yet, they pointed out a lack of funding from local government for further education as a significant issue. The study found no major differences in teaching practices based on teachers' backgrounds, except in how they delivered lessons and managed classrooms. Additionally, the link between teaching methods and institutional support appeared weak. These findings underline the dedication and skill of multigrade teachers and suggest that ongoing professional development and stronger support from schools and local governments are vital to enhancing multigrade education.

**Keywords:** Multigrade Teaching, Teaching Practices, Institutional Support, Schools Division of Quirino, Instructional Preparedness.

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## Introduction

Education plays a vital role in the social, economic, and cultural development of societies (UNESCO, 2021; United Nations, 2024). It provides individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to national progress and community development. However, ensuring access to quality

education for all remains a major challenge in many parts of the world (Berry et al., 2022; Ares-Ferreirós et al., 2025). According to the 2024 Sustainable Development Goals report released by the United Nations, many countries continue to face shortages of qualified teachers (UNESCO, 2022; Asian Development Bank, 2023) inadequate school facilities, and unequal learning outcomes among



students. These issues are more evident in geographically isolated and economically disadvantaged areas where educational resources are limited.

To address these challenges, several countries have implemented multi-grade schooling, especially in remote communities where student populations are small and resources are scarce (UNESCO, 2021; Little & Juvane, 2020). In multi-grade classrooms, a single teacher handles two or more grade levels at the same time. In the Schools Division of Quirino, multi-grade schools serve as an important means of ensuring that learners in rural areas have access to basic education (Flores & Villanueva, 2023; Lopez, 2020). However, this teaching arrangement presents unique challenges (De Leon, 2023; Castro & Del Rosario, 2022).

The quality of education in multi-grade settings largely depends on teachers' instructional practices, including lesson planning, classroom management, and assessment strategies (Barrios & Fernandez, 2018; Abulencia & Martin, 2023). Multi-grade teachers are therefore expected to demonstrate creativity, flexibility, and adaptability in responding to the needs of learners (Jansen & Van der Merwe, 2021; Mwangi & Njoroge, 2020). Despite these expectations, the absence of specialized training, limited instructional resources, and insufficient professional development opportunities may affect teachers' effectiveness (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; Avalos, 2021).

The 1987 Philippine Constitution guarantees the right of every citizen to quality education and mandates the State to make education accessible to all. Supporting this mandate are policies such as Republic Act No. 9155, which promotes school-based management, and Republic Act No. 10533, which institutionalized the K to 12 Basic Education Program and emphasizes contextualized teaching approaches. Additionally, the Department of Education (Philippines) issued guidelines through DepEd Order No. 76, s. 2012 to strengthen the implementation of multi-grade education (Department of Education, 2021; 2024). Despite these initiatives, limited localized studies have

examined the relationship between teachers' instructional practices and learners' academic performance in multi-grade schools in the Aglipay District.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the existing teaching practices in multi-grade schools. The findings are expected to serve as the basis for developing an evidence-based intervention program that will support teachers and improve learning outcomes in multi-grade classrooms in the Schools Division of Quirino.

## Methods

This study employed a descriptive correlational design to determine the relationship between teachers' practices and the institutional support for the multigrade classes of the Schools Division Office of Quirino (Ali & Hussain, 2020; Abulencia, Ramos, & Villanueva 2023). Respondents of the study were the 117 multigrade teachers of the ten districts of the said division during the school year 2025-2026. Clustered sampling was used to select these respondents (CRLT, 2025). Data were gathered through a validated structured questionnaire divided into three sections: the first addressed the teachers' demographic information; the second focused on teaching practices across four domains, such as preparatory activities, instructional delivery, classroom management, and remedial/enrichment activities; and the third assessed perceptions of institutional support. (David, Motala, & Zuze, 2021). The gathered data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations summarized the teachers' demographic profiles, teaching practices, and perceptions of institutional support. Differences in teaching practices and institutional support across demographic groups were tested using independent t-tests and ANOVA, while Pearson correlation coefficients were used to examine the relationship between teaching practices and institutional support. Ethical considerations, including informed consent and confidentiality, were observed throughout the research process (UNESCO, 2021).

**Results and Discussions**

**Table 1.** Profile of Multigrade Teachers in the Schools Division of Quirino

Profile	Specifics	Frequency	Percentage
Highest Educational Attainment	Bachelor’s Degree	27	23.08
	With Master’s Units	51	43.59
	Master’s Degree	39	33.33
Number of Seminars/ Trainings Attended along Multigrade Teaching	1-3 training	43	36.75
	4-6 training	33	28.21
	7 training & above	41	35.04
Years Teaching in Multigrade Class	1-5 years	65	55.56
	6-10 years	38	32.48
	11 years & above	14	11.97

The snapshot of the 117-multigrade teacher-respondents offers valuable insights into their educational paths, training opportunities, and years of teaching experience. It turns out that many of these educators have pursued further education, earned master’s units or even completed their master’s degrees. This dedication to higher learning highlights their commitment to professional growth, which is crucial for enhancing teaching skills and instructional quality according to educational studies (Avalos, 2021; Darling-Hammond et al., 2021).

When it comes to training, there's quite a range in how much exposure these teachers have had. Some have attended just a few sessions, while others have participated in numerous training programs. This inconsistency suggests not everyone has equal access to professional development, which research shows is vital for improving teaching practices,

particularly in diverse classrooms (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021). Looking at their teaching experience, most respondents have been involved in multigrade teaching for just one to five years. This indicates that many are still getting used to the challenges of teaching multiple grade levels at the same time. Studies suggest that newer teachers, especially in rural or resource-limited areas, often handle these complex roles (Berry et al., 2022). However, seasoned teachers among them can serve as mentors, fostering a culture of peer-learning within schools.

In summary, while these teachers show a strong academic background and enthusiasm for professional development, there's a clear need for more uniform training and support to help them tackle the unique challenges of multi-grade teaching effectively.

**Table 2.** *Test of Difference on Teachers’ Practices and Institutional Support in the Schools Division of Quirino*

Teachers’ Practices	Median	Highest Educational Attainment ( <i>p</i> )	No. of Seminars/Trainings Attended ( <i>p</i> )	Years Teaching in Multigrade ( <i>p</i> )
Preparatory Activities	4.00	0.21 (ns)	0.34 (ns)	0.29 (ns)
Instructional Delivery	4.00	0.03 (significant)	0.40 (ns)	0.27 (ns)
Classroom Management	4.00	0.18 (ns)	0.04 (significant)	0.31 (ns)
Remedial & Enrichment Activities	4.00	0.22 (ns)	0.36 (ns)	0.25 (ns)
Institutional Support	4.00	0.19 (ns)	0.33 (ns)	0.28 (ns)

*p-value of ≤.05 is significant*

The table reveals that teachers frequently engage in effective practices across various aspects of multi-grade teaching, such as planning, delivering lessons, managing classrooms, and conducting both remedial and enrichment activities. The median score of 4.00 suggests that teachers excel in instructional performance, regardless of their personal backgrounds.

When it comes to planning, no notable differences appear based on teachers' education levels, training, or experience. This indicates a shared approach to lesson preparation among teachers. Studies indicate that multi-grade teachers often use structured and routine planning methods to handle the complexities of teaching multiple grades simultaneously (De Guzman & Lopez, 2020; Domingo, 2021). These common strategies contribute to a consistent level of instructional readiness. In terms of delivering lessons, only educational attainment shows a significant impact. Teachers with higher academic qualifications may employ more sophisticated or varied teaching methods. This aligns with research by Abulencia and Martin (2023) and Cruz et al. (2023), which suggests that advanced education improves pedagogical skills, allowing teachers to use more effective and diverse methods in multi-grade classrooms.

Classroom management skills differ significantly with the number of training sessions attended. This underscores the value of professional development in equipping teachers to effectively manage multi-grade classrooms. Training offers strategies for organizing classroom activities, keeping students engaged, and managing transitions between different grade levels (Tan & Lim, 2023; Cruz et al., 2020). These findings highlight the benefit of specialized training in enhancing classroom management skills. For remedial and enrichment activities, no significant differences were observed across any variables, indicating that teachers offer consistent learner support. Multi-grade teachers often use strategies like differentiated instruction and peer tutoring to meet diverse student needs (Acosta & Delos Reyes, 2023; Santos & Magno, 2021). These practices seem to be widely adopted, leading to uniformity in this area.

Regarding institutional support, teachers report similar experiences, with no significant differences noted. This points to a uniform level of administrative support, resource access, and professional growth opportunities. Research shows that collaborative school settings and shared institutional frameworks often lead to consistent

perceptions of support among teachers (Delos Santos, 2022).

In summary, while teachers generally perform well, elements like lesson delivery and classroom

management are influenced by education and training levels. This emphasizes the significance of ongoing professional development and higher education in boosting teaching effectiveness in multi-grade environments.

**Table 3.** Correlation between Instructional Support and Teachers’ Practices in the Multi-grade Schools of the Schools Division of Quirino

Teachers’ Practices	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significance (p)
Preparatory Activities	0.12	ns
Instructional Delivery	0.08	ns
Classroom Management	-0.05	ns
Remedial & Enrichment Activities	0.09	ns

*r = Pearson correlation coefficient*

*ns = not significant (p > 0.05)*

The study reveals that institutional support doesn't significantly impact teachers' instructional practices across various domains. This consistency in teaching methods, regardless of support levels, suggests that internal factors such as personal skills, experience, and self-confidence might have a greater influence on teachers.

Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory from 1986 underscores the importance of self-belief in one's capabilities as a key factor shaping behaviour and performance. In teaching, this means educators' confidence in handling multi-grade classrooms can sustain effective practices, even without strong institutional backing. Benjamin Bloom's work in 1976 also emphasized that learning outcomes depend on personal attributes and teaching conditions. Teachers often adjust their methods based on their strengths and experiences. Supporting this, research by Dela Cruz and Ortega in 2022 showed that multi-grade teachers frequently develop independent strategies to succeed, even when resources are limited.

Yet, some studies suggest a different perspective, highlighting how institutional support can enhance

teaching practices by offering resources, mentorship, and collaboration opportunities. Research by Delos Santos in 2022 and Tan & Lim in 2023 indicates that while institutional support may not directly affect practice as measured in this study, it provides valuable guidance and improves teaching quality.

Ultimately, the findings show that multi-grade teachers exemplify resilience and adaptability in their classrooms. Their consistent effectiveness, irrespective of institutional conditions, points to the need for both strong internal skills and supportive external environments.

The results of the study indicate that multi-grade teachers in the Schools Division of Quirino are academically qualified and have been exposed to several trainings related to multi-grade instruction. However, a considerable number of them are still relatively new to the multi-grade setting, with most having only one to five years of experience. Despite their limited years in this specialized environment, teachers reported a consistently high level of implementation across all key areas of multi-grade teaching, including preparatory activities, instructional delivery, classroom management, and

remedial or enrichment practices. These domains were collectively rated as strongly practiced, reflecting the teachers' commitment and adaptability in managing diverse learners within a single classroom. Institutional support was also generally perceived as strong, particularly in supervision and operational assistance. Nonetheless, support from Local Government Units (LGUs), especially in terms of financial or educational assistance for teachers pursuing advanced studies, was identified as an area needing improvement.

Moreover, teaching practices appeared to be largely uniform across different teacher profiles, including educational attainment, number of trainings attended, and years of multi-grade experience. Only a few specific strategies showed significant variation, particularly the use of shifting-lesson activities based on educational attainment and the application of attention signals according to the number of trainings attended. The analysis revealed no significant relationship between institutional support and the teaching practice domains. This suggests that although institutional support mechanisms are in place, they do not necessarily determine how teachers implement their instructional strategies. Overall, the findings underscore the professionalism, resilience, and dedication of multi-grade teachers, while also highlighting opportunities for more focused professional development and strengthened external support to further enhance instructional effectiveness.

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that schools strengthen professional development efforts specifically suited to the realities of multi-grade teaching. Given the observed differences in the use of attention signals across training groups, multi-grade-focused INSET and LAC sessions should place greater emphasis on explicitly teaching, modeling, and practicing effective attention-getting routines and smooth transition management. Similarly, considering the variation in shifting-lesson strategies based on educational attainment, schools may provide more structured and hands-on capacity-building activities that guide teachers in designing meaningful

independent tasks, managing pacing across grade levels, and effectively monitoring learners during lesson shifts. To further support consistent implementation, school heads may institutionalize mentoring systems that include peer coaching, demonstration teaching, and regular feedback cycles, allowing teachers to learn from one another and refine their classroom practices collaboratively. Finally, training initiatives should not end with workshops alone; instead, they should include systematic monitoring and follow-up mechanisms; such as classroom observations, implementation checklists, and reflective logs. This is to ensure that newly learned strategies are meaningfully applied in the classroom. Together, these efforts can help create a more sustained and practical support system for multi-grade teachers.

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