

**Elementary teachers' competence in multigrade in differentiated instruction:
An action plan**

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ABSTRACT

Multigrade classrooms are common in rural and under-resourced schools, where teachers handle multiple grade levels in one class. The findings attempted to determine the competence of elementary teachers in multigrade Differentiated Instruction in Tubigon West District, Tubigon, Bohol during the school year 2025–2026, as a basis for developing an action plan. The study was conducted at public and private elementary teachers in Tubigon West District, Tubigon, Bohol, with purposive sampling method to over 50 teacher respondents. It employed an adapted questionnaire. The research design involved a descriptive-correlational research design. The following statistical treatments were used: simple percentage, while weighted mean, and the Pearson-moment product correlation r . The study examined the respondents' profile, level of competence in implementing multigrade differentiated instruction, the relationship between profile variables and competence, and the challenges encountered. The respondents were mostly younger, predominantly female, and largely Teacher I–III, with many pursuing or having completed graduate studies and generally having considerable teaching experience and participation in school-level trainings. Overall, they demonstrated a very high level of competence in instructional planning, instructional delivery, and classroom management. Results showed no significant relationship between competence and age, gender, designation, and educational attainment, while teaching experience and training and seminars were significantly related to competence. The most common challenges encountered were time constraints and difficulty in meeting curriculum demands while differentiating instruction, with an overall frequency described as often. Based on these findings, the proposed action plan is recommended for adoption to further enrich the competence of teachers in the implementation of multigrade DI.

Keywords: Administration and supervision, teachers' competence, multigrade differentiated instruction, descriptive-correlational research design, Bohol, Philippines.

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INTRODUCTION

Multigrade classrooms are a common feature of elementary schools in rural and under-resourced communities, where teachers handle multiple grade-level curricula within a single classroom. In these settings, the effectiveness of differentiated instruction (DI) largely depends on teachers' competence, specifically in instructional planning, delivery of lessons, and classroom management. Elementary teachers in multigrade classes must strategically design lesson plans that address varying learning objectives, implement instructional strategies that accommodate diverse readiness levels, and manage classroom routines that support simultaneous learning across grade levels (Pedroches, 2025). When teachers lack competence in these dimensions, learners' diverse needs may not be adequately addressed, resulting in uneven learning opportunities. Therefore, examining elementary teachers' competence in multigrade differentiated instruction provides essential insights for developing targeted professional development programs and instructional support systems that strengthen inclusive and equitable teaching practices.

Similarly, international studies on multigrade instruction have largely examined classroom strategies and teacher practices without systematically measuring competence using validated tools (Naparan & Alinsug, 2021). Similarly, Philippine research highlights challenges such as limited resources, diverse learners, and inadequate professional development in rural multigrade schools (Bunglay & Cutab, 2023), yet few studies quantitatively assess teacher competence in differentiated instruction. Bunga (2025) addressed this gap by developing a performance appraisal tool measuring competence in instructional planning, delivery, and classroom management. At the local level, particularly in Region VII and Cebu, research on multigrade differentiated instruction competence remains scarce. Although Alda and Gementiza (2023) explored reading instruction in multigrade classrooms, their work focused on teacher experiences and challenges rather than measuring competence, underscoring the need for systematic local investigations.

However, while previous research has focused on larger cities, Tubigon West District in Bohol remains underexplored, highlighting the need for localized studies. Thus, this study aims to assess the competence of elementary teachers in implementing differentiated instruction in multigrade classrooms in Tubigon West District, Bohol, for the school year 2025–2026, as a basis for an action plan. By assessing current competence levels, the study seeks to develop an actionable plan for targeted professional development that addresses identified gaps in multigrade differentiated instruction.

Therefore, the findings of the study may lead and provide the researcher an empirical data to enhance the competence of elementary teachers in implementing multigrade differentiated instruction by identifying current proficiency levels, addressing gaps in pedagogical skills, and providing targeted professional development interventions that promote effective instructional strategies, classroom management, and learner-centered teaching approaches.

Statement of the problem

The study determined the competence of elementary teachers in multigrade Differentiated Instruction in Tubigon West District, Tubigon, Bohol during the school year 2025–2026, as a basis for developing an action plan.

Specifically, it answered the following subproblems:

1. What are the respondent profiles in terms of age, gender, highest educational attainment, length of teaching experience, and related training and seminars attended?

2. What is the level of competence of the respondents in the implementation of multigrade DI in terms of instructional planning, instructional delivery, and classroom management?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' profiles and their level of competence in implementing multigrade DI?
4. What is the extent of the challenges encountered by the respondents in the implementation of multigrade DI?
5. Based on the findings of the study, what action plan can be developed to enhance the competence of elementary teachers in multigrade DI?

METHODOLOGY

This research employed a descriptive-correlational research design using an adapted questionnaire to determine the elementary teachers' competence in multigrade differentiated instruction in Tubigon West District, Tubigon, Bohol during the school year 2025-2026, as a basis for an action plan. Specifically, the study examined the profile of the respondents, the level of competence of the respondents in the implementation of multigrade DI, the significant relationship between the respondents' profiles and their level of competence in implementing multigrade DI, and the respondents' extent of the challenges encountered in the implementation of multigrade DI. The study employed random sampling, which allowed for efficient data collection within a short timeframe, as the respondents were easily accessible in the study area.

The research followed a system model employing the input, process, and output approach. The input phase contained the profile of the respondents, the level of competence of the respondents in the implementation of multigrade DI, the significant relationship between the respondents' profiles and their level of competence in implementing multigrade DI, and the respondents' extent of the challenges encountered in the implementation of multigrade DI. The process phase served as the method for gathering and synthesizing variables, encompassing the method, gathering of data, organization of data, and analysis of data, through which the results of the questionnaires were examined. The data gathered were tabulated, analyzed, computed, and evaluated to determine the results. The output phase provided the researcher with empirical data to develop and implement an action plan that enhanced the competence of elementary teachers in implementing multigrade differentiated instruction by identifying current proficiency levels, addressing gaps in pedagogical skills, and providing targeted professional development interventions that promote effective instructional strategies, classroom management, and learner-centered teaching approaches. This action plan included the following elements: areas of concern, objectives, strategies, persons involved, budget, source of budget, time frame, expected outcome, and actual accomplishment.

The study was conducted among public and private elementary teachers in Tubigon West District, Tubigon, Bohol. The district comprises numerous elementary and primary schools, several of which operate multigrade classes due to geographically dispersed communities and varying enrollment sizes. Such conditions make multigrade instruction a practical and necessary approach to ensuring access to basic education, particularly in smaller or rural barangays. Given the diversity of learners and limited resources commonly experienced in these settings, teachers in Tubigon West District are required to plan, deliver, and manage instruction across multiple grade levels simultaneously. The presence of schools included in national connectivity and resource-enhancement initiatives further highlights ongoing efforts to strengthen instructional delivery in underserved areas. These contextual characteristics make

Tubigon West District a relevant and appropriate locale for examining elementary teachers' competence in multigrade differentiated instruction.

The respondents of this study were the public elementary school teachers of the above-mentioned district, with a total number of 50 respondents, computed through percentage. Of the total respondents, 50 or 100.00 percent were all teachers, and it was further shown that these were public elementary school teachers.

The study employed an adapted and modified survey questionnaire from the study of Bunga (2025). The research-based questionnaire was composed of three parts. The first part answered the profiles of the respondents, particularly as to their age, gender, designation, highest educational attainment, length of teaching experience, and related training and seminars attended. The second part answered the respondents' level of competence in the implementation of multigrade DI, in terms of instructional planning, instructional delivery, and classroom management, which comprised five equal statements per sub-variable. The third part answered the extent of the challenges encountered by the respondents in the implementation of multigrade DI, which comprised ten equal statements.

The procedures employed in gathering the data needed to address the research questions detailed the methods, instruments, and protocols used in the collection process to ensure that the information obtained was valid, reliable, and appropriate for the objectives of the study. During the preliminary stage, the researchers sent a transmittal letter to the public schools district supervisor and school principal to ask permission to conduct the study. Once approved, the researcher arranged the schedule for meeting the respondents and conducting the study. During the data gathering stage, on the scheduled day, the researchers facilitated an orientation regarding the research, during which salient issues such as the purpose of the study, its procedure, and how the confidentiality of the respondents was protected were discussed. Administration of the survey questionnaires followed right after the orientation, with instructions given on how to answer the survey questionnaires. Assistance was also provided while the respondents were answering the survey questionnaires, and enough time was given to answer the said questionnaires, followed by the retrieval of the questionnaires. During the post data gathering stage, the study tallied, organized, summarized, interpreted, and analyzed the results, and appropriate statistical tools were used in the treatment of data.

The study involved a descriptive-correlational research design, and the following statistical treatments were used: simple percentage was used for the percentage of the respondents' profiles, while weighted mean determined the distribution results of the level of competence of the respondents in the implementation of multigrade DI and the extent of the challenges encountered by the respondents in the implementation of multigrade DI, and the Pearson-moment product correlation r tested the significant relationship between the respondents' profiles and their level of competence in implementing multigrade DI. Simple percentage computation described the profile and frequency of the respondents. Weighted mean determined the distribution results of the respondents' level of competence in the implementation of multigrade DI and the extent of the challenges encountered by the respondents in the implementation of multigrade DI. Pearson-moment product correlation r tested the significant relationship between the respondents' profiles and their level of competence in implementing multigrade DI.

The researcher used the Five-point Likert Scale, which required an individual participant to respond to a series of statements in the questionnaire by indicating very high, high, neutral, low, or very low. A scale value of 5, corresponding to a range of 4.21-5.00, was categorized as Very High, meaning that the respondent experienced the statement to the highest extent. A scale value of 4, corresponding to a range of 3.41-4.20, was categorized as High, meaning that the respondent experienced the statement to a high extent. A scale value of 3, corresponding to a range of 2.61-3.40, was categorized as Neutral, meaning that the respondent

was not certain with the statement. A scale value of 2, corresponding to a range of 1.81-2.60, was categorized as Low, meaning that the respondent experienced the statement to a less extent. A scale value of 1, corresponding to a range of 1.00-1.80, was categorized as Very Low, meaning that the respondent experienced the statement to the least extent.

This study was guided by a set of principles that informed the research design and practices, including voluntary participation, informed consent, and anonymity. With regard to voluntary participation, the study focused on the respondents' engagement and cooperation, and teacher respondents from the aforementioned research context were informed of their voluntary participation in the study. With regard to informed consent, the study was open about the goals and objectives of both the researcher and the respondents. With regard to anonymity, the respondents' profiles and data were likewise kept confidential during the study, and as a result, teacher respondents were assured that their privacy was respected with maximum discretion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study involved fifty respondents whose profiles, level of competence in implementing multigrade differentiated instruction (DI), and encountered challenges were examined through a descriptive correlational research design. Data were gathered using a structured survey questionnaire and were analyzed using frequency and percentage distributions for the demographic profile, weighted mean with verbal descriptions for the level of competence and extent of challenges, and Pearson *r* correlation with computed *t*-values, degrees of freedom, critical *t*-values, and *p*-values at the 0.05 level of significance to determine the relationship between respondents' profiles and their level of competence. The discussion that follows is grounded strictly in the data gathered and is interpreted in direct relation to the objectives of the study, namely to describe the profile of the respondents, determine their level of competence in implementing multigrade DI, establish the significant relationship between their profiles and competence, and identify the extent of challenges they encountered.

In terms of age, the findings show that the largest group of respondents, 17 or 34.00%, belonged to the 21 to 30 years old bracket, followed by 15 or 30.00% who were 31 to 40 years old, 11 or 22.00% who were 41 to 50 years old, and 7 or 14.00% who were 51 to 60 years old, out of a total of 50 or 100.00% respondents. This age distribution indicates that the respondents are generally composed of a relatively young teaching workforce, implying that they may be more adaptable to new instructional approaches such as multigrade DI and more open to continuous professional development. Tomlinson and Moon (2020) explain that adaptability is a key attribute in implementing responsive teaching strategies, as it requires continuous adjustment to learner diversity and instructional demands, while Kraft and Papay (2019) note that teachers' openness to professional growth is often associated with early career stages, where engagement in training and reflective practice is more frequent.

With respect to gender, the data reveal a highly imbalanced distribution, with only 4 or 8.00% of the respondents being male and the overwhelming majority, 46 or 92.00%, being female, out of the total 50 or 100.00% respondents. This finding reflects the dominance of female teachers in the study population and implies a strong female dominated teaching workforce, which may influence collaborative practices, instructional styles, and professional development engagement within schools. Ingersoll et al. (2021) explain that gender composition in schools may shape collaborative dynamics and collegial interactions, as female teachers are often associated with stronger engagement in cooperative professional cultures, while Rizvi and Kalyanpur (2020) emphasize that teacher collaboration and participation in

professional development are influenced by workforce demographics, including gender distribution, which can affect communication styles and shared instructional approaches.

As to highest educational attainment, 2 or 4.00% of the respondents held a doctorate degree, 1 or 2.00% had units in doctorate studies, 7 or 14.00% held a master's degree, 22 or 44.00% had units in a master's degree, and 18 or 36.00% held only a bachelor's degree, out of the total 50 or 100.00% respondents. This profile implies that many teachers are currently pursuing or have completed graduate studies, reflecting a strong inclination toward professional growth and suggesting a workforce that is continuously upgrading its qualifications to improve instructional competence. This is supported by Avalos (2019), who emphasized that teachers' engagement in graduate education is closely linked to sustained professional learning and improved instructional effectiveness, and by Darling-Hammond et al. (2021), who noted that higher educational attainment among teachers contributes to deeper pedagogical knowledge and more effective classroom practices, particularly in addressing diverse learner needs. Opfer and Pedder (2020) further explain that continuous professional development, including advanced academic study, strengthens teachers' capacity to implement innovative and learner-centered instructional strategies.

In terms of length of teaching experience, 24 or 48.00% of the respondents had eight or more years of service and were considered experienced, 11 or 22.00% had four to seven years and were considered relatively experienced, and 15 or 30.00% had one to three years and were considered young in service, out of the total 50 or 100.00% respondents. This distribution suggests a mix of experienced and developing teachers in the workforce, implying that competence in instructional practices may be influenced by varying levels of exposure to classroom realities and teaching challenges over time. Kraft and Papay (2019) emphasized that teachers improve significantly in instructional effectiveness as they gain sustained experience within supportive professional environments, while Wiswall (2020) explained that teaching experience contributes to the gradual development of pedagogical judgment, classroom management skills, and responsiveness to learner diversity.

Regarding related training and seminars attended, 20 or 40.00% of the respondents attended training at the school level, 17 or 34.00% at the district level, and 13 or 26.00% at the division level, out of the total 50 or 100.00% respondents. This finding implies that most teachers are exposed mainly to school-level professional development activities, suggesting that opportunities for higher-level training may influence the depth and breadth of teachers' instructional competencies, particularly in specialized approaches such as multigrade DI. This is supported by Desimone and Garet (2020), who emphasized that the quality and level of professional development significantly affect teachers' instructional knowledge and classroom practice, with more intensive and sustained training leading to stronger pedagogical skills.

The level of competence of the respondents in implementing multigrade DI was assessed across three domains: instructional planning, instructional delivery, and classroom management, using a legend where 1.0-1.8 is interpreted as very low, 1.81-2.6 as low, 2.61-3.4 as neutral, 3.41-4.2 as high, and 4.21-5.0 as very high. In instructional planning, the indicator "Align lesson objectives with the K to 12 curriculum and pupils' context and learning needs and include various performance indicators for pupils to demonstrate evidence of learning" obtained the highest mean of 4.50, described as Very High, followed by "Use individual pupil's formative assessment data consistently to plan differentiated instruction for content mastery, pacing, and transitions" with a mean of 4.42, also Very High. Other indicators included "Differentiate learning plans considering the content, process, and product" with a mean of 4.32, "Prepare multigrade daily lesson plans and include various performance tasks or activities to assess students' mastery of lesson content" with a mean of 4.16, and "Develop differentiated learning plans for each grade level to accommodate pupils' learning needs and capabilities, reflecting both individual and group interests, ability levels, and learning styles" with a mean

of 4.14, described as High. The overall mean for instructional planning was 4.30, described as Very High. This result implies that the respondents possess a very high level of competence in instructional planning for multigrade differentiated instruction, demonstrating strong ability to design lesson plans aligned with curriculum standards and responsive to diverse learner needs. This is supported by Van Geel et al. (2019), who emphasized that effective instructional planning is anchored on curriculum alignment and responsiveness to learner diversity, and by McTighe and Willis (2020), who explained that well-designed instruction integrates clear learning targets with varied assessment strategies. Black and Wiliam (2019) further emphasized that formative assessment is a powerful tool for improving teaching and learning when teachers systematically use evidence of student performance to adjust instruction, while Heritage and Wylie (2020) and Brookhart and Lazarus (2021) similarly noted that data-informed instruction strengthens teachers' capacity to identify learning gaps and provide targeted interventions. Hall and Simeral (2020), Santiago and Benavides (2021), and Baumgartner et al. (2019) further reinforced that high-quality lesson planning in multigrade settings requires strong pedagogical skills, curriculum alignment, and integration of differentiated strategies.

In instructional delivery, the indicators "Engage and maintain pupils in active learning" and "Provide collaborative and learner-centered learning opportunities for pupils to work individually, in pairs, in small groups, and in whole class" both obtained the highest mean of 4.62, described as Very High, followed by "Prioritize what content pupils are expected to learn" with a mean of 4.50. Additional indicators included "Reinforce learning goals consistently throughout the lessons" with a mean of 4.42 and "Use differentiated instructional strategies by which pupils gain easy access to the content" with a mean of 4.36, all described as Very High. The overall mean for instructional delivery was 4.68, described as Very High. This result implies that the respondents exhibit a very high level of competence in facilitating learning through strategies that promote active engagement, learner participation, and collaboration among pupils. Hattie (2019) emphasized that effective instructional delivery is strongly associated with teachers' ability to actively engage students and maintain their participation, while Freeman et al. (2020) found that learner-centered and collaborative strategies significantly enhance student engagement and academic performance. Prince (2021) further explained that active learning approaches contribute to deeper understanding and improved retention of knowledge. Schmidt et al. (2019), Marsh and Willis (2020), and Wiggins and McTighe (2021) similarly emphasized the importance of curriculum prioritization and identification of essential learning goals in ensuring instructional efficiency, while Danielson (2019), Marzano (2020), and Vaughn and Parsons (2021) reinforced that effective instructional delivery requires purposeful strategies that foster engagement while maintaining clarity and structure.

In classroom management, the indicator "Establish classroom rules and procedures, expectations, and routines that are enforced consistently and fairly and monitor group participation and involvement to ensure pupils' learning progress and provide feedback" obtained the highest mean of 4.70, described as Very High, followed by "Arrange tables and seats to accommodate pupils' work and learning needs and interact with all of the different groups during the course of the lesson" and "Visit classes regularly to observe teaching and learning," both with a mean of 4.62. Other indicators included "Practice the teacher's role as a facilitator and participant in the teaching and learning process and maximize instructional learning time" with a mean of 4.52, and "Establish teacher's schedules that indicate a systematic plan for the lesson's activities" and "Use grouping strategies in a variety of ways," both with a mean of 4.44, all described as Very High. The overall mean for classroom management was

4.54, described as Very High. This finding implies that the respondents are highly capable of organizing and maintaining a structured and orderly learning environment that supports effective teaching and learning processes. Emmer and Sabornie (2019) emphasized that effective classroom management is grounded in clear structure, consistent routines, and fair enforcement of rules, while Simonsen et al. (2020) explained that proactive classroom management strategies, including monitoring student behavior and participation, are essential in maintaining order and maximizing instructional time. Hallinger and Heck (2020) and Robinson et al. (2019) further emphasized that classroom observation and active monitoring of instruction are strongly associated with improved teacher effectiveness and student outcomes. Marzano and Marzano (2019), Oliver and Reschly (2020), and Brophy (2021) similarly noted that establishing clear rules, structured routines, and consistent monitoring of participation are fundamental to sustaining student engagement and supporting continuous academic progress.

The significant relationship between the respondents' profiles and their level of competence in implementing multigrade DI was tested using Pearson r correlation at the 0.05 level of significance with 48 degrees of freedom and a critical t -value of 2.01. Results show that age obtained an r -value of 0.18 with a computed t -value of 1.26 and a p -value of 0.21, gender obtained an r -value of 0.11 with a computed t -value of 0.78 and a p -value of 0.44, designation obtained an r -value of 0.22 with a computed t -value of 1.56 and a p -value of 0.12, and educational attainment obtained an r -value of 0.25 with a computed t -value of 1.79 and a p -value of 0.08. Since the computed t -values for these four variables did not exceed the critical t -value of 2.01 and their p -values were higher than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was not rejected for age, gender, designation, and educational attainment, indicating that these variables do not significantly influence teachers' competence in implementing multigrade DI. In contrast, length of teaching experience obtained an r -value of 0.29 with a computed t -value of 2.12 and a p -value of 0.04, and training and seminars attended obtained an r -value of 0.31 with a computed t -value of 2.28 and a p -value of 0.03. Since the computed t -values for these two variables exceeded the critical t -value of 2.01 and their p -values were lower than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected for length of teaching experience and training and seminars attended, indicating that these two variables significantly influence teachers' competence in implementing multigrade DI. This result implies that personal and academic profile characteristics such as age, gender, designation, and educational attainment do not significantly determine teachers' competence, whereas practical exposure through teaching experience and continuous professional development through training and seminars play a crucial role in enhancing competence. This is supported by Kraft and Lyon (2021), who found that demographic characteristics often have minimal predictive power on instructional effectiveness compared to experiential and professional learning factors, and by Sims et al. (2020), who emphasized that teacher competence is more strongly shaped by sustained professional practice and exposure to real classroom conditions than by static personal attributes. Kraft and Blazar (2019) further noted that teaching experience combined with structured professional learning opportunities leads to measurable improvements in instructional competence, particularly in complex teaching environments such as multigrade classrooms.

Finally, the extent of the challenges encountered by the respondents in implementing multigrade DI was assessed using a legend where 1.0-1.8 is interpreted as never, 1.81-2.6 as rarely, 2.61-3.4 as sometimes, 3.41-4.2 as often, and 4.21-5.0 as always. The indicator "Time constraints pose a significant challenge for teachers in preparing and delivering differentiated instruction" obtained the highest mean of 4.34, described as Always, followed by "Meeting the demands of the curriculum while differentiating instruction across multiple grade levels is challenging" with a mean of 4.26, also described as Always. Other indicators included "Teachers encounter significant challenges in planning lessons that accommodate multiple

grade levels simultaneously" and "Limited availability of instructional materials, technology, and classroom space hinders effective differentiated instruction," both with a mean of 4.10; "Large class sizes increase the difficulty of implementing differentiated instruction effectively" with a mean of 3.98; "Teachers face challenges in addressing the diverse learning styles and abilities of students in multigrade classrooms" with a mean of 3.96; "Assessing and evaluating students' learning outcomes in a differentiated multigrade setting is a major challenge for teachers" with a mean of 3.94; "Classroom management becomes more difficult for teachers when implementing differentiated instruction in multigrade classrooms" with a mean of 3.86; "The extent of challenges in differentiated instruction varies depending on school type (public or private) and grade levels taught" with a mean of 3.84; and "A lack of sufficient professional development and training limits teachers' capacity to implement differentiated instruction effectively" with a mean of 3.78, all described as Often. The overall mean for the extent of challenges was 4.01, described as Often. This finding implies that the respondents frequently encounter difficulties in instructional planning, delivery, and management, reflecting the inherent complexity of addressing diverse learner needs across multiple grade levels within a single instructional environment, particularly regarding time, resources, and curriculum coverage. Vangrieken et al. (2019) noted that teachers in complex classroom settings often experience significant time pressure due to the need to plan, adapt, and deliver instruction for diverse learners simultaneously, while De Jong and Meirink (2020) emphasized that instructional workload and limited preparation time can hinder teachers' ability to consistently implement differentiated strategies. Sims and Fletcher-Wood (2021) found that time scarcity directly affects the quality of teaching practices, while Little (2020) and Mulryan-Kyne (2019) emphasized that reconciling curriculum expectations with responsive teaching practices presents unique pedagogical challenges in multigrade settings. Akyeampong and Lussier (2020), Collins and McGinn (2019), and Hargreaves and Braun (2021) further explained that multigrade teaching environments place significant pressure on teachers in managing time, resources, and curriculum expectations, while Brown and Park (2023) and Sharma and Pillay (2022) noted that overlapping lesson requirements and competing academic demands frequently hinder instructional consistency and individualized learner support.

Taken together, these findings demonstrate that the fifty respondents, who are predominantly young, female, pursuing graduate studies, and possess a mix of teaching experience levels concentrated largely in school-level training, exhibit a very high level of competence in implementing multigrade differentiated instruction across the domains of instructional planning, instructional delivery, and classroom management, with overall means of 4.30, 4.68, and 4.54 respectively. This competence, however, is not shaped by demographic or static academic factors such as age, gender, designation, or educational attainment, but is significantly influenced by length of teaching experience and participation in training and seminars, underscoring the value of accumulated practical exposure and continuous professional development in strengthening teachers' instructional capacities. At the same time, the respondents often encounter substantial challenges in implementing multigrade DI, with an overall mean of 4.01, particularly regarding time constraints and the difficulty of meeting curricular demands across multiple grade levels, revealing a persistent gap between teachers' demonstrated competence and the structural and logistical realities of multigrade classroom settings. These findings collectively address the objectives of the study by establishing a clear profile of the respondents, quantifying their competence in implementing multigrade DI, identifying which profile variables significantly relate to that competence, and delineating the extent of challenges that continue to constrain effective practice. The results contribute meaningful evidence to the field of multigrade education by highlighting that experiential and

developmental factors, rather than demographic characteristics, are the more consequential determinants of instructional competence, while also drawing attention to persistent systemic challenges that warrant further institutional support. These findings provide the empirical foundation for the succeeding chapter, which presents the summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings, taken together, paint a coherent picture of what shapes elementary teachers' competence in implementing multigrade differentiated instruction in Tubigon West District. The teacher respondents were largely young, predominantly female, and mostly occupying Teacher I to III positions, with the majority having earned units toward a master's degree, having accumulated considerable teaching experience, and having attended mostly school level trainings and seminars. Against this demographic backdrop, the respondents demonstrated a very high level of competence across all three domains examined, namely instructional planning, instructional delivery, and classroom management. They proved especially adept at aligning lesson objectives with the K to 12 curriculum and with pupils' contexts and needs, at using formative assessment data to guide pacing, transitions, and content mastery, at engaging pupils through active and collaborative learning experiences, at prioritizing essential content amid the demands of multiple grade levels, and at establishing and consistently enforcing classroom routines while monitoring participation and providing timely feedback. These consistent results across all three domains indicate that, on the whole, the teachers of Tubigon West District possess the instructional capability necessary to manage the complex demands of multigrade teaching.

What distinguishes this competence, however, is not who the teachers are in terms of personal or academic profile, but rather what they have done professionally over time. The findings clearly show that age, gender, designation, and educational attainment bear no significant relationship to the respondents' level of competence, as reflected in the low correlation values and in computed t-values and p-values that failed to meet the threshold of significance. By contrast, length of teaching experience and participation in relevant trainings and seminars emerged as significant correlates of competence, supported by higher correlation values and by t-values and p-values that met the criteria for significance. This contrast suggests that competence in multigrade differentiated instruction is cultivated rather than inherent, built progressively through years of classroom practice and through deliberate engagement in professional development activities, rather than predetermined by static personal or academic characteristics. At the same time, this competence is not achieved without difficulty, as the respondents reported encountering challenges often, most notably the constraints of time in preparing and delivering differentiated lessons and the difficulty of reconciling curriculum demands across multiple grade levels within a single classroom setting. This pairing of high competence with frequent challenges underscores that skilled multigrade teaching is sustained through ongoing effort and support rather than being a settled or effortless accomplishment.

Taken as a whole, these findings imply that any effort to enhance and sustain teachers' competence in multigrade differentiated instruction should be directed toward strengthening professional exposure and reducing the structural burdens teachers face, rather than toward addressing demographic or academic variables that have shown no meaningful bearing on competence. It is on this basis that the study offers its recommendations. The Department of Education may strengthen and sustain policies and programs supporting continuous in-service training and professional development focused on multigrade differentiated instruction. School administrators are encouraged to regularly provide relevant trainings and seminars and to support programs that build teachers' skills in instructional planning, instructional delivery, and

classroom management within multigrade settings. Teachers themselves are encouraged to actively participate in such trainings and seminars and to consistently apply differentiated strategies in their practice. Parents may be encouraged to support school initiatives and to collaborate with teachers in reinforcing learners' needs at home, complementing what takes place in the classroom. Researchers are encouraged to draw on these findings as a foundation for developing interventions and programs that respond to the needs identified in this study, while future researchers may explore additional variables that could influence competence in multigrade instruction and undertake similar investigations in broader or different educational contexts to validate and extend these findings. In light of all these considerations, the action plan entitled "Enriching the Competence of Teachers in the Implementation of Multigrade DI" shall be adopted as a concrete response to the needs and challenges identified through this study.

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