

# Examining the Influence of Leadership Practices and Organizational Support on Teachers' Self-Efficacy in K-12 and Matatag Multigrade Classrooms

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**Abstract**— This study examined the relationships among leadership practices, organizational support, and teachers' self-efficacy in implementing the K-12 and MATATAG curricula in multigrade classrooms using a convergent parallel mixed-methods design. The quantitative strand employed a descriptive-correlational design and regression-based mediation analysis, while the qualitative strand utilized narrative inquiry. Results indicated that leadership practices ( $M = 3.85$ ), organizational support ( $M = 3.82$ ), and teacher self-efficacy ( $M = 3.75$ ) were all perceived as high. However, the relationship between leadership practices and teacher self-efficacy was negligible and not statistically significant ( $r = 0.067$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). Furthermore, organizational support did not significantly mediate this relationship. Qualitative findings revealed that teacher self-efficacy was largely shaped by mastery experiences, adaptive instructional strategies, and peer collaboration. The study concludes that leadership practices and organizational support function as enabling conditions rather than direct determinants of teacher self-efficacy.

**Keywords**— Multigrade Education, Leadership Practices, Teacher Self-Efficacy, Organizational Support, MATATAG Curriculum.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Ensuring equitable access to quality education has remained a persistent challenge, particularly in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas. In the Philippine context, multigrade education has been widely implemented as a strategic response to limited teacher deployment and resource constraints, enabling schools to continue delivering basic education despite structural limitations (UNESCO, 2020). In this instructional arrangement, a single teacher facilitates learning across multiple grade levels, creating a complex classroom environment that requires flexibility, adaptability, and innovative teaching strategies.

With the implementation of the K-12 Basic Education Program and the MATATAG Curriculum, the demands placed on teachers in multigrade classrooms have intensified. These reforms emphasize the development of foundational competencies such as literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking, requiring teachers to effectively manage diverse learners while

ensuring meaningful learning outcomes (Department of Education [DepEd], 2023). As a result, teachers in multigrade settings are expected to demonstrate high levels of instructional competence and classroom management skills.

Leadership practices and organizational support are widely recognized as essential factors in facilitating effective curriculum implementation. School leaders play a crucial role in providing instructional guidance, supporting teacher professional development, managing resources, and fostering a positive learning environment aligned with national standards (DepEd, 2020). At the same time, teacher self-efficacy, defined as teachers' beliefs in their ability to perform teaching tasks successfully, has been identified as a key determinant of teaching effectiveness and student achievement (Bandura, 1997).

Despite the recognized importance of leadership practices and organizational support, there remains limited empirical evidence examining how these

factors influence teacher self-efficacy in multigrade contexts. Moreover, the extent to which organizational support mediates the relationship between leadership practices and teacher self-efficacy remains underexplored. Teachers with high self-efficacy are more likely to implement innovative instructional strategies, remain motivated, and persist in addressing classroom challenges.

Thus, this study specifically aims to (1) analyze the relationships among leadership practices, organizational support, and teacher self-efficacy in the context of implementing the K-12 and MATATAG curricula in multigrade classrooms; (2) determine whether organizational support serves as a mediating factor between leadership practices and teacher self-efficacy; and (3) investigate the lived experiences of multigrade teachers to gain detailed insights into the factors influencing their instructional approaches and professional confidence.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This study used a convergent parallel mixed-methods design to combine quantitative and qualitative data.

The quantitative phase employed a descriptive-correlational research design with multigrade teachers from selected schools in Tanguib City, Misamis Occidental. Data were collected using standardized questionnaires that measured leadership practices, organizational support, and teacher self-efficacy. Statistical analyses included computing means and standard deviations, as well as Pearson correlation and regression-based mediation analyses using bootstrapping.

The qualitative phase used a narrative inquiry approach. Ten purposively selected multigrade teachers took part in in-depth interviews. Data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis to find recurring themes.

Ethical Researchers strictly observed informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results revealed that leadership practices ( $M = 3.85$ ), organizational support ( $M = 3.82$ ), and teacher

self-efficacy ( $M = 3.75$ ) were all perceived at high levels among multigrade teachers. These findings indicate that school heads demonstrated strong leadership practices and that organizational support systems were evident within the school context. However, despite these positive perceptions, the correlation analysis revealed a very weak, non-significant relationship between leadership practices and teacher self-efficacy ( $r = 0.067$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). Similarly, mediation analysis showed that organizational support did not significantly mediate this relationship.

This apparent discrepancy between high levels of leadership practices and the absence of a significant relationship with teacher self-efficacy suggests that the development of teacher confidence may not be directly influenced by external leadership or institutional support. Consistent with Albert Bandura (1997), self-efficacy is primarily shaped by mastery experiences, wherein individuals develop confidence through repeated engagement and success in performing specific tasks. Moreover, prior research indicates that leadership often influences teacher outcomes indirectly, through school climate and support structures rather than through direct effects (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). Thus, while leadership practices and organizational support are essential in establishing enabling conditions, they may not directly determine teachers' sense of efficacy.

To further explain these quantitative findings, the qualitative data provided richer insights, yielding six interconnected themes.

### *Strategic Curriculum Planning and Integration*

First, the theme on strategic curriculum planning and integration highlights teachers' capacity to organize and align competencies across multiple grade levels. In multigrade classrooms, effective planning requires integrating learning objectives and efficient time management.

One participant shared, "I align the competencies of the two grade levels so that both the learners and I will not get confused during instruction." (P1). This finding indicates that teachers' confidence is strengthened through continuous engagement in

curriculum planning. In line with Darling-Hammond (2000), instructional competence plays a crucial role in effective teaching. However, the present findings extend this perspective by showing that such competence is primarily developed through direct teaching experience rather than external leadership influence.

### ***Differentiated and Learner-Centered Instruction***

Moreover, the theme of differentiated and learner-centered instruction emphasizes teachers' use of flexible, responsive strategies to address diverse learner needs.

As one teacher explained, "I group them based on their level, and I provide different activities so they can better understand the lesson." (P2). This supports Tomlinson's (2014) assertion that differentiated instruction is essential in accommodating diverse learners. Furthermore, the findings suggest that the successful implementation of such strategies enhances teacher self-efficacy, reinforcing Bandura's (1997) view that mastery experiences are the primary source of efficacy beliefs.

### ***Instructional Adaptation and Resourcefulness***

In addition, the theme of instructional adaptation and resourcefulness reflects teachers' ability to navigate resource constraints through creativity and innovation.

A participant stated, "If materials are lacking, I create my own or look for resources online so that the learners will still have something to use." (P3). This finding highlights the role of adaptability in strengthening teacher confidence. Consistent with UNESCO (2020), teachers in resource-limited contexts often rely on improvisation to sustain instruction. Consequently, this explains why organizational support, despite being highly rated, did not significantly influence teacher self-efficacy.

### ***Leadership Support and Motivation***

Meanwhile, the theme on leadership support and motivation reveals that school heads provided guidance, feedback, and encouragement that contributed to teachers' professional development.

One teacher shared, "Our principal is very supportive. We are guided and encouraged, but we are still the ones who adjust in the classroom." (P4). Although leadership practices were perceived positively, the findings indicate that they function primarily as motivational and facilitative factors. This aligns with Leithwood et al. (2008), who emphasized that leadership influences teaching indirectly. Thus, leadership enhances the teaching environment but does not directly determine teacher self-efficacy.

### ***Organizational and External Support Systems***

Furthermore, the theme on organizational and external support systems highlights the role of professional development programs, Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, and institutional support mechanisms.

As expressed by a participant, "LAC sessions are very helpful because we can share strategies, but in actual teaching, we still rely on our own approaches." (P5). This finding suggests that while organizational support contributes to professional growth, its effect on self-efficacy is indirect. Consistent with Desimone (2009), professional development enhances teaching practices but does not automatically translate into increased self-efficacy unless it is successfully applied in the classroom.

### ***Need for Sustained Policy Support***

Finally, the theme on the need for sustained policy support emphasizes the ongoing challenges faced by multigrade teachers.

One participant emphasized, "Multigrade teaching is really difficult because of the heavy workload, and sometimes the support is still lacking." (P6). This finding highlights the gap between policy intentions and classroom realities. In line with Little (2006), effective multigrade education requires context-specific policies that address workload, resources, and teacher support.

### ***Synthesis of Findings***

Overall, the integration of quantitative and qualitative findings suggests that teacher self-efficacy in multigrade classrooms is primarily shaped by mastery experiences, adaptive instructional practices, and collaborative engagement. While leadership practices

and organizational support were evident, they functioned mainly as enabling conditions rather than direct predictors of teacher self-efficacy.

Therefore, the findings underscore the critical role of teacher agency in navigating the complexities of multigrade instruction. In conclusion, these results reinforce Bandura's (1997) theory that self-efficacy develops through direct experience, highlighting the importance of practical engagement in shaping teachers' professional confidence.

#### 4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concludes that leadership practices and organizational support, although highly implemented, do not significantly predict teacher self-efficacy in multigrade classrooms. Teacher self-efficacy is primarily shaped by mastery experiences, adaptive instructional practices, and collaborative engagement.

It is recommended that schools strengthen context-specific support systems by providing targeted professional development, instructional resources, and collaborative platforms for multigrade teachers. Policymakers should also develop responsive policies tailored to the unique challenges of multigrade education.

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