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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Implementation of the K to 12 Curriculum in Filipino 8: Teachers' Pedagogical Experiences and Instructional Perspectives in Public Secondary Schools of Trece Martires City, Cavite

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Abstract

The implementation of the K to 12 Curriculum in the Philippines has significantly transformed instructional delivery, pedagogical approaches, and learner-centered practices across various disciplines, including Filipino language education. This qualitative phenomenological study explored the pedagogical experiences and instructional perspectives of Filipino 8 teachers in public secondary schools in Trece Martires City, Cavite. Specifically, the study investigated teachers' instructional practices, classroom challenges, curriculum adaptation strategies, and perceptions regarding learner engagement under the K to 12 framework. Twelve Filipino teachers were purposively selected as participants. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's framework was employed in interpreting the data. Findings revealed that teachers implemented contextualized and learner-centered pedagogies, integrated collaborative and experiential learning activities, and utilized localized instructional materials to improve comprehension and participation. However, challenges such as insufficient instructional resources, varied learner competencies, time constraints, and curriculum congestion affected instructional delivery. Teachers also emphasized the importance of professional development, pedagogical flexibility, and culturally responsive teaching in addressing diverse learner needs. The study concludes that successful implementation of the K to 12 Filipino curriculum requires sustained institutional support, continuous teacher capacity-building programs, and enhanced contextualized instructional resources. The findings contribute to the growing discourse on curriculum implementation and Filipino language pedagogy in Philippine secondary education.

Keywords: K to 12 Curriculum, Filipino 8, pedagogical experiences, instructional perspectives, public secondary schools, curriculum implementation, qualitative research

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INTRODUCTION

The implementation of the K to 12 Curriculum in the Philippines marked a significant educational reform intended to enhance the quality of basic education and align Philippine education with global standards. Institutionalized through Republic Act No. 10533 or the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, the K to 12 program introduced learner-centered, contextualized, and standards-based approaches aimed at developing holistic and globally competitive Filipino learners. Within this framework, the teaching of Filipino language and literature underwent substantial pedagogical transformation, emphasizing communicative competence, critical thinking, cultural appreciation, and contextualized learning experiences.

Filipino 8 instruction under the K to 12 Curriculum focuses on developing learners' literary appreciation, communicative proficiency, and understanding of Filipino culture through regional literature, contemporary texts, and performance-based activities. Teachers play a crucial role in translating curriculum standards into meaningful classroom experiences. However, despite the intended innovations of the curriculum, various implementation challenges continue to emerge in public secondary schools, including insufficient learning materials, large class sizes, learner diversity, and limited professional training opportunities.

Several studies emphasized that effective curriculum implementation depends largely on teachers' pedagogical competence, adaptability, and instructional decision-making (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2022). In the Philippine context, Filipino teachers frequently encounter challenges related to contextualization, learner engagement, assessment alignment, and resource availability (Barrot, 2021). Moreover, the implementation of learner-centered and outcomes-based instruction requires teachers to continuously modify their instructional strategies to address the diverse needs and realities of learners.

Despite the growing body of literature on K to 12 implementation, limited qualitative studies specifically explore the pedagogical experiences of Filipino 8 teachers in localized public secondary school contexts. Hence, this study aimed to investigate the lived instructional experiences and pedagogical perspectives of Filipino teachers implementing the K to 12 Curriculum in public secondary schools of Trece Martires City, Cavite.

Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do Filipino 8 teachers implement the K to 12 Curriculum in public secondary schools?
2. What pedagogical practices and instructional strategies do teachers utilize in teaching Filipino 8?
3. What challenges do teachers encounter in implementing the curriculum?
4. How do teachers address instructional and learner-related challenges?
5. What insights and recommendations can be derived from teachers' experiences regarding curriculum implementation?

Methodology

This study utilized a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore the lived experiences, instructional practices, and pedagogical perspectives of Filipino 8 teachers in implementing the K to 12 Curriculum in public secondary schools. The phenomenological approach was deemed appropriate because it enabled the researcher to deeply examine the participants' personal experiences, instructional realities, and meanings attached to curriculum implementation within their classroom contexts. The study was conducted in selected public secondary schools in Trece Martires City, which were chosen due to their diverse learner populations and active implementation of the K to 12 Curriculum in junior high school education. The participants of the study consisted of twelve Filipino 8 teachers selected through purposive sampling. Participants were included based on the following criteria: currently teaching Filipino 8 in public secondary schools, possessing at least three years of teaching experience, and directly implementing the K to 12 Curriculum. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis of lesson plans, instructional materials, and assessment tools. The interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' consent and transcribed

verbatim to ensure accuracy and completeness of the collected data. For data analysis, the study employed Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis framework, which involved data familiarization, coding, theme generation, theme review, and interpretation of emerging patterns and meanings. To ensure the trustworthiness of the study, credibility was established through member checking and triangulation of multiple data sources, while dependability was ensured through the use of audit trails. Furthermore, confirmability and transferability were strengthened through reflective journaling and the provision of thick descriptions to capture the depth and context of the participants' experiences.

Results and Discussion

Theme 1: Contextualized and Learner-Centered Instructional Practices

Participants emphasized the importance of contextualizing lessons according to learners' social realities, cultural experiences, and language backgrounds.

One participant shared:

"Mas nagiging interesado ang mga bata kapag inuugnay ang aralin sa kanilang sariling karanasan at kultura." Teachers frequently integrated localized examples, community narratives, multimedia resources, and collaborative discussions to make lessons more meaningful and relevant. Classroom observations revealed active learner participation during contextualized activities such as role-playing, literary interpretation, and group presentations.

The findings align with the principles of culturally responsive pedagogy, which emphasize connecting instruction to learners' lived experiences to improve engagement and comprehension (Gay, 2018). Similarly, Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory supports collaborative and socially mediated learning environments that enhance meaning-making processes.

Theme 2: Integration of Interactive and Collaborative Learning Activities

Participants highlighted the consistent use of collaborative learning strategies, including peer discussions, dramatization, cooperative tasks, and performance-based assessments.

A participant explained:

"Kapag may group activities at role play, mas nagiging aktibo sila at mas madaling maintindihan ang akda." Teachers believed that collaborative activities improved learner confidence, communication skills, and critical thinking abilities. Learners demonstrated higher participation during experiential tasks compared to traditional lecture-based instruction.

The findings support Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, which emphasizes learning through active experience and reflection (Kolb, 1984). Studies also reveal that collaborative pedagogies improve learner motivation and classroom engagement (Johnson & Johnson, 2020).

Theme 3: Challenges in Curriculum Implementation

Despite positive instructional practices, participants encountered significant challenges in implementing the curriculum effectively. Common concerns included insufficient instructional materials, overcrowded classrooms, limited instructional time, and varied learner reading competencies.

One teacher stated:

"Mahirap minsan dahil kulang ang resources at iba-iba ang antas ng comprehension ng mga estudyante." Teachers also noted difficulties in addressing learners with limited reading comprehension and low motivation toward Filipino literature.

These findings support previous Philippine studies indicating that curriculum implementation challenges often involve resource limitations and learner diversity (Barrot, 2021). OECD (2019) also highlighted that educational reforms require systemic institutional support for successful implementation.

Theme 4: Pedagogical Flexibility and Teacher Adaptability

Participants emphasized the need for flexibility in instructional planning and assessment practices. Teachers frequently modified lesson delivery, simplified literary texts, and adjusted classroom activities depending on learner needs.

One participant mentioned:

"Kailangan talagang maging flexible ka bilang guro dahil hindi pare-pareho ang kakayahan ng mga bata."

Teachers perceived adaptability as essential in maintaining learner engagement and ensuring comprehension. The findings affirm Florian and Black-Hawkins' (2011) Inclusive Pedagogy framework, which emphasizes responsive instructional practices that accommodate learner diversity.

Theme 5: Professional Development and Institutional Support

Participants underscored the importance of continuous professional development programs, instructional mentoring, and institutional assistance in improving curriculum implementation.

A teacher expressed:

"Malaking tulong ang trainings at sharing ng strategies para mas mapabuti ang pagtuturo."

Teachers recommended increased curriculum-focused seminars, enhanced instructional resources, and stronger administrative support systems.

These findings highlight the importance of teacher professional learning communities in sustaining curriculum reforms and improving instructional quality (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that the implementation of the K to 12 Curriculum in Filipino 8 in public secondary schools of Trece Martires City is characterized by teachers' strong commitment to learner-centered, contextualized, and flexible pedagogical practices despite various instructional and institutional challenges. The participants demonstrated a clear understanding of the curriculum's emphasis on meaningful learning experiences, communicative competence, and cultural responsiveness. Teachers consistently integrated localized examples, collaborative activities, literary interpretation, and experiential tasks to make Filipino instruction more relevant and engaging to learners. These practices reflect the core principles of the K to 12 Curriculum, which advocate contextualization, constructivist learning, and active learner participation. The findings affirm the work of Gay (2018), who emphasized that culturally responsive teaching improves learner engagement by connecting classroom instruction to students' social realities and lived experiences. Similarly, the study supports Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory, which posits that learning occurs effectively through social interaction, collaboration, and guided participation.

The study further revealed that collaborative and experiential learning strategies significantly enhanced learner participation and classroom interaction. Teachers utilized group activities, role-playing, peer discussions, and performance-based assessments to encourage active learning and critical thinking. These instructional approaches allowed learners to become more participative and confident in expressing their ideas and interpretations of literary texts. Such findings align with Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory, which emphasizes that learners construct knowledge through active engagement, reflection, and meaningful experiences. The integration of collaborative learning activities also supports the findings of Johnson and Johnson (2020), who argued that cooperative learning environments strengthen communication skills, social interaction, and learner motivation. Through these strategies, teachers were able to create more inclusive and dynamic Filipino classrooms that encouraged participation among diverse learners.

Despite the positive instructional practices observed, the findings highlighted several persistent challenges affecting curriculum implementation. Teachers reported difficulties related to insufficient instructional resources, overcrowded classrooms, varied learner comprehension levels, limited instructional time, and the increasing complexity of learner needs. Many participants expressed concerns regarding the lack of updated learning materials and the difficulty of addressing learners with weak reading comprehension and low motivation toward Filipino language learning. These findings are consistent with previous Philippine studies indicating that

educational reforms often encounter systemic barriers, particularly in public school contexts where resources and support mechanisms remain limited (Barrot, 2021). The findings also support the report of the OECD (2019), which emphasized that successful curriculum reforms require adequate institutional support, accessible learning resources, and sustained teacher development initiatives. The challenges encountered by teachers indicate that curriculum implementation extends beyond policy adoption and requires comprehensive structural and pedagogical support systems.

Moreover, the study underscored the importance of pedagogical flexibility and teacher adaptability in addressing diverse learner needs and instructional constraints. Teachers frequently modified lesson delivery, simplified learning activities, and adjusted instructional approaches based on learners' abilities, interests, and classroom realities. Such adaptability demonstrates teachers' professional responsiveness and commitment to inclusive education practices. These findings align with Florian and Black-Hawkins' (2011) Inclusive Pedagogy framework, which highlights the importance of accommodating learner diversity through flexible and responsive teaching strategies. Teachers' ability to adapt instructional methods reflects their evolving pedagogical competence and their recognition that effective learning environments require sensitivity to learners' individual differences and socio-cultural backgrounds.

The findings likewise emphasized the significant role of professional development and institutional support in strengthening curriculum implementation. Participants recognized the value of seminars, instructional mentoring, collaborative planning, and professional learning communities in improving their pedagogical practices and curriculum understanding. Teachers viewed continuous training as essential in helping them cope with evolving educational demands and curriculum expectations. This supports the argument of Darling-Hammond et al. (2020), who emphasized that sustained professional development enhances teacher effectiveness, instructional quality, and learner outcomes. The participants' insights further suggest that teacher empowerment and institutional collaboration are critical factors in sustaining educational reforms and improving the quality of Filipino language instruction in public secondary schools.

Overall, the study demonstrates that the implementation of the K to 12 Curriculum in Filipino 8 involves both opportunities and challenges within the Philippine public school context. While teachers exhibit innovative, contextualized, and learner-centered pedagogical practices, systemic limitations continue to affect instructional efficiency and learner outcomes. Nevertheless, teachers' adaptability, commitment, and professional resilience remain central to the successful implementation of the curriculum. The findings contribute to the broader discourse on curriculum reform, Filipino language pedagogy, and culturally responsive education by highlighting the lived instructional realities of Filipino teachers in contemporary Philippine secondary education.

Conclusion

The implementation of the K to 12 Curriculum in Filipino 8 reflects teachers' commitment to learner-centered, contextualized, and inclusive pedagogical practices. Teachers utilized collaborative learning activities, localized instructional materials, and flexible teaching approaches to improve learner participation and comprehension. However, curriculum implementation remains challenged by insufficient resources, learner diversity, and instructional constraints.

The study concludes that effective curriculum implementation requires sustained professional development, institutional support, and enhanced access to contextualized learning resources. Teachers' adaptability and pedagogical responsiveness remain critical in ensuring meaningful Filipino language instruction under the K to 12 framework.

Implications of the Study

The findings provide valuable implications for curriculum planners, school administrators, and Filipino language educators. Educational institutions may strengthen teacher training programs focusing on contextualized pedagogy, differentiated instruction, and learner-centered assessment. Schools may also prioritize the development of localized instructional materials and support systems that address diverse learner needs.

The study further contributes to the broader discourse on curriculum implementation and culturally responsive Filipino language education in Philippine public secondary schools.

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