ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 4| April 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691|| ISI Value: 1.188

MANAGING CHANGE: SCHOOL HEADS' RESILIENCE AND STRATEGIC ADAPTATION IN DIRECTING CHALLENGES IN TRANSITION OF K-12 TO MATATAG CURRICULUM

Shane A. Labag
[1]*Laguna State Polytechnic University, Sta. Cruz Campus, Sta. Cruz, Laguna Philippines, 4009*

Article DOI: https://doi.org/10.36713/epra21174
DOI No: 10.36713/epra21174

ABSTRACT

The transition from the K-12 curriculum to the MATATAG curriculum marks a vital step in education, which demands effective implementation. This study endeavors to understand how the school heads relate their resilience and strategies to the challenges they faced. A convergent parallel mixed-methods design is used to gather quantitative data through surveys and qualitative data through interviews with school heads and teachers.

The results revealed that school heads' resilience and their capacity to handle curriculum-related obstacles were moderately to strongly positively correlated in the areas of emotional intelligence, adaptability and flexibility, and stress management. In managing challenges related to teacher workload, professional development, and administrative support and policy changes, the correlations were even stronger. Additionally, strategic leadership practices such as stakeholder involvement and fostering a collaborative learning environment significantly enhanced the transition process. This implies that addressing transition-related challenges requires clear rules, efficient resource allocation, and continuous professional development.

Based on the findings, the research suggests that to facilitate a more seamless transition to the MATATAG curriculum, enhancing leadership opportunities for school heads, enhancing support mechanisms for teachers, and ensuring appropriate resource distribution are crucial. Future research should also investigate longitudinal studies on the effectiveness of leadership practices and curriculum changes to evaluate their long-term impact.

KEYWORDS: *MATATAG Curriculum Implementation, School Leadership, Resilience, Strategic Leadership, Policy Adjustment, Stakeholder Engagement, Resource Management*

I. INTRODUCTION

In an era of rapid technological development and increased global connectivity, the Philippines Department of Education (DepEd) has the important responsibility of ensuring that the country's educational system remains relevant. To equip students with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive in the 21st century, curriculum reform is crucial. This involves incorporating the latest findings in educational research, addressing new cultural and economic demands, and aligning with international standards.

Given that the education system must evolve to be effective and meet the needs of a constantly changing society, DepEd is consistently tasked with preparing students for a sustainable future. Therefore, curriculum modifications are not just an option—they are necessitated by several important considerations (Sklar, 2018).

Under the leadership of Vice President and Education Secretary Sara Z. Duterte, the MATATAG Curriculum was introduced as a deliberate effort to address the underperformance of Filipino learners in various tests, which highlighted concerns about their educational outcomes (Acido & Caballes, 2024). The primary aim of this curriculum is to address issues with the existing K–12 curriculum, such as an imbalance in cognitive load, overcrowded competencies, and a mismatch of required learning skills (Bacelonia, 2023). The MATATAG Curriculum, which stands for "MAke the curriculum relevant to produce competent and job-ready, active, and responsible citizens; TAke steps to accelerate delivery of basic education facilities and services; TAke good care of learners by promoting learner well-being, inclusive education, and a positive learning environment; Give support to teachers to teach better," is also termed as "Bansang Makabata, Batang Makabansa," focuses on core skills and prioritizes learners' mastery of reading and numeracy skills (Kilag et al., 2024). The MATATAG Agenda aims to develop competent, job-ready, engaged, responsible, and patriotic citizens, moving away from traditional approaches to education and instead focusing on holistic development and the acquisition of basic skills. The redesigned K to 10 curriculum streamlines competencies and emphasizes language, reading, literacy, mathematics, patriotism (MAKABANSA), good manners, and appropriate behavior from kindergarten to grade 10 and it reduces congestion by 70% compared to the previous curriculum (Estrellado, 2023). As a result, it provides comprehensive learning that goes beyond traditional academic disciplines, equipping students with the skills

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 4| April 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691|| ISI Value: 1.188

and knowledge they need to succeed in their careers and personal pursuits.

Educational initiatives are inevitable, and adjustments are made in response to the evolving demands of students and societal changes. Curriculum reforms are essential and require careful management and strategic direction. Therefore, school heads, who play a crucial role in managing the transition process encounter numerous opportunities and challenges.

This study aimed to understand their resilience and strategies in dealing with these changes, ensuring the successful transition to the MATATAG curriculum, improving the quality of education for all students, assisting teachers in a seamless transition, and upholding educational standards.

Statement of the Problem

The transition from the K-12 to the MATATAG curriculum constituted a substantial transformation in the Philippine education system, necessitating school heads' endurance and adaptation. This transformation involved several problems that necessitates the creation of effective techniques for navigating these changes. However, there is a lack of research about how these obstacles affect them and the techniques they use to be resilient throughout this period. This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of challenges in transition of K-12 to MATATAG curriculum in terms of:
   - 1.1 Familiarity with the new curriculum;
   - 1.2 Allocation of Resources;
   - 1.3 Availability of Teaching and Learning Materials;
   - 1.4 Teacher Preparedness and Workload;
   - 1.5 Administrative Support and Policy Adjustment;
   - 1.6 Professional Development and Training; and
   - 1.7 Stakeholder Involvement and Partnerships?
2. What is the level of school heads' resilience relative to:
   - 2.1 Emotional Intelligence;
   - 2.2 Adaptability and Flexibility;
   - 2.3 Optimism;
   - 2.4 Effective Communication;
   - 2.5 Stress Management; and
   - 2.6 Community and Relationship Building?
3. What is the level of school heads' strategies in terms of:
   - 3.1 Teacher Support and Empowerment;
   - 3.2 Resource Management;
   - 3.3 Leadership and Decision-Making Processes; and
   - 3.4 Collaborative Learning Environments?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the challenges and the school head's resilience throughout the transition from K-12 to the MATATAG curriculum?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the challenges and the school head's strategies throughout the transition from K-12 to the MATATAG curriculum?
6. How do school leaders view and exhibit resilience when dealing with challenges in curriculum transition?

Research Hypotheses

This study postulates the following hypothesis:

There is no significant relationship between the challenges and school heads resilience to the MATATAG curriculum.

There is no significant relationship between the challenges and school heads strategies to the MATATAG curriculum.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

Mixed methods research is the process of gathering, analyzing, and combining both qualitative and quantitative methodologies in a single study or a series of studies to comprehend the research problems (Creswell, 2017). This approach can be used to delve into not only the "what" of a study but also aims to address questions like "how" and "why" (i.e., when). It involves a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, as well as specific equipment, data, and data processing skills.

In this study, convergent parallel design was utilized where quantitative and qualitative data are collected concurrently but analyzed separately, then combining their results were being compared to providing a comprehensive understanding of the research problem (George, 2021).

The transition from the K-12 to the MATATAG Curriculum is a significant milestone in the field of education. School heads play a crucial role in overseeing this transition to ensure that both teachers and students adapt effectively. Therefore, employing a convergent parallel design enables a more thorough understanding of the challenges and strategies involved, offering valuable insights for future educational developments. The researcher can simultaneously gather qualitative data through interviews with school heads, capturing their experiences, perceptions, and strategies. Concurrently, quantitative data can be collected via surveys to understand their challenges and level of resilience.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study were the school principals/heads and Grade 7 teachers in the Schools Division of Cabuyao City. For principals, (1) they must currently hold the position of school head or principal in a junior high school or integrated school; (2) they must have at least three years of administrative and leadership experience; (3) English must be their second language; (4) they must be willing to participate in survey or in-depth interviews, providing truthful and comprehensive analyses of their strategies and priorities; and (5) they must be actively involved in the first phase of implementing the MATATAG curriculum through attending training and seminars, and gaining personal experience with the transition process. For teachers, (1) they must currently hold the position of a teacher in a junior high school or integrated school; (2) they must be willing to participate in the survey; and (3) they must have attended the MATATAG curriculum training

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 4| April 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691|| ISI Value: 1.188

and seminars and gaining personal experience with the transition process.

Research Instrument

This research utilized a convergent parallel approach to gather quantitative and qualitative information. Quantitative data was collected through survey questionnaires created by the researcher to evaluate the resilience of school leaders during the curriculum transition. Qualitative data was gathered through an interview. To guarantee the validity and reliability of these research tools, research experts validated them and underwent pilot testing.

Pilot testing involved the use of Cronbach's Alpha, a statistical tool that assesses the internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire's items. The survey utilized the Likert scale to gauge participants' perceptions, opinions, and attitudes. Its simplicity and effectiveness render it a favored instrument in research throughout diverse fields. As emphasized by Pimentel (2019), the Likert scale is susceptible to specific biases, yet methods can be utilized to reduce these and improve validity and reliability.

Research Procedure

The research procedure is a step-by-step process followed in the study. From identifying the problem to formulating final recommendations, this guarantees a methodical, logical, and organized approach, making sure that each step builds upon the previous one to provide significant and trustworthy findings.

It started with problem identification, where the researcher identified a significant issue worth investigating- the challenges encountered in the implementation of the MATATAG curriculum. This step lays the foundation and establishes the framework for the entire study. After determining the problem, the researcher proceeded to conduct a literature review by exploring related theories and studies that were pertinent to the MATATAG curriculum. This provided a comprehensive background and helped refine the scope of the study by emphasizing what has already been discovered and what gaps remain. With an extensive understanding of the context, the researcher then developed specific research questions to address the study's goals. The appropriate research design was chosen when the questions were developed. To collect quantitative information from a large number of respondents, the researcher chose to use a survey approach.

The next phase was the construction and validation of the research instruments. To make sure it was understandable, trustworthy, and able to gather the required data, a questionnaire was created and pilot tested. Data collection and treatment followed after obtaining permission from the Schools Division Superintendent. Once permission is granted, hard copies of the questionnaire were distributed to nine school heads and selected teachers. The data collection involved personally administering survey questionnaires to the respondents to ensure confidentiality and anonymity of responses, and clear instructions were provided for completing the instruments. All the gathered data were encoded in Microsoft Excel to facilitate accurate analysis by the university's research statistician.

The researcher continued with the data analysis. To calculate averages, uncover patterns, and examine variations in the responses, statistical tools were employed. The results were then interpreted to form the basis for the discussion and conclusion, in which the researcher summarized key findings, highlighted significant issues, and reflected on the study's contributions.

Lastly, recommendations were developed to offer useful ideas for enhancements pertaining to the research.

III. Results and Discussion

To test the significant relationship between the school heads' challenges and resilience throughout the transition from K-12 to the MATATAG curriculum in terms of emotional intelligence, adaptability and flexibility, optimism, effective communication, stress management and community and relationship building, they were treated statistically using Real Statistics Data Analysis Tools, employing the Interval Coefficient for Pearson R.

Significant Relationship between School Head's Challenges and Resilience throughout the Transition from K-12 to the MATATAG Curriculum

School Head's Challenges		School Head's Resilience					
		Emotional Intelligence	Adaptability and Flexibility	Optimism	Effective Communication	Stress Management	Community and Relationship Building
Familiarity with the new curriculum	Pearson Correlation	.626**	.752**	.726**	.737**	.695**	.674**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	154	154	154	154	154	154
Allocation of Resources	Pearson Correlation	.652**	.763**	.705**	.734**	.757**	.677**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	154	154	154	154	154	154
Availability of Teaching and Learning Materials	Pearson Correlation	.650**	.769**	.739**	.759**	.707**	.704**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	154	154	154	154	154	154
Teacher Preparedness and Workload	Pearson Correlation	.663**	.811**	.799**	.784**	.735**	.686**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	154	154	154	154	154	154
Administrative Support and Policy Adjustment	Pearson Correlation	.780**	.868**	.801**	.860**	.806**	.811**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	154	154	154	154	154	154
Professional Development and Training	Pearson Correlation	.664**	.818**	.818**	.798**	.734**	.748**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	154	154	154	154	154	154
Stakeholder Involvement and Partnerships	Pearson Correlation	.717**	.792**	.752**	.774**	.749**	.774**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	154	154	154	154	154	154

The table illustrates the correlation coefficients in the table reveal the direction and extent of the relationship between school heads' resilience and the difficulties they encountered while transitioning from the K–12 to the MATATAG curriculum. Based on the findings, there is a moderate to substantial positive relationship between school heads' resilience characteristics and their capacity to handle problems successfully, as shown by the correlation coefficients, which vary from 0.63 to 0.87.

Across all circumstances, the resilience qualities that show the strongest relationships are flexibility and adaptability. Interestingly, there is a substantial correlation between adaptability and teacher workload and preparation (r=.811,

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 4| April 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691|| ISI Value: 1.188

p=.000), professional growth and training (r=.818, p=.000), administrative assistance, and policy adjustment (r=.868, p=.000). This implies that school administrators are better prepared to manage curriculum-related changes if they can swiftly adapt to new rules and workloads.

Likewise, effective communication is essential, particularly in administrative support (r= .860, p= .000) and stakeholder engagement (r= .774, p= .000). This emphasizes the need for school administrators to have transparent and effective communication channels to adeptly manage curricular changes. Moreover, stress management exhibits significant connections, especially with administrative support (r= .806, p= .000), suggesting that good stress management can assist school leaders in navigating policy changes and workload demands.

Notably, stakeholder engagement and collaborations exhibit high levels of emotional intelligence (r= .717, p= .000) and adaptability (r= .792, p= .000). This indicated that cultivating robust external connections might augment a school leader's ability to adjust and maintain emotional resilience amid changes.

Lopez (2024) highlighted the significance of the connection between emotional intelligence (EI) and school leaders' capacity to maintain their resilience to successfully manage the transitions and become effective implementers of a new curriculum. Highly emotional intelligent school leaders are better equipped to handle the emotional strain by being adaptable and communicating in creating a supportive environment.

Furthermore, Doll et al. (2021) said that highly school adaptive leaders are more likely to advocate for an educational environment that is flexible and prioritizes continuous learning and improvement. By encouraging a growth mentality within their school communities, they may help teachers implement new teaching strategies and resources that align with the updated curriculum.

In summary, the strong positive correlations suggest that resilient school heads—those who are adaptable, communicative, emotionally intelligent, and capable of managing stress—are better equipped to address challenges in implementing the MATATAG curriculum. This underscored the need for leadership training, professional development, and support systems to enhance school heads' resilience and facilitate a smoother transition to the new curriculum framework.

Significant Relationship between School Head's Challenges and Strategies throughout the Transition from K-12 to the MATATAG Curriculum

School Head's Challenges		School Head's Strategies			
		Teacher Support and Empowerment	Resource Management	Leadership & Decision-Making Processes	Collaborative Learning Environments
Familiarity with the new curriculum	Pearson Correlation	.715**	.716**	.707**	.702**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	154	154	154	154
Allocation of Resources	Pearson Correlation	.715**	.753**	.736**	.698**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	154	154	154	154
Availability of Teaching and Learning Materials	Pearson Correlation	.723**	.764**	.770**	.728**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	154	154	154	154
Teacher Preparedness and Workload	Pearson Correlation	.719**	.776**	.784**	.772**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	154	154	154	154
Administrative Support and Policy Adjustment	Pearson Correlation	.805**	.805**	.834**	.847**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	154	154	154	154
Professional Development and Training	Pearson Correlation	.732**	.777**	.828**	.783**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	154	154	154	154
Stakeholder Involvement and Partnerships	Pearson Correlation	.803**	.782**	.815**	.756**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	154	154	154	154

The table above illustrates the significant relationship between school head's challenges and strategies throughout the transition from K-12 to the MATATAG curriculum.

Based on the findings, the correlation coefficients, which range from 0.698 to 0.847, school heads' strategic approaches increase as they successfully handle obstacles, which results in a more effective execution of the curriculum. Among the most notable results is the strong correlation between policy adjustment and administrative support and all strategic areas, especially leadership and decision-making processes (r= 0.834) and collaborative learning settings (r= 0.847). This implied that school administrators may establish a more productive and inclusive learning environment by giving priority to well-defined rules, organized guidance, and clearly defined administrative assistance. Curriculum modifications at schools with well-thought-out policies often go more smoothly because teachers and students get the support and direction they need.

Comparably, there is a significant correlation between leadership and decision-making processes and teacher preparation and professional development (r= 0.784 and r= 0.828, respectively). This highlighted how important teacher preparation and training are to the curriculum shift's success. By making investments in teacher development, the school heads provide teachers the abilities, know-how, and self-assurance they need to adjust to changing teaching philosophies and methods. Effective leadership increases the overall efficacy of curriculum implementation by fostering an empowered culture in which educators actively participate in decision-making.

The substantial correlation between leadership and decision-making (r= 0.815) and stakeholder participation and partnerships with collaborative learning settings (r= 0.756) is another important conclusion. This suggested that effective curriculum

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 4| April 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691|| ISI Value: 1.188

implementation requires participation from parents, external partners, and the larger community in addition to school leaders and teachers. Schools that foster open dialogue and cooperation with interested parties build a network of support that improves learning results.

Moreover, the effectiveness of curriculum execution is closely linked to resource management and the accessibility of instructional resources as seen in the availability of teaching materials (r= 0.764) and teacher preparedness (r= 0.776), which are strongly correlated with resource allocation. This emphasizes how crucial it is to make sure that educational institutions have the resources, infrastructure, and funding they need to continue using successful teaching strategies. Even the greatest plans may fall short in the absence of necessary teaching resources if resources are not managed effectively.

The results highlighted the need for school heads to use strategic leadership techniques to actively address the difficulties associated with curriculum implementation. The robust positive correlations imply that it is greatly increased by overcoming challenges in resource management, stakeholder involvement, teacher preparedness, and policy reforms. School heads may build a flexible and resilient educational system that benefits teachers and students by encouraging collaborative learning settings, empowering teachers, and engaging communities.

According to Epstein et al. (2018), establishing a healthy and productive learning environment requires the active participation of stakeholders, including families, communities, and schools. Making sure that all parties involved are informed and engaged throughout these transitions is one of the biggest challenges. Reforms to the curriculum often include fundamental changes in the way teachers teach, assess, and track students' learning outcomes. Schools may facilitate these gains by strengthening their capacity to provide students ongoing assistance and access to resources both inside and outside of the classroom through partnerships with families and the broader community.

In conclusion, strategic leadership and well-organized planning are needed in managing the shift to the MATATAG curriculum. A seamless curriculum change is more likely to be facilitated by school heads who place a high priority on stakeholder participation, professional development, and administrative assistance. Further, efforts to ensure the success of the implementation should continue to focus on effective resource management, inclusive decision-making, and continuous training. Educational institutions may create an atmosphere that encourages learning, creativity, and long-term success by bolstering five important areas.

Themes emerged from the shared testimonies of the participants

Thematic Chart A. Challenges and Strategies in MATATAG Curriculum Implementation

Participants	Responses	Subordinate Themes	Superordinate Themes
SH 1	"MATATAG curriculum is very abrupt... adjustments on the part of school heads."	Abrupt Implementation	Challenges
SH 2	"Many teachers are indifferent with regards to change... they are in their comfort zone."	Resistance to Change	
SH 3	"Teachers are opted to have 7-8 loads, which is quite difficult."	Scheduling and Workload Issues	
SH 4	"Availability of materials, especially for Grade 7... we have to be very resourceful."	Fund and Resource Constraints	
SH 5	"Some colleagues are not into attending trainings since this was done during semestral break or vacation."	Low Training Attendance	
SH 1	"We need to be open, to be adaptable with different kinds of changing demands."	Open-mindedness and Flexibility	Strategies
SH 2	"We need to adhere to or follow such memorandum order."	Compliance with DepEd Mandates	
SH 3	"We must foresee difficulties and assist teachers in handling workloads."	Proactive Leadership	
SH 4	"Teachers used quality-assured materials from other regions."	Resourcefulness in Material Development	
SH 5	"To encourage them, motivate them that change is inevitable."	Teacher Motivation and Support	

The implementation of the MATATAG curriculum poses substantial challenges and strategic prospective opportunities for school heads. Although sudden changes, limited resources, and teacher opposition present hurdles.

McCaffery (2018) explained the need for meticulous preparation when allocating resources during times of transition. During a curriculum shift, school administrators must assess the new curriculum's requirements and ensure that their material, human, and financial resources meet them. To meet the requirements of the new curriculum, it is essential to give priority to certain areas, such as assisting teachers in their professional development and obtaining up-to-date teaching materials. They may steer clear of any roadblocks in the distribution of goods and resources by developing thorough resource management methods.

Consequently, Kisa and Correnti (2015) believed that curriculum implementation can be hampered by teachers' ignorance and willingness. Because of this, training them empowers them by removing obstacles that stand in their way. Various school systems may either support or impede changes and prevent students from reaching their full potential since change takes time, they may get disinterested and return back to previous methods.

Effective transition depends on efficient resource allocation and priority, especially in teacher training and updated teaching materials. Resistance should be avoided, and effective curriculum adoption can be ensured by addressing teacher preparedness and willingness through continuous training and support. School heads may raise the quality of teaching by creating a prepared and encouraging atmosphere.

Moreover, cultivating adaptability, proactive leadership, and ingenuity may alleviate these problems. By using these strategies, they may guarantee the proper implementation of the MATATAG curriculum, therefore improving the quality of education for students.

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 4| April 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691|| ISI Value: 1.188

Thematic Chart B. Fostering Resilience: Attributes and Strategies of School Heads in MATATAG Curriculum Implementation

Participants	Responses	Subordinate Themes	Superordinate Themes
SH 1	"We need to be open, we need to be flexible with these changes."	Open-mindedness and flexibility	Personal Attributes Encouraging Resilience
SH 3	"If you are a school leader or head, you must be a risk-taker... you need to be a forecaster."	Risk-taking and futuristic thinking	
SH 4	"You have to be optimistic that you will overcome all of these challenges despite the shortcomings and deficiencies."	Optimism and positive mindset	
SH 5	"I think you are in the position, you really have to be strong and flexible."	Strong leadership and adaptability	
SH 1	"Proper communication is really important, communication with parents, stakeholders, teachers, and students needs to be done properly."	Consistent and proper communication	School strategies Fostering Resilience
SH 2	"It's the mandate of the DepEd, I have to follow this mandate and implement the mandate, that's first and foremost."	Adherence to DepEd mandates and policies	
SH 3	"It's also up to us, the teachers, to take initiative and courage, so that's one thing on how I cope with that stressful manner."	Empowerment of teachers and staff	
SH 4	"I'm always applying the consultative style, asking to others... because my training as a head teacher is also good." "The good thing here in Cavite is that the PTA, the community, and LGU are very supportive."	Participative and Consultative leadership; Community and stakeholder engagement	
SH 5	"The strategies here are, of course, always having LAC sessions, so we need to bring out the potential of the teachers."	Professional development through LAC sessions and training	

In managing a school, resilience is the result of striking a balance between personal attributes and strategies. While structured communication, teamwork, and professional development programs guarantee that resilience is fostered across the school community; proactive, flexible, and optimistic thinking enables school heads to continue being productive in their positions and they can effectively navigate the difficulties of adopting the MATATAG curriculum and other educational innovations.

Meanwhile, the importance of optimism in fostering resilience was mentioned by Wescott (2019) when undergoing curriculum reform. Optimism helps school heads remain strong and forward-thinking even in the face of obstacles like staff resistance, policy changes, or a lack of funding. Positive leaders can keep going when things become hard and give people confidence.

To sum up, resilience in school leadership is the result of a dynamic interaction between personal attributes and deliberate actions. To successfully traverse the challenges of adopting the MATATAG curriculum, school heads must strike a balance between flexibility and adaptability. A learning environment that welcomes change and innovation is created by promoting a culture of development within the school.

Thematic Chart C. Developing Support Systems: Collaboration and Resilience through Community Engagement

Participants	Responses	Subordinate Themes	Superordinate Themes
SH 1	"There's camaraderie and help... if I overlook something, my colleagues message me and support me."	Camaraderie and Peer Support	Collaboration and Support among School Heads
SH 2	"I have seven head teachers assisting me... with thirteen master teachers helping in curriculum transition."	Assistance from Head Teachers and Master Teachers	
SH 4	"I train subject area coordinators... instilling focus on learners and ensuring curriculum monitoring."	Engagement and Consultation with Teaching Staff	
SH 1	"The LGU is very supportive, especially in security and community involvement."	Partnership with LGU and Local Organizations	Stakeholder and Community Engagement
SH 5	"We receive aid from different schools, private partners, and NGOs, strengthening our implementation."		
SH 4	"I openly declare school challenges, and stakeholders respond by providing supplies and assistance."	Transparency and Collaboration with Stakeholders	
SH 1	"One of my biggest challenges is manpower... we lack essential personnel, but resilience is key."	Overcoming Manpower Limitations	Resilience Amidst Challenges
SH 3	"Implementation coincided with storms and class suspensions... constant communication and engagement helped us cope."	Navigating Curriculum Changes and External Disruptions	
SH 5	"Above all, human resources provide the strength to endure and succeed."	Strong Leadership and Adaptability	

Support networks are essential to maintaining resilience throughout the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum. School administrators depend on cooperation, communication, and community participation to overcome obstacles and guarantee academic achievement.

While interaction with teaching staff guarantees a focus on students, school heads, head teachers, and master teachers support one another. LGUs, NGOs, and corporate organizations are examples of external partnerships that provide extra assistance, especially with security and resource distribution. Transparency is fostered by open communication with stakeholders, which promotes community support for resolving school-related issues.

The significance of families in fostering fruitful partnerships between schools and the community was identified by Stefanski et al. (2016). Involving families and other stakeholders during curriculum changes might provide challenges. With schools depending on families to support students through academic, emotional, and social transformations, it calls for collaboration to ensure that all parties involved are in accord with the new learning goals and approaches.

Notwithstanding these efforts, difficulties arise from a lack of personnel and unexpected circumstances, such as natural disasters and class suspensions. However, school heads may overcome these challenges with strong leadership, flexibility, and proper communication.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, both null hypotheses are rejected, suggesting that school heads' resilience and the challenges that they encounter in implementing the MATATAG curriculum are significantly correlated.

Ho1's rejection indicated that school heads who exhibit resilience—specifically, flexibility, stress management, emotional intelligence, and clear communication—are better able to handle the difficulties posed by the MATATAG curriculum. Building resilience is crucial, as shown by the substantial positive relationships found between resilience variables and challenges such as teacher workload, professional development, and policy changes. School heads are more equipped to handle the demands of curriculum implementation if they can successfully manage stress, adjust to changes rapidly, and keep lines of communication open.

Likewise, the rejection of Ho2 demonstrated that school heads' strategies are essential for overcoming obstacles. School heads' effectiveness of curriculum implementation has a substantial relationship to collaborative learning environment, administrative support, and leadership and decision-making. They may establish a more welcoming and well-supported learning environment by placing a high priority on professional development, stakeholder involvement, and defined policies. The effectiveness of curriculum adoption also depends on effective resource management and easy access to educational resources.

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 4| April 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691|| ISI Value: 1.188

In conclusion, for school heads to successfully handle the challenges presented by the MATATAG curriculum, they must possess both resilience and strategic leadership, but it will require enhancing leadership development, encouraging flexibility, and making sure that all resources are managed thoroughly.

Recommendations

The researcher has come up with the following recommendations to enhance school heads' resilience and strategic approaches based on the findings of the study:

1. To assist school heads in successfully implementing the new curriculum, leadership programs should emphasize the development of emotional intelligence, stress management, and adaptability to enable them to share experiences and best practices in dealing with difficulties, developing peer mentorship and support groups.
2. To ensure that teachers and school heads are prepared for changes, the Department of Education (DepEd) should provide them with regular and organized training sessions. To promote greater participation rates, training sessions have to be planned throughout the academic year as opposed to during holidays or vacations.
3. DepEd needs to guarantee that every school has access to adequate printed and digital teaching materials, textbooks, and learning tools by effectively allocating and utilizing the available resources. Therefore, it is essential to conduct resource management training.
4. To create a strong support system for curriculum implementation, the school heads should improve their channels of communication with parents, teachers, and the community. Working together with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), companies, and local government units (LGUs) should be encouraged to secure additional resources and support.
5. To evaluate the implications of curriculum implementation and make needed adjustments, school heads must utilize data-driven decision-making. Teachers and other stakeholders should be included in planning and decision-making processes through the use of a more participatory leadership style.
6. Further studies can explore the impact of MATATAG Curriculum implementation on the academic performance of students and teacher well-being. To obtain the necessary information, future researchers can think about doing "triangulation". This study can be replicated in a different setting and with different participants to compare the similarities and differences of the results. In addition, changing the research method can also be effective in gathering data. This replication is highly recommended.

REFERENCES

1. *Acido, J. V., & Caballes, D. G. (2024). Assessing educational progress: A comparative analysis of PISA results (2018 vs. 2022) and HDI correlation in the Philippines. https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2024.21.1.0020*
2. *Bacelonia, W. (2023, August 10). DepEd launches MATATAG Curriculum to address basic education woes. Philippine News Agency. https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1207588*
3. *Carie Justine P. Estrellado. (2023). MATATAG Curriculum: Why Curriculum [must] Change? Journal of Interdisciplinary Perspectives, 2(1), Page 6–10. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10336930.*
4. *Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches. SAGE Publications. https://www.ucg.ac.me/skladiste/blog_609332/objava_105202/fajlovi/Creswell.pdf*
5. *Doll, K., Ragan, M., Calnin, G., Mason, S., & House, K. (2021). Adapting and enduring: Lessons learned from international school educators during COVID-19. Journal of Research in International Education, 20(2), 114-133. https://doi.org/10.1177/14752409211034399*
6. *Epstein, J. L., Sanders, M. G., Sheldon, S. B., Simon, B. S., Salinas, K. C., Jansorn, N. R., ... & Williams, K. J. (2018). School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action. Corwin Press.*
7. *George, T. (2021, August 13). Mixed Methods Research, Definition, Guide & Examples. Scribbr. https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/mixed-methods-research/*
8. *Kisa, Z. and R. Correnti (2015), "Examining Implementation Fidelity in America's Choice Schools: A Longitudinal Analysis of Changes in Professional Development Associated With Changes in Teacher Practice", Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, Vol. 37/4, pp. 437-457, http://dx.doi.org/10.3102/0162373714557519.*
9. *Kilag, O. K., Andrin, G., Abellanosa, C., Villaver Jr, M., Uy, F., & Sasan, J. M. (2024). MATATAG Curriculum Rollout: Understanding Challenges for Effective Implementation. International Multidisciplinary Journal of Research for Innovation, Sustainability, and Excellence (IMJRISE), 1(5), 172-177. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11183037*
10. *Lopez, I. (2024). The EQ Way: How Emotionally Intelligent School Leaders Navigate Turbulent Times. ASCD.*
11. *McCaffery, P. (2018). The higher education manager's handbook: effective leadership and management in universities and colleges. Routledge. https://doi.10.4324/9781351249744*
12. *Pimentel, J. L (2019). Some biases in Likert scaling usage and its correction. International Journal of Science: Basic and Applied Research (IJSBAR), 45(1), 183-191.*
13. *Sklar, D. P. (2018). Implementing curriculum change: choosing strategies, overcoming resistance, and embracing values. Academic Medicine, 93(10), 1417-1419. https://doi.10.1097/ACM.0000000000002350*
14. *Stefanski, A., Valli, L., & Jacobson, R. (2016). Beyond Involvement and Engagement: The Role of the Family in School-Community Partnerships. School Community Journal, 26(2), 135-160. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1124001.pdf*
15. *Wescott, P. (2019). The role of resilience among k-12 principals and administrators leading transformational change (Doctoral dissertation, Seattle Pacific University). https://digitalcommons.spu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1048&context=soe_etd*