

ARE WE READY FOR MATATAG?

by:

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In recent years, questions have arisen regarding the effectiveness of the Philippine educational system in teaching young people core competencies such as language, reading, and numeracy. The limitations of the K-12 curriculum in improving learners' literacy and numeracy became apparent from the findings of many international and local organizations, necessitating a curriculum reform and giving rise to the MATATAG curriculum (Villaver et al., 2024).

The implementation of the Matatag Curriculum aims to improve the quality of education in the country by focusing on essential learning areas and ensuring students develop the necessary skills for the future. However, the remaining concerns and issues surrounding the rollout are not due to the intent and nature of the reform; it is due to the state and readiness of public schools and teachers. Most schools face various challenges that may affect the successful implementation of the curriculum, including the availability of learning materials, classroom conditions, teacher preparedness, and access to technology.

For instance, the Matatag Curriculum requires updated textbooks, workbooks, and other instructional resources to align with the new learning standards. However, many schools still struggle with a lack of materials, forcing teachers to rely on outdated books or create their teaching aids (Domogen, 2023). Without proper resources, students may not receive the full benefits of the revised curriculum, which could impact their overall learning experience and performance.

Aside from instructional materials, many national high schools also experience a lack of infrastructural development, particularly in the classrooms. This results in overcrowded classrooms, making it harder for teachers to bear the workload and provide individualized attention to students. The problems brought about by extremely large class sizes are amplified by the fact that most classrooms are old and no longer conducive. Some schools even lack proper facilities such as science laboratories, computer rooms, and technical-vocational workshops, which are essential for hands-on learning. Without adequate classrooms and learning spaces, a curriculum change may not be as effective.

Moreover, the success of any curriculum depends largely on how well teachers understand and implement it. While the MATATAG Curriculum introduces improvements in teaching methods, many educators, especially older teachers who are not as savvy in the modern educational environment, may require further training to adapt to the changes. Most local schools have limited access to professional development programs due to budget constraints or institutional prioritization. Without continuous training and support, some educators may struggle to deliver lessons effectively and may default back into teaching as they would on the past curriculum.

Access to technology is another challenge that affects the readiness of national high schools. The Matatag Curriculum integrates digital learning tools to enhance students' educational experiences. However, despite the stint of shifting to remote learning during the pandemic, not all schools have access to computers, reliable internet connections, and other necessary devices. Most schools are still amidst the process of integrating educational technology in their classrooms. Some rural schools, in particular, face difficulties in implementing technology-based learning due to limited infrastructure within their location. Whatever the case may be, without proper access to technology, some students may fall behind if MATATAG is fully implemented.

Needless to say, while the curriculum aims to enhance education, the readiness of national high schools in implementing it, based on the factor explored, is questionable at

best. Addressing the challenges in learning materials, infrastructure, and teacher capacity is a necessary first step to ensure the successful transition into the new curriculum.

Hence, schools, teachers, and education officials must work together to improve resources, provide training, and develop better facilities to support quality learning. Without proper preparation, students may not fully benefit from the improvements that the curriculum intends to bring. Strengthening the education system will require continuous efforts to bridge the gaps and create an environment where all students have the opportunity to learn effectively.

References:

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