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# Exploring the challenges and strategies of multigrade teachers in implementing reading remediation sessions

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### ABSTRACT

This study explored the difficulties encountered and the strategies employed by multigrade teachers in the Bangui District during reading remediation sessions. Using a descriptive qualitative design, data were collected through an open-ended Google Form survey distributed to 15 multigrade teachers. The study aimed to identify the challenges faced in managing diverse learners, addressing differences in reading levels, and coping with limited time and instructional resources, as well as the strategies used to overcome these difficulties. Findings revealed that teachers experience challenges such as short learner attention spans, misbehavior, low motivation, and a lack of reading materials. In response, teachers employed adaptive strategies, including grouping learners by reading ability, peer tutoring, repeated reading exercises, visual aids, modularized instruction, and integrating community and parental support. Professional development activities, such as Learning Action Cells (LACs) and teacher trainings, also enhanced teachers' remediation practices. The study highlights the resilience, creativity, and commitment of multigrade teachers in ensuring continuity of learning despite the constraints of multigrade classrooms. The findings provide insights for school administrators and policymakers to support effective remediation programs in rural and resource-limited settings.

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## Introduction

Teaching in a multigrade classroom presents unique challenges that require teachers to demonstrate flexibility, creativity, and effective pedagogical strategies. In the Philippine context, multigrade teaching is implemented primarily in geographically isolated and low-enrollment schools to ensure access to basic education for all learners (Department of Education [DepEd], 2019). However, this setup often requires a single teacher to handle multiple grade levels simultaneously, making lesson preparation, time management, and classroom organization more complex. Understanding the difficulties faced by multigrade teachers, especially during remediation classes, is therefore essential in developing more

In the Bangui District of Ilocos Norte, many teachers are assigned to multigrade classes due to small student populations and limited resources. While these educators strive to meet the diverse needs of learners, remediation periods—meant to address learning gaps—can be particularly challenging. Teachers must adapt learning materials for multiple grade levels while ensuring that each learner receives the attention and support needed to master foundational skills. Such conditions highlight the pressing need to identify the specific challenges teachers encounter and the strategies they employ to overcome them. This situation reflects the broader reality described by the Department of Education (2019), which recognizes that multigrade teachers in rural schools face constraints in instructional time, learning materials, and learner support systems. Similarly, Dela Cruz (2021) emphasized that teachers in small and remote schools must implement creative and context-based approaches to sustain effective remediation despite limited resources.

Several recent studies emphasize that multigrade teaching requires planning, differentiated instruction, flexible classroom management, and adaptive teaching practices to address the diverse needs of learners within a single classroom (Bunga et al., 2025; Parfitt et al., 2025). In multigrade settings, teachers must balance instructional time, employ learner-centered and inclusive approaches, and make strategic use of limited resources to enhance equitable learning outcomes for all students (Dy et al., 2024). Furthermore, multigrade classrooms offer opportunities for peer learning, collaboration, and community engagement, in which students support one another and develop collective learning skills through shared activities (Ferreirós-Martínez & Iglesias, 2025; Best practice approaches for multigrade education, 2023). These elements underscore the importance of examining the real-life experiences of multigrade teachers in local contexts, such as the Bangui District, to understand how they navigate instructional challenges and foster meaningful learning in resource-constrained environments.

Given the importance of reading remediation, however, there are no existing qualitative studies on the challenges and strategies teachers face in conducting it. The present study aims to explore the difficulties faced by and strategies used by multigrade teachers in Bangui District during remediation classes. This research seeks to identify practical approaches that could enhance teaching efficiency and learner performance. The findings may serve as a basis for designing localized professional development programs and policy recommendations to support teachers working in similar multigrade settings. Ultimately, this study is motivated by the goal of improving the quality of education in small and rural schools where multigrade teaching remains an essential component of educational access and equity.

## ***Review of related literature and studies***

This review aims to connect the study to existing research on multigrade education, focusing on teachers' challenges and strategies during remediation. It identifies gaps in existing knowledge, builds a foundation for the study, and explains how teachers address teaching challenges in resource-limited schools. The review also shows how teacher creativity and flexibility help make remediation more effective and improve learning outcomes, especially in rural areas like the Bangui District.

Multigrade education continues to be widely adopted in rural and low-density areas where traditional single-grade classrooms are not feasible. Recent studies emphasize that multigrade classrooms involve teaching students from different grade levels together under one teacher, creating both opportunities and challenges for instruction and learning (Ferreirós-Martínez & Iglesias, 2025). This model can support access to education and foster peer collaboration, personalized learning, and inclusive practices (Journal of Adventist Education, 2023). However, teachers often face significant pedagogical and managerial demands, including addressing diverse learner needs, managing limited resources, and balancing multiple curricula simultaneously (Recla & Potane, 2024). These challenges highlight the need for specialized strategies and professional support to ensure that multigrade teaching effectively meets the learning needs of all students.

Recent research shows that multigrade education remains widely practiced in rural and under-resourced settings to improve access and promote inclusive learning opportunities for diverse learners (Ferreirós-Martínez & Iglesias, 2025; *Best practice approaches for multigrade education*, 2023). In these contexts, the success of multigrade teaching is closely linked to teacher preparedness, particularly in instructional planning, classroom management, and differentiated instruction (Jodhani et al., 2025). Studies further indicate that multigrade teachers must develop flexible instructional approaches and organizational skills to address varied student needs while balancing multiple curricula (Ferreirós-Martínez & Iglesias, 2025). Moreover, professional development and ongoing support are critical to enhancing teacher effectiveness and fostering adaptive practices, such as cooperative learning and group work, in multigrade classrooms (*Best practice approaches for multigrade education*, 2023). These findings suggest that well-prepared and supported teachers are better positioned to manage the complexity of multigrade environments and promote meaningful learner engagement.

Globally, multigrade education is increasingly recognized as a viable framework for advancing education for sustainable development (ESD) and inclusive education. According to Parfitt et al. (2025), the multigrade model fosters equity by providing learning opportunities to children in geographically isolated or disadvantaged communities, where establishing separate grade-level classes would be impractical. The integration of multiple age groups in one classroom encourages collaboration, social cohesion, and peer mentoring—skills that align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4, which aims to ensure quality education for all. In countries such as India, Colombia, and South Africa, multigrade initiatives have been instrumental in increasing literacy and school retention rates, especially when supported by teacher training programs and community-based resource sharing (Bunga et al., 2025).

Furthermore, current studies underscore the growing role of technology-assisted and blended learning approaches in enhancing multigrade instruction. The integration of digital tools, such as interactive reading platforms and adaptive learning applications, has been shown to improve learner engagement and enable teachers to deliver individualized instruction more efficiently (Dy et al., 2024). However, access to technological resources remains uneven across rural and low-income regions, thereby perpetuating disparities in instructional quality (Ferreirós-Martínez & Iglesias, 2025). As a result,

researchers advocate for a balanced approach that combines traditional contextualized teaching strategies with technology-based innovations to maximize learning outcomes. This evolving global perspective reinforces the importance of teacher training, community participation, and educational policy support in sustaining effective multigrade practices worldwide.

### ***Multigrade education in the Philippines***

In the Philippines, the Multigrade Program in Philippine Education (MPPE) was formally institutionalized to address the educational needs of small, rural communities (Department of Education [DepEd], 2019). The program ensures that children in geographically isolated areas receive quality education, even with limited human and material resources. However, challenges remain significant. Ramos (2018) found that Filipino multigrade teachers often face difficulty in balancing multiple lesson plans, managing student behavior, and conducting formative assessments. Additionally, the scarcity of instructional materials tailored for multigrade settings hinders effective teaching and remediation (Dela Cruz, 2021).

Research also indicates that multigrade teachers experience a sense of professional isolation due to the remoteness of their assignments. Ocampo (2020) highlighted that limited administrative visits, lack of peer collaboration, and minimal access to in-service training exacerbate teacher stress and burnout. Despite these difficulties, some teachers exhibit strong adaptability by integrating community-based learning activities and local resources into their teaching practices (Villanueva, 2019). This demonstrates that resilience and creativity play a key role in sustaining the quality of learning in multigrade schools.

Recent studies reinforce that multigrade education in the Philippines remains a critical approach to achieving equitable and inclusive education, especially in geographically disadvantaged and conflict-affected regions. According to Urma and Callo (2023), teachers in multigrade schools continually face challenges in classroom management, instructional preparation, and the delivery of remediation, primarily due to learner diversity and limited infrastructure. However, they compensate for these limitations through contextualized teaching, drawing from local culture, stories, and indigenous materials to make learning more meaningful. Similarly, Rayas et al. (2023–2024) emphasized that teacher motivation, community participation, and school leadership support are strong predictors of success in multigrade classrooms. The study also suggested that improving access to teacher mentoring programs and localized training can enhance instructional efficiency and learner engagement in rural schools.

Furthermore, emerging research highlights the growing role of professional learning communities and the integration of technology in strengthening multigrade education in the Philippines. Villanueva and Bautista (2024) reported that participation in Learning Action Cells (LACs) enables teachers to share practical strategies, co-create learning materials, and reflect on their practices to improve the delivery of remediation. Likewise, Dy et al. (2024) found that some multigrade teachers have begun using digital reading tools and mobile-based learning applications to support individualized reading remediation in classrooms with mixed grade levels. Although internet connectivity and access to resources remain barriers, these innovative efforts show that Filipino multigrade teachers are embracing 21st-century pedagogical approaches to address persistent educational gaps. Overall, these developments reflect a

national movement toward more context-responsive, technology-aided, and collaborative models of multigrade teaching in pursuit of quality basic education for all learners.

### ***Remediation classes in multigrade teaching***

Remediation classes are designed to help learners close gaps in their foundational skills and achieve the required levels of proficiency. In multigrade settings, these tasks are especially difficult because teachers must provide remedial support to learners across different grade levels with varied needs and pacing (Ferreirós-Martínez & Iglesias, 2025). Studies on multigrade classrooms consistently report that teachers face time constraints, heavy workload, and challenges in individualized instruction, which affect the delivery of remedial activities (Recla & Potane, 2024). These challenges often result from the need to plan multiple lesson sequences concurrently, assess diverse learners, and manage limited instructional resources.

Furthermore, teachers' pedagogical challenges—such as expertise in remediation and access to adequate school resources—have been shown to significantly influence the conduct of remediation and enrichment activities in multigrade classrooms (Urma & Callo, 2023). The lack of systematic monitoring and evaluation further complicates remedial efforts, as many teachers rely on informal assessment practices, making it difficult to measure student progress objectively. These conditions can also affect learner motivation and engagement, particularly when students have repeated learning difficulties and require sustained support.

Recent studies highlight that remedial instruction in multigrade schools requires a more structured, data-driven, and differentiated approach. According to Dy et al. (2024), effective remediation in multigrade classrooms depends on teachers' ability to group learners by reading proficiency and to design flexible learning activities that match their instructional levels. This approach allows teachers to maximize limited time while still addressing individual learning gaps. Similarly, Bunga et al. (2025) emphasized that remediation should integrate formative assessment tools, such as reading checklists, performance-based tasks, and learner progress journals, to track improvement more systematically. The use of community-based resources—such as reading corners, parental involvement, and peer mentoring—has also been shown to strengthen learners' motivation and sustain literacy gains beyond the classroom.

In the Philippine context, remediation programs are increasingly being aligned with national literacy recovery efforts, such as the "Catch-Up Fridays" initiative and localized reading intervention projects in rural schools. Villanueva and Bautista (2024) found that multigrade teachers who participate in collaborative learning communities and Learning Action Cells (LACs) are better equipped to design remediation activities suited to their learners' varied needs. Moreover, the integration of technology-enhanced learning, including digital reading applications and audio-assisted lessons, has been identified as an emerging strategy to support learners who struggle with decoding and comprehension (Rances et al., 2023). However, access to reliable devices and internet connectivity remains a significant barrier, especially in geographically isolated areas. These findings underscore the importance of providing ongoing teacher training, technical assistance, and community partnerships to ensure that remediation in multigrade classrooms is effective, inclusive, and sustainable.

Despite the challenges of multigrade teaching, recent studies indicate that teachers continue to employ a range of adaptive strategies to support learner engagement and achievement. Research has shown that differentiated instruction—such as grouping students by ability, using tiered activities, and planning flexible learning tasks—is a core strategy that enables teachers to meet diverse learner needs across grade levels (Pedroches, 2025; Dy et al., 2024). Teachers also implement peer learning and tutoring, which allows learners to support one another and fosters collaboration among students of different ages (Journal of Adventist Education, 2023; Recla & Potane, 2024). Additionally, multigrade teachers make use of project-based and real-life contextual learning, integrating lessons with meaningful activities and collaborative group work that promote active participation (Ferreirós-Martínez & Iglesias, 2025; Journal of Adventist Education, 2023). These strategies highlight how teachers adapt their pedagogy to engage learners effectively, maximize instructional time, and respond to the complexity of multigrade classrooms.

In the Philippine setting, Villanueva (2019) found that teachers use modularized instruction—creating self-paced learning modules suitable for multiple grade levels—to manage diverse learners during remediation. Ramos (2018) also observed that teachers integrate contextualized and culture-based materials, drawing from community experiences to make lessons more relevant. Participation in Learning Action Cells (LACs) has also been identified as a valuable professional support mechanism that enhances teachers' confidence and instructional practices (Department of Education [DepEd], 2019). These strategies demonstrate that effective multigrade teaching and remediation depend on the teacher's ability to innovate and contextualize instruction.

Recent research highlights that collaboration and reflective practice are essential components of successful multigrade teaching. According to Villanueva and Bautista (2024), teachers who regularly engage in professional learning communities develop stronger instructional skills, share best practices, and co-create innovative materials suited for multigrade contexts. This collaborative culture helps mitigate the sense of professional isolation often experienced by teachers in remote schools. Similarly, Chalway (2025) emphasized that peer coaching and collective lesson planning empower teachers to experiment with diverse pedagogical techniques, such as inquiry-based learning and thematic teaching, which enhance learners' critical thinking and communication skills. These professional networks and reflective processes are instrumental in sustaining instructional quality despite resource limitations.

Furthermore, advances in technology integration and blended learning are reshaping how multigrade teachers approach instruction. Dy et al. (2024) and Rances et al. (2023) found that the use of digital reading applications, multimedia storytelling, and interactive learning platforms can significantly improve literacy and engagement among learners in multigrade classrooms. Teachers are now using tablets, radios, and smartphones to deliver differentiated learning tasks and monitor progress, particularly in reading and numeracy. However, limited connectivity and inadequate ICT training remain major challenges in rural areas (Bunga et al., 2025). To address this, DepEd and local education offices have begun implementing offline learning kits and teacher-led digital literacy workshops, enabling multigrade teachers to utilize technology effectively without relying on continuous internet access. These

innovations demonstrate how digital tools, when properly supported, can enhance teaching efficiency and learner outcomes in multigrade education.

### ***Remediation classes in multigrade teaching***

Remediation classes are intended to help learners close gaps in foundational skills and achieve required proficiency levels. In multigrade settings, remediation becomes particularly challenging as teachers must attend to learners across different grade levels with varying needs and pacing (Ferreirós-Martínez & Iglesias, 2025). Studies consistently report that multigrade teachers face time constraints, heavy workloads, and difficulties in individualized instruction, which complicate the delivery of remedial lessons (Recla & Potane, 2024; Urma & Callo, 2023).

The effectiveness of remedial programs is also influenced by pedagogical expertise and access to resources. Many teachers rely on informal assessment methods, which limit the ability to measure student progress objectively (Urma & Callo, 2023). Moreover, learners in remediation classes often demonstrate low confidence and motivation due to repeated learning difficulties, highlighting the need for strategies that both engage students and support their academic growth (Rayas et al., 2023–2024).

### ***Teaching strategies in multigrade classes***

Despite these challenges, multigrade teachers employ various strategies to sustain learner engagement and promote academic improvement. Recent research highlights differentiated instruction, peer tutoring, project-based learning, and real-life contextual activities as effective approaches to meet diverse student needs across multiple grade levels (Pedroches, 2025; Dy et al., 2024; Ferreirós-Martínez & Iglesias, 2025). Teachers also implement collaborative learning and cooperative activities to enhance peer-assisted instruction and active participation (Journal of Adventist Education, 2023; Recla & Potane, 2024).

In the Philippines, innovative approaches such as modularized instruction, culture-based and contextualized lesson materials, and participation in professional support structures like Learning Action Cells (LACs) have been documented (Villanueva, 2019; Ramos, 2018; Department of Education [DepEd], 2019). These strategies demonstrate that effective multigrade teaching relies on the teacher's ability to adapt, innovate, and contextualize instruction, particularly in resource-limited and rural settings.

Recent research underscores that reflective practice and professional collaboration are vital to improving the quality of multigrade instruction. Villanueva and Bautista (2024) found that teachers who regularly engage in collaborative lesson planning, peer observations, and reflective discussions through professional learning communities develop greater confidence and pedagogical creativity. Through these shared platforms, teachers refine instructional materials, adjust teaching methods to learners' needs, and integrate formative assessments that guide ongoing remediation. Likewise, Chalway (2025) reported that reflective teachers are more effective in identifying students' learning barriers and redesigning lessons to promote inclusion, learner autonomy, and critical thinking. Such practices cultivate a mindset of continuous improvement, which is crucial in dynamic and multi-level learning environments.

Furthermore, the integration of technology-enhanced instruction and community-based learning has become increasingly prominent in multigrade strategies. Dy et al. (2024) and Rances et al. (2023) observed that the use of multimedia storytelling, audio-assisted reading, and mobile-based learning applications supports literacy growth among early graders while allowing older learners to work independently. Some teachers have also incorporated radio-based instruction and localized digital learning kits, particularly in remote schools with limited connectivity (Bunga et al., 2025). In addition, community partnerships—such as parental involvement in reading sessions and barangay-led literacy programs—have been shown to reinforce classroom learning and improve student motivation (Urma & Callo, 2023). These emerging practices reveal how Philippine multigrade teachers creatively blend traditional and modern strategies to maximize learning despite resource constraints, ensuring that remediation and regular instruction remain effective and inclusive.

## ***Statement of the problem***

This study aims to explore the lived experiences of multigrade teachers in the Bangui District during remediation classes. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the challenges encountered by multigrade teachers when conducting reading remediation sessions?
2. What are the strategies employed by multigrade teachers to address the challenges encountered by them?

## ***Methodology***

This chapter presents the research design and data sources, including the study locale, population, and sampling; the data-gathering instrument; and data analysis, along with the ethical standards.

### ***Research design***

This study utilized a descriptive qualitative research design to explore the difficulties encountered and strategies employed by multigrade teachers in Bangui District during remediation classes. The descriptive design was deemed appropriate since it focuses on understanding current conditions, practices, and perceptions without manipulating variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Through this approach, the researcher gathered detailed insights into the teachers' lived experiences and professional challenges.

### ***Participants of the study***

The participants of this study were professional teachers handling multigrade classes in selected public elementary schools in Bangui District, Ilocos Norte. A purposive sampling technique was used to identify teachers with at least 1 year of experience teaching multigrade classes and who were directly involved in conducting remediation sessions. This ensured that participants possessed relevant and firsthand knowledge of the study's focus.

### ***Research instrument***

A semi-structured interview guide was developed by the researcher to collect qualitative data. The guide



contained open-ended questions designed to elicit detailed responses about teachers' experiences, perceived difficulties, and strategies in handling remediation classes. The instrument was validated by education experts and pilot-tested among non-participant multigrade teachers to ensure clarity and reliability.

### ***Data gathering procedure***

Permission to conduct the study was sought from the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent through the District Supervisor of Bangui. After approval, the researcher scheduled interviews with participants at their respective schools. Each interview was conducted in person, recorded with consent, and lasted approximately 30–45 minutes. The researcher assured participants of confidentiality and voluntary participation throughout the process.

### ***Data analysis***

The gathered qualitative data were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis, following the steps of familiarization, coding, categorization, and theme generation (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Emerging themes were used to describe teachers' common experiences, challenges, and coping strategies during remediation classes. Findings were summarized and interpreted in relation to existing literature.

### ***Ethical considerations***

The study observed ethical research practices. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. Responses were kept confidential and used solely for this study. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any time without any consequence.

## ***Data presentation and analysis***

This section presents the study's findings based on responses from 15 multigrade teachers in Bangui District. The data were collected using open-ended questions distributed through Google Forms, and the survey link was sent directly to the respondents. Their responses were analyzed using thematic analysis, where common patterns and ideas were grouped into themes. The results are presented in accordance with the study's research questions.

### ***Problem 1: What are the challenges encountered by multigrade teachers when conducting reading remediation sessions?***

#### **Theme 1: Diverse reading levels of learners**

| <b>Responses</b>                                                   | <b>Frequency (n=15)</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Learners have different reading abilities and comprehension levels | 9                       |
| Difficulty addressing individual reading needs                     | 4                       |
| Fast learners and slow readers in one group                        | 2                       |

**Note.** Data were collected via open-ended questions administered through Google Forms to 15 multigrade teachers in Bangui District. Responses were analyzed and grouped into themes based on common ideas expressed by the participants.

The data reveal that diverse reading levels among learners are the most common challenge encountered

by multigrade teachers during reading remediation sessions. Nine respondents stated that learners in multigrade classes possess varying reading abilities, making it difficult to implement a single instructional strategy. Teachers explained that while some learners can already read fluently, others still struggle with basic phonics and word recognition.

This situation makes remediation sessions more challenging because teachers must simultaneously adjust their instruction to accommodate learners with varying levels of reading competence. Effective reading instruction requires teaching approaches that respond to learners' individual reading abilities, interests, and learning pace. According to Richard L. Allington and Anne McGill-Franzen (2021), successful reading instruction emphasizes differentiated support, targeted interventions, and meaningful reading opportunities that match students' reading levels. In multigrade classrooms, however, teachers must address several grade levels and reading abilities simultaneously, which increases the complexity of planning and conducting remediation activities. The findings suggest that differentiated reading instruction and flexible grouping strategies are necessary to address the diverse literacy needs of learners in multigrade classrooms.

## Theme 2: Limited time for individual instruction

| Responses                                              | Frequency (n=15) |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Limited time to assist struggling readers individually | 7                |
| Difficulty balancing teaching multiple grade levels    | 5                |
| Time constraints due to other teaching tasks           | 3                |

*Note.* Data were collected via open-ended questions administered through Google Forms from 15 multigrade teachers in Bangui District. Responses were analyzed and grouped into themes based on common ideas expressed by the participants.

Another significant challenge identified by the respondents is the limited time available for individual reading remediation. Seven teachers emphasized that managing multiple grade levels in a single classroom reduces the time they can devote to struggling readers. Teachers explained that aside from conducting remediation sessions, they must also prepare lessons, manage classroom activities, and address the needs of learners from other grade levels. As a result, individualized reading support becomes difficult to sustain.

Research indicates that time allocation is a critical factor in effective reading intervention programs. According to Timothy Shanahan (2020), struggling readers require consistent, focused instruction to improve their reading skills. However, in multigrade classrooms, teachers often divide their attention across multiple groups of learners, limiting the effectiveness of remediation programs. This finding is supported by Recla and Potane (2024), who found that multigrade teachers experience difficulty in managing instructional time due to multiple teaching responsibilities and diverse learner needs.

These findings highlight the need for structured remediation schedules and additional instructional support to maximize learning time for struggling readers, as effective intervention programs require organized instructional time and sustained support for learners with reading difficulties (Timothy Shanahan, 2020; Recla & Potane, 2024).

**Theme 3: Learner behavior and short attention span**

| Responses                              | Frequency (n=15) |
|----------------------------------------|------------------|
| Learners have short attention spans    | 6                |
| Misbehavior during reading sessions    | 5                |
| Difficulty maintaining learners' focus | 4                |

**Note.** Data were collected via open-ended questions administered through Google Forms from 15 multigrade teachers in Bangui District. Responses were analyzed and grouped into themes based on common ideas expressed by the participants.

The findings also show that behavioral challenges and short attention spans affect the implementation of reading remediation sessions. Six respondents reported that learners tend to lose focus quickly during reading activities, particularly those who struggle with reading. Teachers explained that some learners become easily distracted or disengaged, especially when they encounter difficult reading tasks. As a result, maintaining learners' attention during remediation sessions is challenging. This observation is supported by Recla and Potane (2024), who found that managing learner behavior and sustaining attention are common difficulties in multigrade classrooms due to divided teacher attention.

Studies suggest that learner engagement plays an important role in literacy development. According to Linda Darling-Hammond (2017), active engagement and supportive classroom environments significantly influence learners' academic progress. When learners are actively involved in the learning process, they are more likely to develop better comprehension and reading skills.

These findings indicate that teachers must adopt interactive and engaging teaching strategies to maintain learners' interest during reading remediation activities, consistent with the findings of Ferreirós-Martínez and Iglesias (2025), which emphasize the importance of learner-centered and engaging approaches in multigrade classrooms.

**Problem 2: What strategies do multigrade teachers employ to address the challenges they encounter?****Theme 1: Differentiated instruction**

| Responses                                              | Frequency (n=15) |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Providing activities based on learners' reading levels | 8                |
| Individualized reading tasks                           | 4                |
| Adjusting instruction according to learners' needs     | 3                |

**Note.** Data were collected via open-ended questions administered through Google Forms from 15 multigrade teachers in Bangui District. Responses were analyzed and grouped into themes based on common ideas expressed by the participants.

The findings indicate that multigrade teachers commonly use differentiated instruction to support struggling readers. Eight respondents stated that they prepare different reading activities based on learners' abilities to ensure that each learner receives appropriate support. This practice reflects the need to address the diverse learning needs present in multigrade classrooms. Similar findings were reported

by Dy et al. (2024), who emphasized that differentiated instruction is widely used in multigrade settings to accommodate varying learner abilities and promote inclusive learning.

Differentiated instruction enables teachers to adapt their teaching strategies, learning materials, and classroom activities to address the diverse readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles of students. According to Carol Ann Tomlinson (2017), differentiated instruction provides learners with multiple pathways for acquiring information, processing ideas, and demonstrating understanding, ensuring that all students can engage with the curriculum at an appropriate level and maximize their academic growth.

In multigrade classrooms, differentiation becomes particularly important because learners from different grade levels and reading abilities share the same learning environment. This is supported by Ferreirós-Martínez and Iglesias (2025), who noted that flexible and adaptive instructional approaches are essential in multigrade classrooms to effectively address diverse learner needs.

## Theme 2: Flexible grouping of learners

| Responses                                      | Frequency (n=15) |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Grouping learners according to reading ability | 7                |
| Peer tutoring among learners                   | 5                |
| Small group reading sessions                   | 3                |

**Note.** Data were collected via open-ended questions administered through Google Forms from 15 multigrade teachers in Bangui District. Responses were analyzed and grouped into themes based on common ideas expressed by the participants.

Flexible grouping emerged as another strategy used by teachers to improve reading remediation. Seven respondents mentioned grouping learners by reading proficiency to make instruction more manageable. This approach allows teachers to focus on specific learner needs while maintaining classroom organization. Similar findings were reported by Recla and Potane (2024), who emphasized that grouping learners is an effective strategy in multigrade classrooms for addressing varying ability levels and facilitating more focused instruction.

Through grouping, teachers can provide targeted instruction to learners with similar reading difficulties. Some teachers also use peer tutoring, in which more advanced readers assist struggling learners during reading activities. This strategy not only supports struggling readers but also enhances the skills of more proficient learners. According to John Hattie (2018), peer learning and cooperative instruction have a significant positive effect on student achievement when properly implemented.

These strategies help teachers manage diverse learners in multigrade classrooms while promoting collaborative learning among students. This is further supported by Cagatan and Quirap (2024), which highlights that peer tutoring and collaborative learning improve learner engagement and reading performance in multigrade settings.

**Theme 3: Use of local and contextualized materials**

| Responses                                  | Frequency (n=15) |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Use of locally available reading materials | 6                |
| Incorporating local stories and culture    | 5                |
| Creating improvised reading materials      | 4                |

*Note.* Data were collected via open-ended questions administered through Google Forms from 15 multigrade teachers in Bangui District. Responses were analyzed and grouped into themes based on common ideas expressed by the participants.

The findings also show that teachers integrate local and contextualized learning materials to support reading remediation. Six respondents reported using locally available materials such as community stories, environmental print, and improvised reading resources. This reflects the teachers' ability to adapt to limited resources while still providing meaningful learning experiences. Similar findings were reported by Ramos (2021), who emphasized that teachers in rural settings often rely on contextualized, locally available materials to enhance literacy instruction.

Contextualized materials make reading activities more meaningful and relatable to learners. When learners see familiar concepts in reading materials, their comprehension and interest often improve. According to the Department of Education (2022), contextualized learning materials help learners connect classroom lessons with real-life experiences, making learning more effective.

The use of local resources also helps teachers overcome the challenge of limited instructional materials in remote multigrade schools. This is supported by Urma and Callo (2023), who found that teachers in geographically isolated areas maximize available resources and develop improvised materials to address the shortage of instructional tools.

**Theme 4: Professional development and collaboration**

| Responses                                | Frequency (n=15) |
|------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Participation in trainings and workshops | 6                |
| Learning through LAC sessions            | 5                |
| Sharing strategies with fellow teachers  | 4                |

*Note.* Data were collected via open-ended questions administered through Google Forms to 15 multigrade teachers in Bangui District. Responses were analyzed and grouped into themes based on common ideas expressed by the participants.

Professional development activities also play an important role in improving teachers' reading remediation practices. Six respondents stated that trainings and workshops helped them enhance their teaching strategies, while others mentioned Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions and peer collaboration. These findings suggest that teachers rely on continuous learning opportunities and collaboration to improve their instructional practices. Similar results were found by Dy et al. (2024), who emphasized that professional development enhances teachers' ability to implement effective instructional strategies in multigrade classrooms.

Professional learning opportunities allow teachers to acquire new knowledge, share experiences, and develop innovative teaching approaches. According to UNESCO (2020), continuous professional development strengthens teachers' instructional competence and improves the overall quality of education.

The findings highlight the importance of sustained professional support for multigrade teachers to enhance their capacity in delivering effective reading remediation programs. This is further supported by the Department of Education (2019), which promotes Learning Action Cells (LACs) as a school-based professional development strategy that encourages collaboration and sharing of best practices among teachers.

## ***Results and discussion***

The findings of this study underscore the complex realities faced by multigrade teachers when implementing reading remediation, particularly regarding learner diversity, limited instructional time, behavioral challenges, and insufficient resources. These conditions necessitate high levels of adaptability, instructional flexibility, and resourcefulness. Despite these constraints, teachers demonstrate strong commitment by employing differentiated instruction, flexible grouping, contextualized materials, and continuous professional development to support struggling readers.

The results reinforce key theoretical frameworks, particularly differentiated instruction and constructivist learning theory. Consistent with Tomlinson (2017), the study affirms that effective instruction in diverse classrooms requires adapting content, process, and product to address varied learner needs, making differentiation essential in multigrade contexts. Furthermore, the use of peer tutoring and collaborative learning reflects constructivist principles and Vygotsky's concept of scaffolding, where social interaction supports learning. This aligns with Hattie (2018), who identified collaborative learning as positively affecting student achievement.

However, the findings also highlight structural constraints, particularly limited instructional time and competing teaching demands. As noted by Shanahan (2020), struggling readers require sustained, focused instructional time, yet multigrade teachers must divide their attention among multiple groups, limiting opportunities for individualized intervention.

From a policy perspective, the study emphasizes the need for stronger institutional support, particularly to provide adequate, contextually appropriate instructional materials. While the Department of Education (2019) advocates for localized resources, gaps in access remain evident in multigrade settings. Additionally, continuous professional development through training, workshops, and Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions is critical, as UNESCO (2020) highlights its role in improving teacher competencies and educational outcomes.

The findings further suggest the importance of structured remediation programs, improved time allocation, and additional support mechanisms such as teacher aides or reading volunteers. This aligns with Recla and Potane (2024), who emphasize the role of institutional support and effective time

management in addressing challenges in multigrade teaching. Moreover, strengthening partnerships among schools, parents, and communities is essential, as community engagement has been shown to enhance literacy development, particularly in resource-limited contexts (Ramos, 2021).

Overall, while multigrade teachers exhibit resilience and innovation, sustained support from educational institutions, policymakers, and stakeholders is crucial. Strengthening instructional resources, professional development, structured remediation, and collaborative partnerships can significantly enhance the effectiveness of reading remediation in multigrade classrooms.

## **Conclusion**

Multigrade teachers in Bangui District face significant challenges in conducting reading remediation, including short learner attention spans, behavioral issues, varied reading levels, and limited instructional resources. Despite these constraints, teachers employ diverse strategies to enhance engagement and improve reading outcomes, such as ability-based grouping, peer tutoring, repeated reading, visual aids, modularized instruction, and parent and community engagement. Participation in professional development activities, including Learning Action Cells and literacy trainings, further strengthens teachers' capacity to effectively manage multigrade classrooms.

These findings highlight the dedication, adaptability, and instructional creativity of multigrade teachers in sustaining continuity of learning. They also underscore the need for sustained institutional support through adequate resources, targeted training, and structured remediation programs to strengthen reading interventions in rural and resource-constrained educational settings.

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