



# ATTITUDE TOWARDS TEACHING AND PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS IN A MULTI-GRADE CLASSROOM

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## ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this descriptive correlational research is to investigate the attitudes and professional qualification of BEED students enrolled in teaching multi-grade classes. The results showed that the respondents had an agreeable attitude towards the teaching profession. The mean score of the responses on professional qualification was very high, indicating that prospective teachers have a good understanding of the skills and competencies required for effective teaching in a multi-grade classroom setting. However, there was a negative correlation between attitudes towards teaching profession and professional qualification, which was not significant. The study highlighted the need for teacher education programs to provide more practical training opportunities and relevant curricula to enhance the professional competence of prospective teachers. The results also emphasized the importance of considering age and teaching experience when tailoring training programs to better address the needs of different groups of prospective teachers. Further research with a larger and more diverse group of participants is necessary to better understand the complex relationship between attitudes towards teaching profession and professional qualification.*

**KEYWORDS:** pre-service teachers, professional qualification, teaching multi-grade classes, teaching profession

## INTRODUCTION

Multi-grade teaching occurs within an educational system in which a single class is consist of two or more student grade levels compared with the typical classroom setup which a single classroom contains students of only one grade level. However, this may not be the case in systems where grade level repetition and acceleration are common (Berry, 2000). Moreover, “multi-grade teaching encompasses the teaching of children from two or more grade levels in a single class” (Romo, 2021). Therefore, it requires the specific use of teaching and learning strategies, methodologies, techniques and learning activity sheets. In real sense, the reasons for their formation vary but are always related to the number of students, the number of available teachers, or both.

In the Philippines educational setting, the offering of multi-grade classes is inevitable, since, just like other countries, ours also have constraints in infrastructure and manpower to serve the learners, particularly those in the far-flung areas. Moreover, DO No. 96, s. 1997 or the “Policies and Guidelines in the Organization and Operation of Multigrade (MG) Classes” outlined the implementing guidelines and policies on the organization of multigrade classes to provide access to schools for children in far-flung barangays and to incomplete schools. These also includes provisions on allocating classroom to multigrade classes, provision of textbooks and other support material including allocating

teacher items and or assigning teachers. In addition, DEPED Order No. 63 s. 2010 also outlines the provisions on enhancing Deped Order #81 s. 2009 on strengthening the implementation of the multigrade education program in Philippine education. Furthermore, in the Philippines, some teachers’ problems in elementary schools, especially in rural and remote areas, are lack of training and insufficient resources and findings (Magno, 2014 as cited in Naparan & Alinsug, 2021). Apparently, most of these teachers handling multigrade classes are relatively young and they are in their prime years of teaching (Ballesteros & Ocampo, 2016). Despite the in adversities teachers experienced, multigrade teachers find ways to serve the students better (Napan & Alinsug, 2021).

However, during their pre-service education and training in their respective teacher education institutions their focus was not on multigrade classes. This supports the idea of Cadosales (2017) as cited in Naparan and Alinsug (2021) that, “during the practice teaching years of elementary teachers, their mentors were trained to be ready in the actual world of teaching, yet this training does not focus on multigrade teaching. The teachers’ ability to deliver the lesson well is crucial to the students (Cadosales, 2011 as cited in Naparan & Alinsug, 2021).

To address the call of profession and to be competent as teachers in the multigrade, multigrade teachers are educators, so they are expected to manifest teaching



proficiencies and attributes just like contemporary teachers (Mendoza-Sintones, 2019).

Based on the aforementioned literatures, the present determined the attitude towards teaching and the perceived professional qualifications of pre-service teachers particularly those who are enrolled in the course teaching in the multi-grade class.

### Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to evaluate the prospective teachers enrolled in Teaching Multi-Grade Classes course of Eastern Samar State University Guiuan.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
  - 1.1. Attitude towards teaching profession; and
  - 1.2. Professional qualification.
2. Is there a significant relationship between the attitude towards teaching profession and professional qualification of prospective teachers in the multi-grade classroom.
3. What recommendations can be proposed based from the result of the study?

### Significance of the Study

Basically, this serves as a baseline data to determine the needs and prospects of BEED students enrolled in teaching multigrade classes. Moreover, this will also help teacher education training institutions to formulate mechanisms in increasing and sustaining high-class professional training to pre-service teachers to become competent in teaching multi-grade classes.

## METHODOLOGY

This section of the research paper presents the research design, sampling procedure, the respondents of the study, instrumentation, the data gathering procedures, and ethical considerations carried out in the conduct of this research study. Further it also explains the statistical tools, treatment and analysis of the data gathered.

### Research Design

The research study employed the use of quantitative research particularly the descriptive-correlational research design. The use of the descriptive design in this study helped in interpreting the relationship between variables (Gall et al., 1993 cited in Yalley, 2017). Similarly, the use of correlational research design enables the researcher to use a "correlational statistical test to describe and measure the degree of association (or relationships) between two or more variables" (Creswell, 2012).

### Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were the thirty-three (33) prospective teachers enrolled in the Teaching Multi-Grade Classes course of the BEED program of the College of Education of Eastern Samar State University Guiuan, Eastern Samar.

### Sampling Design

A purposive sampling technique was used in identifying the respondents of the study. As defined, "purposive sampling refers to a group of non-probability sampling techniques in which units are selected because they have characteristics that you need in your sample. In other words, units are selected "on purpose" in purposive sampling. Also called judgmental sampling, this sampling method relies on the researcher's judgment when identifying and selecting the individuals, cases, or events that can provide the best information to achieve the study's objectives. Purposive sampling is common in qualitative research and mixed methods research. It is particularly useful if you need to find information-rich cases or make the most out of limited resources" (Nikolopoulou, 2022).

### Research Instrument

The research study utilized two sets of questionnaires from Win and Nwe (2020) entitled "Attitude Scale for Student Teachers towards Teaching Profession" and "Professional Qualification Scale for Pre-Service Teachers" by Yengin Sarpkaya and Altun (2021).

### Data Gathering Procedures

With the objectives posed in the present study, the data was gathered from the respondents following several steps: A request for permission asking the target respondents was given to the identified students. Upon consent of the purposely identified respondents, a consent form was issued to each of the participants to secure voluntary participation. Moreover, in the actual conduct of the survey questionnaire and other data gathering process, the informed consent document was explained to the respondents informing their rights in the participation of the research survey. Afterwards, the questionnaires were retrieved immediately and with the possession of the researchers to secure the confidentiality of respondents' responses. After the retrieval, coding, tabulation, statistical treatment and analysis was conducted to answer the problem of the study.

### Ethical Consideration

In order to maintain the integrity, validity and ethical aspect of the research process, the administration of the survey questionnaires to the respondents was through an informed consent form and the willingness to participate and engage in the conduct of this research. The respondents were informed that all data to be collected are to be treated fairly and be used solely for research purposes. Moreover, to ensure the safety and rights of the possible participants, informed consent, voluntary participation, rights of participants, anonymity, and confidentiality will be an utmost consideration (Chigona et al., 2010).

### Analysis of Data

To answer all the problems presented in this research endeavor, descriptive statistics was performed. To measure the significant relationship of the different variables, Pearson's Product-moment Correlation was computed. All data was analyzed based on an equal frequency distribution with 1.79 or 1.8



equal intervals. Lastly, all quantitative data was statistically treated using the SPSS statistical software.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the data, analyses and interpretation of the results of this study. This study dealt with the attitude towards the teaching profession and the professional qualification as perceived by the BEED students enrolled in the Teaching Multi-Grade Classes course.

**Table. 1**

Mean Scores of Responses of the Prospective Teachers' Attitudes Towards Teaching and the Perceived Professional Qualifications

No.	Variables	Mean	Interpretation
1	Attitude Towards Teaching Profession	2.89	Agree
2	Perceived Professional Qualifications	4.81	Very High

Table 1 presents the mean score of the responses on attitude towards the teaching profession that was 2.89 interpreted as "agree". According to the results, it can be interpreted that the BEED students enrolled in the teaching multi grade classes attitudes towards the teaching profession was satisfactory with the identified grand mean of 2.89 which is interpreted as "agree". Thus, the attitude of the respondents is satisfactory.

This implies that the attitude of the respondents towards the teaching profession is satisfactory as far as their perception in the multigrade classes. Further, based on the revealed results, such interpretation can be associated to how the respondents would somehow perceive their interest in teaching multi-grade classes.

Moreover, it revealed that the BEED students enrolled in teaching multi grade classes had a "very high" level of professional qualification, with a grand mean score of 4.81. This suggests that the prospective teachers have a good

understanding of the skills and competencies required for effective teaching in a multi-grade classroom setting.

Furthermore, this indicates that the prospective teachers have a strong awareness of the importance of individual differences and the need to utilize available resources for the development of students. The study further identified several factors that are significantly associated with professional qualification. Age and teaching experience were found to have a significant impact on the professional qualification of prospective teachers. This highlights the importance of providing more practical training opportunities and incorporating more relevant and updated curricula in the teacher education program to enhance the professional competence of prospective teachers.

**Table 2**

Relationship between Attitudes towards Teaching Profession and Professional Qualification

Variable 1	Variable 2	Correlational Coefficient	Interpretation	P-value	Interpretation
Attitudes towards Teaching Profession	Professional Qualification	-.099	Negative Correlation	.571	Not Significant

Table 2 showed that there was a negative correlation between attitudes towards teaching profession and professional qualification, with a correlational coefficient of -.099. However, this correlation was not significant ( $p .571$ ).

The finding of a negative correlation between attitudes towards teaching profession and professional qualification is surprising, as one would expect a positive relationship between the two variables. It is possible that this negative correlation is due to the fact that individuals with high levels of professional qualification may have become disillusioned with the teaching profession, leading to more negative attitudes towards it. Alternatively, individuals with more positive attitudes towards the teaching profession may be more likely to enter the profession with lower levels of professional qualification.

Overall, these findings suggest that there may be a complex relationship between attitudes towards teaching profession and professional qualification. It is also important

for teacher education programs to consider how they can foster positive attitudes towards the teaching profession while also promoting high levels of professional qualification among their graduates.

## CONCLUSIONS

The study revealed that the BEED students enrolled in teaching the multi grade classes had agreeable attitude towards the teaching profession and a very high level of professional qualification. However, there was no significant correlation found between these two variables. The results suggest that there may be a complex relationship between attitudes towards teaching profession and professional qualification that requires further investigation. The study also highlights the importance of providing practical training opportunities and relevant curricula to enhance the professional competence of prospective teachers. Overall, the findings can be used to inform teacher education programs and policy makers to better



prepare and support future teachers in multi-grade classroom settings.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Encourage more practical training opportunities: The study highlights the importance of providing more practical training opportunities for prospective teachers to enhance their professional competence. Teacher education programs should consider incorporating more relevant and updated curricula to better equip their graduates.
2. Foster positive attitudes towards the teaching profession: While the study found that the attitudes of BEED students towards the teaching profession were agreeable or satisfactory, it is important for teacher education programs to continue to foster positive attitudes towards the profession to promote a culture of excellence and commitment among educators.
3. Consider the impact of age and teaching experience on professional qualification: The study found that age and teaching experience significantly impact the professional qualification of prospective teachers. Teacher education programs should consider tailoring their training programs to better address the needs of different age groups and experience levels.
4. Further research: The study revealed a negative correlation between attitudes towards teaching profession and professional qualification, but the relationship was not significant. Further research with a larger sample size and a more diverse group of participants is needed to better understand this relationship.
5. Utilize available resources for student development: The study also revealed that prospective teachers have a strong awareness of the importance of individual differences and the need to utilize available resources for the development of students. Teacher education programs should continue to emphasize the importance of utilizing available resources and tailoring instruction to meet the diverse needs of students in multi-grade classroom settings

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