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CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF K TO 12 PROGRAM AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE INSTRUCTIONAL COMPETENCE OF TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

K to 12 program is a basic curriculum program implemented in the Philippines. Upon its implementation, the instructional competence of the teachers is also influenced. This study aimed to relate the challenges in the implementation of the K to 12 program and the instructional competence of teachers which employed a correlational research design that involved 35 Grades I to III teachers from Calumpang Elementary School of Cahilsot District, General Santos City Division during the School Year 2022-2023. Following the self-administered survey, modified questionnaires were used to gather the data needed for the study. The statistical tools used in the analysis included frequency count, weighted mean, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The results showed that the level of challenges in the implementation of the K to 12 program is described as high in terms of curriculum, instruction, and assessment with an overall mean of *3.29*. It also revealed that the level of instructional competence of teachers is described as high with an overall mean of *3.37*. This study concluded that the instructional competence of teachers is not affected by the challenges that they encounter. Generally, the Department of Education may fortify teachers' instructional competence as it strengthens them in combating the challenges encountered in the field of education.

INTRODUCTION

The introduction of the K to 12 programs in the Philippines aimed to foster 21st-century skills among learners. However, various challenges have hindered its success, notably the need for more essential learning equipment and facilities. This deficiency affects student engagement and significantly hampers teachers' ability to deliver instruction effectively (Quijano, 2023). Despite the intent of the K to 12 program to enhance the quality of education, various obstacles have hindered its effectiveness. A major concern is the lack of adequate educational resources such as classrooms, seating, textbooks, and other essential materials (Campos, 2023). Additionally, teachers face difficulties in conveying concepts using the mother tongue, adapting to new assessment and grading systems, and managing classrooms effectively under the revised curriculum. These issues negatively impact both

student engagement and teacher performance, ultimately affecting the overall learning experience (Salandanan, 2022).

On the other hand, addressing the challenges faced in the implementation of the K to 12 program is essential to improving the quality of education. Teachers play a crucial role in ensuring that learning outcomes are met, and their instructional competence directly influences student success. By understanding and mitigating the difficulties they encounter, this study can contribute to developing solutions that enhance teaching strategies, improve resource allocation, and support professional development (Mendoza & Bautista, 2019). The findings may serve as a reference for educators, school administrators, and policymakers in refining the implementation of the K to 12 program. Furthermore, the foundation of the K to 12 program is anchored in several legal frameworks that support its implementation. Republic Act No. 10533, also known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, mandates the establishment of a standardized curriculum aimed at producing globally competitive graduates. Additionally, the Department of Education (DepEd) Order No. 8, s. 2015 outlines the policy guidelines on classroom assessment, ensuring that student learning is measured effectively. However, despite these legal provisions, implementation challenges persist, affecting the intended outcomes of the program (Laroza & Gregorio, 2020). This study sought to provide a comprehensive analysis of the issues affecting teachers' instructional competence under the K to 12 curriculum. By examining the specific difficulties faced by educators such as resource limitations, curriculum adjustments, and assessment challenges this research aims to offer insights that can guide improvements in policy implementation, teacher training, and overall curriculum effectiveness.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative research approach, which involves collecting and analyzing numerical data to identify patterns, relationships, and trends (Bhandari, 2020). This method allows for the use of statistical tools to test hypotheses, generate insights, and apply findings to a broader population. It ensures objectivity and reliability in measuring variables associated with the implementation of the K to 12 program and its effect on teachers' instructional competence. Specifically, the study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the connection between challenges in implementing the K to 12 program and teachers' instructional competence. The descriptive component aimed to identify and describe the difficulties teachers encounter in curriculum, assessment, and instruction. Meanwhile, the correlational component sought to determine the extent to which these challenges impact instructional competence. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire adapted from the IPCRF, ensuring a standardized assessment of instructional competence.

Research Locale

This study was conducted at Calumpang Elementary School, located in Purok 25, Cahilsot Village, J.P. Rizal Street, Barangay Calumpang, General Santos City. The school employs 75 dedicated and competent teachers committed to delivering quality basic education. As an institution actively implementing the K to 12 program, Calumpang Elementary School has faced numerous, challenges, particularly in terms of limited instructional resources and infrastructure. Notable issues include the shortage of textbooks in core subjects, a lack of adequate classrooms and laboratories, and an under-equipped library. These constraints have significantly impacted the school's ability to deliver the K to 12 curriculum effectively. Moreover, the limited access to teacher training and professional development programs has hindered the faculty's adaptation to the demands of the enhanced curriculum. Although the school has shown commitment and progress in implementing educational reforms, persistent gaps in facilities and teacher development remain evident. Despite these, Calumpang Elementary School continues to be recognized as one of the top-performing institutions in the city (Garcia & Morales, 2021).

Selection Process

The respondents of this study were selected using simple random sampling to ensure an unbiased representation of the teaching population at Calumpang Elementary School. From a total of 75 teachers, 30 were randomly chosen to participate. This method minimized selection bias, ensuring that each teacher had an equal chance of being included in the study. Randomization also enhanced the study's internal validity by reducing potential confounding variables that could affect the findings.

Research Respondents

The respondents consisted of 30 teachers from Calumpang Elementary School during the school year 2020-2021. Their data were gathered from their Individual Performance Commitment and Review (IPCR) ratings, spanning from the initial implementation of the K to 12 Program up to the present school year. By analyzing their performance records, the study aimed to assess trends and challenges associated with K to 12 implementations. The selected respondents provided a representative sample, ensuring that the findings accurately reflected the broader teaching population of the school.

Research Instrument

The study utilized two structured survey questionnaires as primary research instruments. The first was a researcher-made tool, developed after an in-depth review of relevant literature to identify core challenges in the implementation of the K to 12 curriculum. This questionnaire focused on curriculum design, teaching strategies, and assessment methods, drawing test items from existing studies and frameworks, including DepEd's implementation guidelines and related academic sources (Orale & Dizon, 2013). To ensure content validity, the questionnaire was evaluated by field experts for clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study's objectives. Reliability testing was conducted through pilot testing among a small group of respondents with similar characteristics as the target population. The instrument demonstrated high internal consistency, affirming its reliability. This validated approach ensured the accuracy and credibility of the data gathered. Such methodological rigor enhances the study's contribution to understanding K to 12 implementation issues.

Table 1. Interpretation Guide for the Level of Challenges Encountered by Teachers in the Implementation of the K to 12 Program

Mean Range	Description	Interpretation
4.50-5.00	Very High	The level of challenges encountered by the teachers in the implementation of K to 12 program is very high.
3.50-4.49	High	The level of challenges encountered by the teachers in the implementation of K to 12 program is high.
2.50-3.49	Moderately High	The level of challenges encountered by the teachers in the implementation of K to 12 program is moderately high.
1.50-2.49	Low	The level of challenges encountered by the teachers in the implementation of K to 12 program is low.
1.00-1.40	Very Low	The level of challenges encountered by the teachers in the implementation of K to 12 program is very low.

The second research instrument was developed to evaluate teachers' instructional competence using the Individual Performance Competency Rating (IPCR) framework. This tool is recognized for its comprehensive assessment of teaching effectiveness through key indicators such as lesson planning, classroom management, and student engagement strategies. By integrating the IPCR, the study ensured a systematic and dependable evaluation of instructional performance. This approach provided meaningful insights into educators' strengths and areas needing enhancement, supporting continuous professional development (Reyes & Gamboa, 2021).

Table 2. Descriptive Interpretation of Teachers' Instructional Competence

Mean Range	Description	Interpretation
4.50 - 5.00	Very High	The instructional competence of teachers is outstanding.
3.50 - 4.49	High	The instructional competence of teachers is very satisfactory.

Mean Range	Description	Interpretation
4.50 - 5.00	Very High	The instructional competence of teachers is outstanding.
2.50 - 3.49	Moderate	The instructional competence of teachers is satisfactory.
1.50 - 2.49	Low	The instructional competence of teachers is unsatisfactory.
1.00 - 1.49	Very Low	The instructional competence of teachers is poor.

The study employed two survey questionnaires comprising close-ended and Likert scale questions to collect quantitative data. Close-ended items provided fixed response options, enabling participants to choose the most suitable answers. Meanwhile, the Likert scale assessed the extent of participants' agreement or disagreement with statements related to instructional competence and challenges. Data from close-ended questions were analyzed using frequency counts to illustrate response distribution, while weighted mean was applied to Likert items to determine the average rating. This approach ensured accurate interpretation of responses (Garcia & Reyes, 2021).

Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to the implementation of this study, the researcher formally sought approval from the school head of Calumpang Elementary School through a written letter detailing the study's purpose, objectives, and significance. Upon receiving permission, the researcher-initiated data collection by coordinating directly with the teachers to ensure a shared understanding of the study's focus on the challenges in K to 12 implementation and teacher instructional competence. Two researcher-made survey questionnaires were personally distributed, accompanied by clear instructions. Participants were given sufficient time to reflect and respond thoughtfully. Completed surveys were collected with strict adherence to ethical standards, including participant anonymity and confidentiality. The responses were carefully organized and tabulated according to each questionnaire item. Using descriptive and inferential statistical tools, the data were analyzed to accurately identify the extent of challenges faced by teachers and their impact on instructional performance. This ethical and systematic approach reflects standard practices in recent educational research (Cabrillas & de Guzman, 2022).

Ethical Considerations

This study strictly adhered to ethical standards as mandated by Holy Trinity College, ensuring that participants were treated with respect and integrity throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from 30 teachers at Calumpang Elementary School, who were fully briefed on the study's purpose, procedures, and their rights as participants. Participation was entirely voluntary, and respondents had the freedom to withdraw at any stage without consequence. To protect the identity and privacy of respondents, all data were coded and treated with strict confidentiality. The study also upheld data privacy principles by ensuring that participants' responses remained anonymous and secure. Additionally, gender sensitivity was observed by promoting equality and respect for individuals of all gender identities. Cultural sensitivity was equally prioritized, with efforts to respect and accommodate the diverse cultural backgrounds of the participants. These ethical practices ensured that the study was conducted responsibly and in accordance with academic and institutional guidelines.

Data Analysis

The study employed quantitative methods to analyze data on the challenges in implementing the K to 12 program and their influence on teachers' instructional competence. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize frequencies, percentages, and mean scores. To determine the relationship between challenges and instructional competence, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) and p-value were computed. This approach enabled objective interpretation of the data, ensuring reliability and validity (Field, 2020; Gravetter & Wallnau, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of Challenges in the Implementation of K to 12 Program

Table 3 shows data that describe the level of challenges in the implementation of K to 12 programs in terms of curriculum.

Table 3. Level of Challenges in the Implementation of K to 12 Program in Terms of Curriculum

Items		Mean	Description
1.	Understanding different points-of-views of resource persons in curriculum retooling seminars.	*3.26*	High
2.	Formulating of teachers lesson plan based curriculum.	*3.14*	High
3.	Crafting lesson plans that are aligned with the curriculum competency requirements.	*3.26*	High
4.	Aligning teaching guides and teaching and learning materials available.	*3.46*	High
Overall Mean		***3.28***	**High**

The survey results reveal that teachers at Calumpang Elementary School face a high level of challenges in implementing the K to 12 curriculum, with an overall mean score of *3.28*. The most significant difficulty lies in aligning teaching guides and materials ($M = 3.46$), followed by challenges in understanding diverse perspectives during curriculum retooling seminars and crafting lesson plans aligned with competency standards ($M = 3.26$). Even the lowest reported difficulty—formulating lesson plan-based curriculum—remains high ($M = 3.14$). These findings indicate persistent struggles in curriculum alignment and instructional design. Supporting research by Abragan et al. (2022) attributes these difficulties to inadequate training, limited resources, and lack of specialization-related support. Additionally, the Department of Education (2019) reported that *30%* of public schools lack sufficient classrooms and facilities, further hindering K to 12 implementations. Addressing these gaps through targeted training, improved resource allocation, and institutional support is essential to ensure effective curriculum delivery and improved instructional quality.

Table 4. Level of Challenges in the Implementation of K to 12 Program in Terms of Instruction

Items		Mean	Description
1.	Availability of teaching-learning materials such as textbooks, activity sheets, etc.	*3.40*	High
2.	Use of mother tongue in teaching.	*3.34*	High
3.	Communicating tasks and instruction using the mother tongue.	*3.34*	High
4.	Lack of time to conduct the lesson.	*3.34*	High
Overall Mean		***3.36***	**High**

The survey revealed that teachers encountered high levels of difficulty in implementing the K to 12 program, particularly in instruction aligned with the 4A's (activating, acquiring, applying, and assessing knowledge). The overall mean of *3.36* indicates substantial challenges, with the greatest difficulty being the lack of teaching-learning materials such as textbooks and activity sheets, reflected by a high mean score of *3.40*. Other significant issues included the use of the mother tongue and insufficient time for lessons, each with mean scores of *3.34*. These findings align with previous studies by Natividad (2019), Maffea (2020), and Simpal and Robles (2024), who reported similar resource-related constraints and the need for infrastructure support in Education 4.0. The results highlight critical barriers affecting instructional delivery, including limited preparation, subject mastery, and inadequate training. The study underscores the need for enhanced professional development, especially for college instructors assigned to teach in high school settings (Ednave et al., 2018).

Table 5 shows data that describe the level of challenges in the implementation of K to 12 programs in terms of assessment.

Table 5. Level of Challenges in the Implementation of K to 12 Program in Terms of Assessment

Items		Mean	Description
1.	Designing test in line with competency requirements and objectives.	*3.37*	High
2.	Conducting outcomes-based performance evaluation.	*3.14*	High
3.	Adapting to the new grading system.	*3.23*	High

4.	Constructing and using of rubrics.	*2.97*	High
5.	Formulating questions that poses higher order thinking skills (HOTS).	*3.54*	Very High
Overall Mean		***3.25***	**High**

The study revealed that teachers at Calumpang Elementary School experienced significant challenges in implementing the K to 12 curriculum, particularly in assessment. The overall mean score of *3.25* indicates a high level of difficulty. The most challenging area was formulating Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) questions, with a very high mean score of *3.54*. Designing tests aligned with competencies (*3.37*), adapting to the new grading system (*3.23*), and conducting outcomes-based performance evaluations (*3.14*) were also marked as high difficulty. Although constructing and using rubrics received the lowest mean score of *2.97*, it still reflects a high level of challenge. These findings are consistent with Afifah and Retnawati (2019), who noted teachers' limited understanding of HOTS indicators, and with Mangali et al. (2019), who cited inadequate resources and administrative support as obstacles in outcomes-based assessments. The results underscore the need for targeted training and institutional support to enhance teachers' assessment practices.

Table 6. Summary Table on the Level of Challenges in the Implementation of K to 12 Program

Indicators	**Mean**	**Description**
1. Curriculum	*3.28*	High
2. Instruction	*3.36*	High
3. Assessment	*3.25*	High
Over-all Mean	***3.29***	**High**

The study's summary findings reveal that teachers experienced a high level of challenges in implementing the K to 12 Program. The overall mean score of *3.29* indicates that teachers consistently faced substantial difficulties, with instruction posing the greatest challenge (*M = 3.36*), followed by curriculum implementation (*M = 3.28*), and assessment (*M = 3.25*), all categorized as high. These results suggest that teachers at Calumpang Elementary School encountered considerable obstacles across all major instructional domains during the program's implementation. Rivera (2018) identified several factors contributing to these challenges, including insufficient teacher preparation and professional development, student overload, and shortages in classrooms and textbooks. Likewise, Perez (2018) reported deficiencies in learning materials, facilities, and classroom space, particularly in Technical-Vocational tracks. Despite these issues, stakeholders did not perceive a major impact on Senior High School operational readiness, likely due to teacher training and support interventions.

Level of Instructional Competence of Teachers

Table 7. Level of Instructional Competence of Teachers in Terms of Content Knowledge and Pedagogy

Items	**Mean**	**Description**
1. Applies knowledge of content within and across the curriculum teaching area.	*3.43*	High
2. Uses a range of teaching strategies that enhance learner achievement in literacy and numeracy skills.	*3.54*	Very High
3. Applies a range of teaching strategies develop creative and critical thinking as well as other higher order thinking skills.	*3.37*	High
Overall Mean	***3.45***	**High**

The survey revealed that the teachers of Calumpang Elementary School demonstrated a high level of instructional competence in terms of knowledge and pedagogy, with an overall mean of *3.45*, verbally described as high. Among the indicators, the highest mean was recorded in the use of a range of teaching strategies that enhance learner achievement in literacy and numeracy skills (*3.54*, very high). Teachers also showed competence in applying knowledge of content within and across curriculum areas (*3.43*, high) and in using strategies to develop creative, critical, and higher-order thinking skills (*3.37*, high). These findings suggest that teachers are well-prepared to meet the demands of the K to 12 Program. This can be attributed to the Department of Education's

intensive training initiatives, which equipped educators with essential content knowledge, pedagogical strategies, and practical techniques. Launched in the 2012–2013 academic year, these trainings supported the implementation of the new curriculum, beginning with Grades 1 and 7. As highlighted by Ningtiyas and Jailani (2018), such interventions fostered behavior change and professional growth. Consequently, teachers became more confident and effective in delivering lessons, resulting in improved student engagement and learning outcomes across key subject areas.

Table 8. Level of Instructional Competence of Teachers in Terms of Learning Environment and Diversity of Learners

Items		Mean	Description
1.	Manages classroom structure to engaged learners individually or groups in meaningful exploration discovery and hands on activities within a range of physical learning environment.	*3.40*	High
2.	Manages learners' behavior constructively by applying positive and non-violent discipline to ensure learning focused environment.	*3.46*	High
3.	Uses differentiated, developmentally appropriate learning experience to address, learner gender, needs strength, interest and experience.	*3.46*	High
Overall Mean		***3.44***	**High**

Table 8 presents data that provide a detailed analysis of the teachers' level of instructional competence in implementing the K to 12 Program. Specifically, it highlights their effectiveness in creating a conducive learning environment and addressing the diverse needs of learners. The data offer insights into how well educators adapt their teaching strategies to accommodate different learning styles, backgrounds, and abilities, ensuring inclusive and effective instruction. The study revealed that teachers at Calumpang Elementary School demonstrated a high level of instructional competence, particularly in creating a supportive learning environment and addressing learner diversity, with an overall mean score of *3.44*. They exhibited strong skills in managing student behavior through positive, non-violent discipline and in delivering developmentally appropriate, differentiated learning experiences that consider learners' gender, needs, strengths, interests, and backgrounds—both earning the highest mean scores of *3.46*. Additionally, teachers effectively organized classroom structures to encourage individual and group engagement through exploration, discovery, and hands-on activities, with a mean score of *3.40*. These findings indicate that teachers are highly competent in fostering inclusive and dynamic classrooms that promote active learning and accommodate diverse student needs. They implement effective behavior management strategies and create personalized learning opportunities that support meaningful participation. Supporting this, Forghani-Arani and Cerna (2019) emphasize the value of teacher competence in managing diversity, viewing it as a resource for educational growth. Teachers who understand and respect their students' socio-economic and cultural backgrounds can adjust instructional approaches accordingly, promoting inclusive practices that enhance learning for all. This competence contributes significantly to cultivating a positive and equitable learning environment.

Table 9. Level of Instructional Competence of Teachers in Terms of Curriculum and Planning

Items		Mean	Description
1.	Plans manages and implements developmentally sequenced teaching and learning processes to meet curriculum and varied teaching contexts.	*3.34*	High
2.	Participates in collegial discussion that as teacher and learner feedback to enrich teaching practice.	*3.54*	Very High
3.	Selects develops, organizes and uses appropriate teaching and learning resources including ICT to address learning goals.	*3.20*	High
Overall Mean		***3.36***	**High**

Table 9 presents the level of teachers' instructional competence in implementing the K to 12 program, specifically in curriculum and planning. Results revealed a high overall competence level with a mean score of *3.36*. Teachers showed the highest competence in engaging in collegial discussions (*M = 3.54*) and strong performance in managing learning processes (*M = 3.34*). Slightly lower competence was observed in utilizing teaching resources and ICT (*M = 3.20*). The findings indicate that teachers at Calumpang Elementary School exhibit a high level of instructional competence in curriculum and planning. They actively participate in collegial discussions, promoting feedback exchange that enhances their teaching practices. Teachers also demonstrate strong skills in designing and implementing developmentally appropriate instruction aligned with the curriculum, showing adaptability to varied teaching contexts. However, there is slight room for improvement in selecting and utilizing suitable teaching and learning resources, including ICT, to better support learning goals. Jasnani (2021) emphasized that curriculum competence extends beyond subject knowledge to include curriculum design, implementation, and assessment strategies. These competencies allow teachers to develop structured, engaging, and learner-centered experiences. The study supports the idea that such competencies are essential in improving instructional quality. Ajayi et al. (2020) also stressed that effective teachers, with strong subject mastery and pedagogical skills, significantly influence student success. Their ability to foster critical thinking and engagement contributes to improved educational outcomes. Overall, the results affirm the importance of instructional competence in ensuring quality education.

Table 10. Level of Instructional Competence of Teachers in Terms of Assessment and Reporting

Items	Mean	Description
1. Designs selects, organizes and use diagnostic formative and summative assessment strategies consistent with curriculum requirements.	*3.23*	High
2. Monitors and evaluates learner progress and achievement using learners' attainment data.	*3.20*	High
3. Communicates promptly and clearly the learners needs progress and achievements to key stakeholders including parents/guardian.	*3.26*	High
Overall Mean	***3.23***	**High**

The survey findings reveal that teachers exhibit a high level of instructional competence, with an overall mean score of *3.23*. They excel particularly in assessment and planning, notably in communicating student needs, progress, and achievements to parents and stakeholders, which received the highest mean of *3.26*. Teachers also show strong competence in designing and applying various assessment types aligned with curriculum standards, reflected by a mean of *3.23*. However, a slightly lower mean of *3.20* indicates a need for improvement in utilizing learner attainment data to monitor student progress. These results emphasize strengths in communication and curriculum-aligned assessments, but also point to the need for better data-driven instruction. According to Herppich et al. (2018), instructional competence involves applying assessment data to guide teaching effectively. Barberos et al. (2019) further note that performance evaluations should enhance teacher growth and instructional quality. Overall, competent teachers play a crucial role in shaping effective learning experiences by continuously refining their methods through data and evaluation.

Table 11. Summary Table on the Level of Instructional Competence of Teachers

Indicators	Mean	Description
1. Content Knowledge and Pedagogy.	*3.45*	High
2. Learning Environment and Diversity of Learners.	*3.44*	High
3. Curriculum and Planning.	*3.36*	High
4. Assessment and Reporting.	*3.23*	High
Overall Mean	***3.37***	**High**

Table 11 shows data that described the summary table on the level of instructional competence of teachers. The study revealed that teachers demonstrated a high level of instructional competence, with an overall mean score of *3.37*. They showed particular strength in content knowledge and pedagogy (*M = 3.45*), inclusive classroom practices (*M = 3.44*), and curriculum planning (*M = 3.36*), indicating strong subject mastery and effective teaching

strategies. These competencies reflect the teachers' ability to engage learners and address diverse student needs. However, assessment and reporting received a comparatively lower mean score of *3.23*, suggesting a need for further development in evaluating student performance and communicating results effectively. The findings affirm that teachers possess solid instructional knowledge and skills across multiple domains, especially in creating inclusive learning environments and aligning instruction with the curriculum. Despite minor gaps in assessment practices, their overall competence remains high. Supporting literature, including Cardino and Ortega-Dela Cruz (2020), highlights that effective instruction requires structured guidance and adaptability to learners' needs. Similarly, OECD (2019) findings align with this study, emphasizing teachers' strong instructional practices. Continued professional development is essential to sustain and further enhance instructional competence, ultimately improving student learning outcomes.

Significant Relationship Between the Level of Challenges in the Implementation of K to 12 Program and the Level of Instructional Competence of Teachers

Table 12. Significant Relationship Between the Level of Challenges in the Implementation of K to 12 and Level of Instructional Competence of Teachers

Variables	Level of Challenges in the K-12 Implementation		
	Correlation Coefficient (r)	p-value	Remarks
Content Knowledge and Pedagogy	*0.44*	*0.008*	With Significant Relationship
Learning Environment and Diversity of Learners	*0.24*	*0.172*	No Significant Relationship
Curriculum and Planning	*0.23*	*0.174*	No Significant Relationship
Assessment and Reporting	*0.20*	*0.259*	No Significant Relationship

The results indicate that there is no significant relationship between the challenges in implementing the K to 12 Program and teachers' instructional competence across various domains, including content knowledge and pedagogy, learning environment and diversity of learners, curriculum and planning, and assessment and reporting. Although a moderate positive correlation was found between content knowledge and pedagogy and implementation challenges ($r = 0.44$), it was not statistically significant ($p = 0.172 > 0.05$). Similarly, the domains of learning environment and diversity of learners ($r = 0.24$, $p = 0.172$), curriculum and planning ($r = 0.23$, $p = 0.174$), and assessment and reporting ($r = 0.20$, $p = 0.259$) also showed no significant correlations. Despite the absence of statistically significant relationships, the findings from Table 2.5 reveal that teachers demonstrated high levels of instructional competence in all domains. This suggests they are well-prepared to meet professional challenges. Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of teacher competence, as emphasized by Hafeez (2021), who noted its positive impact on student achievement and teaching effectiveness. Overall, while instructional competence does not significantly correlate with implementation challenges, it remains a crucial factor in ensuring quality education and supporting student development.

Degree of Influence of the Instructional Competence of Teachers on the Challenges Encountered in the Implementation of K to 12 Program

Table 13. Degree of Influence of the Instructional Competence of Teachers on the Challenges Encountered in the Implementation of K to 12 Program

Variables	**Level of Instructional Competence of Teachers**			
	R-Square	**Adjusted R-Square**	**Percentage**	**Remarks**
1. Curriculum	*0.08*	*0.05*	*4.65%*	Little Influence
2. Instruction	*0.05*	*0.02*	*2.20%*	Little Influence
3. Assessment	*0.13*	*0.10*	*10.06%*	Little Influence

The results in Table 13 show that challenges in the curriculum, instruction, and assessment domains have minimal influence on teachers' instructional competence. The correlation between curriculum challenges and instructional

competence is weak ($r = 0.08$, adjusted $r = 0.05$), accounting for only *4.65%* of the variance. Similarly, instruction ($r = 0.05$, adjusted $r = 0.02$) and assessment challenges ($r = 0.13$, adjusted $r = 0.10$) explain just *2.20%* and *10.06%* of the variance, respectively. These weak positive relationships suggest that despite existing challenges in the K to 12 Program, teachers' instructional competence remains largely unaffected. Continuous professional development enables teachers to enhance instructional practices, adapt to pedagogical trends, and address areas for growth, as emphasized by Saleem and Gul (2021).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concluded that teachers experienced a high level of challenges in implementing the K to 12 Program, particularly in curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Despite these difficulties, teachers maintained a high level of instructional competence, especially in areas such as content knowledge, curriculum planning, pedagogy, and assessment. Importantly, the study found no significant relationship between the challenges encountered and teachers' instructional competence, suggesting that their ability to deliver effective instruction remained stable despite implementation issues.

Based on these conclusions, several recommendations were made. School heads are encouraged to address ongoing challenges through research and targeted professional development, particularly in assessment practices like designing higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) questions and aligning tests with competencies. Strengthening teachers' instructional competence through continuous training is also advised. Moreover, school administrators should enhance monitoring and development initiatives to sustain or improve teaching effectiveness. Lastly, further qualitative research is recommended to explore teachers' experiences more deeply and complement the quantitative results for broader insight.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declared that there was no conflict of interest, whether financial, professional, or personal, that influenced the conduct, findings, or reporting of this study titled *"Challenges in the Implementation of the K to 12 Program and Their Influence on the Instructional Competence of Teachers."*

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