Lived Experiences of Untrained Public Elementary School Teachers on the Implementation of Multi- Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT) in Teaching Learners: A Qualitative Inquiry

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore and understand the lived experiences of untrained Grade 1 teachers on the implementation of Multi-Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT) in Tagum City Division. It used qualitative research design employing phenomenological approach. It comprised of fourteen (14) untrained grade 1 teachers: seven (7) teachers for online in-depth interview (IDI) and seven (7) teachers for online focus group discussion (FGD). This study was limited to describing and understanding the lived experiences of the participants and the data were taken from the result of IDI and FGD. For data analysis, this study employed coding and thematic analysis. On their experiences, the findings revealed that they met learners with learning and special needs; they lacked information and training on the nature of assessment; encountered in-denial and uncooperative parents; had time constraints; and difficulties in preparing the location and materials. However, to cope their problems, they had set flexible schedules; became resourceful; provided with coordination and support; and established open communication with their parents. Apart from that, their insights were: MFAT as a valuable tool to cater learners' needs; intensification of parent cooperation; provision of financial support and tools and proper time allocation; and a call for psychological and medical assessment or treatment to SPED children. The results implied that the implementation of MFAT must be improved as well as the support from the colleagues, Heads, DepEd officials, and parents. Also, the study gives awareness, insights, and suggestions that may be useful for the improvement of MFAT and giving interventions.

Keywords: lived experiences, untrained, Multi-Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT), qualitative-phenomenological research, Tagum City Division

INTRODUCTION

Public schools are institutions wherein heterogeneous and diverse learners are placed, developed, and taught together in classrooms. Also, the education system of the Philippines had enforced inclusive education in schools as it aims to provide basic education to all Filipino learners. Because of that, it is inevitable to have at least one or two students who have learning difficulties in one classroom. As stipulated in the DepEd Oder No. 29, s. 2018, teachers assess Grade 1 learners enrolled in regular schools, who may have exhibit developmental advancement or delays or have manifestations of learning disability. However, as teachers conducted the assessment, they encountered issues and challenges in implementing, making interventions, and teaching the learners.

In Thailand, one of the studies reported that some factors that affect the ineffectiveness of the conducted assessment of Thai teachers in their classrooms are the constraints of time, excessive paperwork, lack of confidence and knowledge of teachers on assessment which can cause a negative effect on their practices. They still had difficulty applying what they learned about the assessment on their actual practices in the classroom (Narathakoon et al., 2020). On the other hand, in Singapore, the learners at the primary level with developmental delay are assessed using their assessment tool. However, educators had encountered barriers in conducting the assessment tool such as lack of time, resources, training of teachers, no further follow-up from specialists, and inactive support of the parents (Choo et al., 2019). In another study in Malaysia, during the conduct of the paper-based assessment tool in detecting learning disabilities of primary learners, teachers had faced issues and constraints. Like the assessment was time-consuming, limited only to the particular type of disabilities, inappropriate to some learners, stressful on the part of teachers, untargeted objectives, incomplete/unfinished activities, and no suggestions of interventions were mentioned (Rasli et al., 2018).

In the Philippines, the education and the government had expanded their effort to inclusive education program by accelerating the screening and assessment of learners. They issued DepEd Order No. 29, s. 2018 entitled Policy on the Implementation of Multi- Factored Assessment Tool. However, most participating teachers struggled to specify what support might help the learners better to meet their needs. Also, not all public grade 1 teachers had attended the training on MFAT, so many had not understood the concept and process of the assessment. Aside from that, they lacked knowledge about the disabilities of learners. With that, teachers tended to get unreliable results of the assessment and it affected their attitude toward the program (Kirby, 2018).

In schools in Tagum City Division, Grade 1 teachers were obliged to conduct the Multi-Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT) to selected learners. However, some teachers had encountered challenges and difficulties in implementing the MFAT, such as having insufficient knowledge about the proper qualification of learners that need to undergo the said assessment, lack of understanding about the assessment tool, and the impractical process of conducting it. Moreover, some teachers expressed that the result of the assessment tend to be biased and lacking because of the inappropriateness of it to some learners and no futher diagnosis for others who were identified with learning needs. That was because they could not address properly the needs of the learners since lack of support and materials given to them.

There have been researches related to this study, but I had not read any studies that specifically dealt in implementing MFAT using a qualitative phenomenological approach in the local setting. With this, I prompted to conduct this study which focused on the lived experiences, challenges, and perceptions of grade 1 teachers on the implementation of the Multi-Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT). Moreover, the findings of this study may give awareness to other teachers, educational administrators, and DepEd officials about having appropriate and further assessment for grade 1 learners who exhibit various developmental/learning abilities and their lived experiences in implementing the MFAT. Further, this would also help other grades 1 teachers with similar experiences

to gain insights and suggestions as to what strategic solutions may be useful in improving the assessment and their teaching instructions, giving appropriate assessment, and providing the needs of the learners.

Thus, this study was in need to conduct in order to address the concerns and issues of teachers and come up with useful recommendations that could be helpful to grade 1 teachers in enhancing the teaching instructions and the improvement of the implementation of the program. Also, it was to address immediately and correctly the needs of the learners especially those who were identified with needs. It would help them effectively develop their domains in learning that would greatly affect their success as mainstream learners and individuals.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore and understand the lived experiences of untrained Grade 1 teachers on the implementation of Multi-Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT) in teaching learners. It focused on challenges, insights, and perceptions about experiences of the fourteen (14) teachers in Tagum City Division in implementing the tool and giving interventions to the learners.

At this stage in the research, MFAT was generally defined as the screening tool used by grade one teachers to gather information on learner's strengths, needs, learning styles, and capacities, and other educational concerns like learning disabilities and special needs. This tool was imposed by Department of Education and implemented by grade 1 public elementary teachers.

Research Question

1. What are the experiences of the untrained Grade 1 teachers on the implementation of Multi-Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT) in teaching learners?
2. How do teachers cope with the different issues and challenges in the implementation of MFAT?
3. What are the insights of the untrained Grade 1 teachers regarding the implementation of MFAT that can be shared to other teachers, educational administrators, and the Division Office?

Theoretical Lens

The concept and idea of this study was gleaned from Albert Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1997). It referred to the confidence of a person's ability to carry out behaviors required to produce specific achievements in results. Self-efficacy represented confidence and ability to control one's own motivation, actions, and social environment (Forsyth & Carey, 2009).

In this study, the Self-Efficacy Theory supported it as the Department has mandated the schools to conduct the assessment in grade 1 by all grade 1 teachers, some of them were not confident to implement well the tool to their students since not all were trained on how to utilize the tool and assess the students. Untrained teachers were not knowledgeable enough to know the implication of every indicator in the assessment tool to their students. Thus, some of the teachers were unconfident to conduct the assessment in their class because of a lack of knowledge and training.

Further, this study was related to educative model Inclusive Education (IE), which students with disabilities were placed in the regular classroom setting to learn the age-appropriate curriculum in the same classroom environment as their nondisabled peers. This principle emphasized that all learners with learning disabilities can be taught in a regular classroom to the fullest scope as possible, and they were only excluded in regular classroom setting if the support services cannot be given (Greene, 2017).

This model backed the present study as the education system has followed inclusive learning wherein learners with learning disabilities and special needs were mainstreamed in regular classes in all public schools. With that situation, grade 1 teachers were mandated to assess as early as possible some identified learners using the assessment tool given by the department to make interventions and able to give proper learning opportunities to them.

Moreover, another concept that supported it is Tomlinson's Model of Differentiation Instruction which advocated for responsive teaching that attends to students' variance in readiness, interests, and learning profiles. Teachers understand, know, and observe the similarities, differences, strengths, and weaknesses of the learner and use information and results to plan instruction (Robb, 2020).

This was related to what the assessment tool is for. As the teachers identified learners who exhibit developmental advancement or delays or have learning disabilities, they needed to differentiate the instructions for them to meet the needs and helped the students develop and improved their learning abilities accordingly.

Moreover, this study was viewed on Zone of Proximal Development which was developed by Soviet psychologist and social constructivist Lev Vygotsky. This concept referred to the gap of the performance of the learners on what they can do with and without help, guidance, and encouragement from more knowledgeable persons (McLeod, 2019).

In this theory, since the teachers could identify the level of learning capabilities of learners through assessment, they would make interventions. Through that, they could give appropriate assistance and learning activities to the learners according to their level until they can perform independently and master the skills. Also, by conducting remedial classes wherein teachers have individualized instruction to teach and give support to their needs until they were able to perform the task and skill independently.

This study was also supported on DepEd Order No. 29, s. 2018 in which it aimed to determine in public elementary schools those enrolled grade 1 learners who may exhibit advance or delay learning skills or manifest learning disorder. This was entitled Policy on the Implementation of the Multi-Factored Evaluation Tool. Moreover, the assessment tool used by the grade 1 teachers in identifying learners with special educational needs and to assist them for instructional planning and educational placement of learners (Llego, 2020).

Hence, this study was aligned to the Inclusive Education program specifically under the mentioned DepEd Order. The teachers' attitude towards it could affect the effectiveness of the program. If the teachers developed self-efficacy towards the utilization of the said screening tool, they likely motivated and confident to use and implement well the tool and in giving the interventions to learners. For doing so, they could help the identified learners in developing their learning abilities by providing differentiated instructions, scaffolding, and appropriate learning opportunities.

METHODOLOGY

This part explains a comprehensive description as to how the study would be conducted about the lived experiences of public elementary teachers on the implementation of Multi Factored Assessment Tool in teaching learners. This chapter includes a presentation of the research design, research participants, role of the researcher, the data sources, data collection procedure, data analysis, the trustworthiness of the study, and the ethical consideration.

Research Design

This study was qualitative in form. I employed qualitative research in which according to Creswell (2014), this research design was primarily used to describe, explore and understand the common lived experiences of individuals toward a phenomenon or social issue. In addition, this approach involved interviews, focus group discussions, documents, records, and notes in collecting data and analysis. It was used to collect and analyze generated insights from individuals or people about the research questions (Hameed, 2020). Thus, qualitative research was particularly dealt with interpretation and convene non-numerical data in understanding the situation of persons and the social environment (Adedoyin, 2020).

This study used qualitative research approach for it aimed to explore and understand the experiences of grade one teachers who had problems regarding the implementation of MFAT in teaching learners. Further, this study gathered non-numerical data through interviews, group discussion, recordings, and notes. This was participated by 14 untrained grade 1 public elementary teachers from Tagum City wherein seven (7) teachers for virtual IDI and another seven (7) for FGD. It was to gather the data and responses from the participants about their standpoints, challenges, experiences, and coping mechanism toward the problem in implementing MFAT.

Moreover, Creswell (2013) defined phenomenology as an approach to qualitative study that concentrates on the commonality of a lived experience within a specific group. The basic aim of the method was to arrive at a definition of the essence of the phenomenon. It was being supported by Waters (2017) who stated that phenomenological research is a study that attempts to understand peoples' perspectives and understanding of a particular situation or phenomenon. Furthermore, this kind of research design allowed the participants to express their personal insights, experiences, opinions, and subjectivity towards the phenomenon during interview. Also, it gave importance to the participants' perceptions and interpretation. Hence, a phenomenological research design was useful for knowing in-depth problems and for discovering the hidden concerns and voices of the persons involved (Pathak, 2017).

In this study, a phenomenological design was employed to understand and describe the standpoints of the actual experiences of the untrained grade 1 teachers from Tagum City Division in implementing MFAT in teaching their learners. It aimed to gather direct information from the participants about their experiences through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The researcher conducted IDI and FGD through online platforms like Zoom or Google Meet due to pandemic. The questions that were asked during IDI and FGD were based on research questions which were about the experiences, standpoints, insights, and coping mechanisms of the participants toward the problem. Through that, this approach enabled the researcher to gather reliable and relevant data and responses from the participants. The data gathered were treated, analyzed, and thematized to come up with substantial results and formulate interpretation, conclusions, and recommendations. Thus, the researcher used the phenomenological research design because it was the appropriate method to gather the information and experiences of the participants regarding the utilization of MFAT to their learners.

Research Participants

According to Creswell (2013) a phenomenological study is conducted with a heterogeneous group should have a minimum of 3 to a maximum of 15 individuals.

In this study, there were 14 participants teaching grade 1 level in different schools in Tagum City Division. I had seven (7) participants for the virtual in-depth interview (IDI) and another seven (7) participants for the virtual focus group discussion (FGD) to share their experiences and insights in implementing of MFAT. The participants were recruited through an online by sending a letter of permission to ask them to be the participants in this research study. Then, the objectives and the methodology of this study were explained to them so that they were guided during the interview.

I employed purposive sampling in determining my participants. The purposive sampling involved selecting from a wide range related to the subject of the research. This method of sampling was useful when not taking a random sample (Etikan, 2016). I selected participants who have the knowledge about the phenomenon and qualified in the selection criteria of the study.

The pre-inclusion criteria of this study were based on the following dimensions: (1) They are grade 1 public elementary teachers. Also, (2) the participants had two-year of experience in implementing MFAT. Lastly, (3) participants should be untrained teachers in utilizing the MFAT. On the other hand, the exclusion criteria were the following: (1) Grade 1 teachers who had attended the training on MFAT. Another, (2) grade 1 teachers who have no or one year experience in implementing MFAT.

Data Analysis

The data of this qualitative phenomenological research was examined using coding and thematic analysis. According to Smith and Davies (2010) as cited by Theron (2015) coding is a method to organize the data so that underlying messages portrayed by the data may become clearer to the researcher. Also, Charmaz (2006) defined coding as a significant connection between gathering and explaining the meaning of the data or information. Researchers use code as a descriptive concept or label to get the main content or meaning of the data.

In the study, the data were gathered for transcription and analysis after IDI and FGD. The data were analyzed by reading the participants' transcription responses. Then, from the transcribed data, coding was utilized to organize and group together the common terms from participants' responses. Also, this served as the basis for identifying and formulating core ideas and major themes that emerged out from the participants' experiences in implementing MFAT. By doing so, the results were easily summarized by the researcher and the readers can understand the study.

Thematic analysis is a method for the systematic identification, arrangement, and insight of meaning patterns (themes) through a dataset. Thematic analysis helped the researcher to see and make sense of collective or mutual meanings and experiences by focusing on context in a dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Then, a thematic analysis was done in identifying the different major themes from the core ideas of the participants' responses that emerge from the four main questions and sub-questions of the study. Interpretation was done afterward. The results of data analysis were the basis for formulating the conclusion, recommendation, and implications of this research study.

Trustworthiness of the Study

The four criteria that should be considered and employed in qualitative research in pursuit of a trustworthy study were credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 as cited by Shenton, 2004).

Credibility is considered as an important factor in establishing trustworthiness. (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 as cited by Shenton, 2004). According to Merriam (1995), the credibility deals with the congruency of findings with the realities. To establish credibility in this study, the following concrete measures were employed: iterative questioning, triangulation of methodology and member checking (Shenton, 2004).

Iterative questioning is utilized by the researchers to ask probing and rephrased questions related to the research study to gather and extract detailed and rich data (Shenton, 2004). It was supported by Lincoln and Guba (1985) who stated that iterative questioning refers to the systematic and repetitive process of asking questions.

Iterative questioning was employed in this research study by asking probing and rephrased questions to the participants to have them elaborate their answers and gain more ideas. In this manner, the purpose of the study was attained by gathering comprehensive and detailed data from them during the virtual interview. However, before the interview, the participants were informed that I would ask questions about their experiences in implementing MFAT. With that, the participants had ideas as to what the interview was all about.

Triangulation of Methodology is used wherein different methods are present in the study like focus group discussion (FGD) and in-depth interview (IGD) to attain more wide range and comprehensive information (Patton, 1999 as cited by Carter et al., 2014). In order to reduce biases, ensure validity, and achieve significant results, triangulation is employed with the involvement of different participants from various organizations or sources (Shenton, 2004).

In this study, I utilized the triangulation of methods such as focus group discussion (FGD) and in-depth interview (IDI). The data gathered were triangulated to attain a deeper understanding, relevant and reliable data regarding the experiences of the participants in implementing MFAT in teaching learners. Out of 14 participants, I had seven (7) participants for in-depth interview and the remaining seven (7) were for FGD or focus group discussion. The IDI and FGD were conducted via online platforms like Google Meet or Zoom.

Member checking is considered as the significant provision that is utilized to strengthen a study's credibility. Participants may also be asked to read the transcript of dialogues that they have taken part in (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 as cited by Pandey & Patnaik, 2014). Also, Merriam (1995) further elaborates that not only about taking data collected from the study participants but also the tentative interpretations of these data are returned to the individuals from whom they were derived and to inquire whether the interpretations are plausible.

Member checking was done in this research study. I informed the participants that they could read, assess, disapprove, modify, or check the transcripts of dialogues and the results. I had sent back to them the transcriptions to verify whether the transcribed statements were correct and may suggest changes if there were misreported statements.

Dependability ensures that the findings of a research study are consistent and reliable. The processes of the research study are documented and allow other persons from outside of the study to audit, follow, check, and validate (Sandelowski, 1986, Polit et al., 2006, Streubert, 2007 as cited by Moon et al., 2016). The provision of detailed processes of the study enables the future researcher to use it as their reference/repeat the work. To establish dependability, I employed the following concrete measures: overlapping methods/triangulation, in-depth methodological description, and audit trail (Shenton, 2004).

Overlapping methods use carefully planned methodological triangulation or multiples data gathering procedures such as in-depth interview, group discussion, and questionnaires. It is used to create overlapping data to check its validity (Brown, 2005). Also, it is used to ensure that the findings generated out from the data collected using the different methods are consistent. (Pandey & Patnaik, 2014).

To address the dependability of the study, I employed overlapping methods such as in-depth interview (IDI) and focus group discussion (FGD) using. During that time, I used an interview guide to triangulate and ensured the consistency of the responses of the participants. Using IDI and FGD, it reduced the subjectivity of the result and to make sure that the findings were from the outcomes and based on the experiences and responses of the participants. The group discussion and interviews were conducted via Google Meet or Zoom. The audio or video recordings were utilized to retrieve information from the responses of the grade 1 teachers.

The presentation of the study's in-depth methodological description helps the readers to check and assess the extent of the practices of the research. Moreover, it allows them to check the effectiveness and have detailed understanding of the methods used. The research design, its implication, and the details of gathering the data are included and presented (Shenton, 2004).

In this study, I established well the dependability by providing the in-depth methodological description that could give a clear presentation of the study conducted. In Chapter 3 of this research, I explained thoroughly the data gathering procedures and the research design. Also, the strategies used and all research practices like virtual interviews were reported in detail by ensuring audio or video recordings. Through that, readers could understand well and adapt the study's research methods and practices to their corresponding settings.

Audit trails are performed to keep a record of the processes used in a study. The research steps at the beginning of the study to the reporting of the results are described and presented clearly through an audit trail (Pandey & Patnaik, 2014). Also, Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that an audit trail allows the readers to know the step-by-step of the research through the description of the procedures and the decisions made.

I utilized the audit trail in this study to emphasize the steps of data analysis in making the decisions for this study. I ensured that all the recordings of the responses and narrations of the participants taken during the virtual interview via Google Meet or Zoom were transcribed and translated carefully. The findings were taken from the participants' answers and not on the biases of the researcher. Also to ensure that the results were based on legitimate sources, all the recording were kept and checked. Everything in my study were analyzed, assessed, and evaluated thoroughly by my thesis adviser who was an expert in this field.

Confirmability refers to the objectivity, the similarity of statements taken from two or more individuals that confirms the precision, validity, and significance of the results (Elo et al., 2014). The results must be proven by the researchers that they are related to the conclusions, can be observed, and repeated as a process (Moon et al., 2016). Also, confirmability assures that the findings of the inquiry are supported well by gathered data. To establish the confirmability of the study, an in-depth methodological description and audit trail are employed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 as cited by Shenton, 2004).

This study established confirmability by providing an in-depth methodological description. It allows the results of the research to be scrutinized. The researcher must present the steps and procedures of the study to ensure that the results are based on the experiences and preferences of the research participants rather than those of the researcher (Moon et al., 2016).

I kept the recordings from Google Meet or Zoom during the virtual interview to use them as legitimate sources wherein the research panel and adviser could scrutinize and verify if the interpretations and conclusions were accurate and based on participants' experiences and answers and not merely from researcher's preferences and biases. Also the data, tools, documentation, and written notes were readily available for checking and validating the findings and results to establish the confirmability of this research study.

Furthermore, I employed the audit trail to establish well the confirmability of this research study. I presented the research steps taken during the conduct of the study. The data gathered during the virtual interviews and discussion were transcribed and translated carefully. Only the recorded responses and answers of the participants, not the biases of the researcher, were the basis in formulating results and interpretation of the study. All the data were checked, verified, and analyzed thoroughly by my adviser, Dr. Exelsis Deo A Deloy, who is an expert in this field. Then, the results and processes were presented using the tables.

Transferability as stated by Merriam (1998) cited by Pandey and Patnaik (2014) emphasized that the findings of the study can be transferred and applied to other settings or wider populations. This is supported by Suter (2014) who stated that transferability refers to the degree to which the findings and the problems described in the study are applicable to the other contexts and practices. Furthermore, the researcher's responsibility is to ensure that adequate contextual information of the research work is presented well to address the transferability of the research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 as cited by Pandey & Patnaik, 2014). To establish transferability in this study, I employed the following concrete measures: a thick description of the research processes for ease of transfer and a detailed description of the phenomenon (Shenton, 2004).

Thick description is described as a way of measuring the validity of the study by describing the phenomenon comprehensively and in detail. Also, the conclusions drawn in the study should be transferable to other situations, settings, individuals, and contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 as cited by Pandey & Patnaik, 2014). Then, the strategies in collecting the data and analysis must be presented thoroughly to provide a clear and accurate view of the methods used in this study (Creswell, 2014).

To address transferability in the study, I provided a thick description of the research processes in which the methods and the results of data were presented and explained thoroughly. The other details such as the audit trail were included in the appendices so that readers could evaluate, able to transfer the data to other contexts, and serve as their reference for future research. The researcher kept the soft copies of the documents in the study.

To strengthen well the transferability of a study, the researcher must provide a clear and detailed description of the context or the phenomenon, selection method, experiences of the participants, and the collection of data and analysis (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004 as cited by Moon et al., 2016). By doing that, readers would have a proper understanding of the study (Shenton, 2004).

Besides, I provided a clear detailed description of the lived experiences of untrained grade 1 teachers in implementing MFAT, their contexts, and processes of data collection and analysis. The transcribed responses of the participants were presented in the study particularly in Chapter 4. With that, the readers could understand properly the phenomenon being studied as well as the challenges, issues, and standpoints of the participants. Through the presentation of the findings, readers could understand well the study, relate, and compare it to their situations. Also, other researchers could transfer the data for future reference.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical consideration is one of the important aspects in conducting research and it requires that the researchers must protect the right and dignity of the participants (Akaranga et al., 1994). To establish ethical consideration, I followed the ethical standards stated in the Belmont Report (1979) as cited by Orb et al. (2019) which were respect for persons, beneficence, and justice.

The first principle is **respect for persons**. This principle gives serious consideration and acknowledges the participants as autonomous people who are capable of expressing their ideas, experiences, and make their own decisions. Also, some of the aspects of this principle are the inclusion of informed consent during the conduct of the study and the confidentiality of the data. Generally, researchers are expected to obtain an agreement for the study from the participants (Pelling, 2019).

To establish the principle of respect for person in a study, researchers must utilize the informed consent form during the conduct of the research. Informed consent forms are those that participants sign before they engage in research. This form acknowledges that participants' rights will be protected during data collection (Creswell, 2014).

In this study, I asked the participants to sign the informed consent form wherein it consisted of a certificate of consent and participation information sheet. The form served as proof of their voluntary participation. It was sent online through an e-mail or google drive link wherein they could download it. Then, I asked them to send it back to me through an e-mail. The participants had affixed their e-signatures in ICF and received a personal copy of it.

Since there is a pandemic, the conduct of IDI and FGD was via Google Meet or Zoom. I asked permission before the interview to record our whole conversation. It was one way of showing respect to the participants since they had a choice whether

they permitted it or not. The permission for the recording was included already in ICF to inform them ahead about the conditions of their participation during virtual interviews and group discussion.

Moreover, I ensured the privacy of the participants during virtual IDI and FGD. I encouraged them to use headphones and be alone at their respective venues to ensure that nobody could hear our conversation except us. The interview was conducted only during their preferred time and date to ensure that there was no conflict in their schedule. More so, I established rapport to stimulate a good discussion, and they could express their thoughts freely and comprehensively about the topic. I ethically treated them and respected their answers.

Besides, I assured that the narrations and personal opinions of the participants were taken with respect and treated following only the purpose of the study. Afterwards, I sent back the transcription for them to verify whether the transcribed statements were correct and they may suggest changes if there were misreported statements.

Another way to establish respect for persons is by informing the participants about their right to withdraw from the study. They should be informed by the researcher that they have the right to discontinue their participation in the study. Then, they should not be required to disclose any explanation to the researcher (Shenton, 2004). In this study, I informed the participants about their right to withdraw from participating in the study. Further, no coercion or begging happened if the participants decided to withdraw.

Confidentiality refers to modifying or changing the participants' personal information in the data. It is to protect the privacy of the participants while collecting and analyzing the data (Allen, 2017). In connection to that, confidentiality is also related to data protection. Data protection aims to guarantee the right of individuals to privacy. It ensures that the personal data of participants are safe from unforeseen and unintended use. It includes measuring collection, access to data, communication, and usage of data (Wilms, 2012).

To establish confidentiality and data protection in the study, I encouraged the participants before the virtual interview to change their account names or make a new e-mail address with a code name. It was to avoid exposing their information during video recording that may harm them. Further, I ensured anonymity in all their transcribe narratives and answers by using code names. Also, any of their information in the form were hidden.

The second principle is **beneficence**. This principle requires the researchers not to give unnecessary harm but to ensure doing good to the research participant (Pelling, 2019). It is supported by Orb et al. (2019) statement that a second ethical principle closely linked with research is beneficence—doing good for others and preventing harm. Hence, it addressed to not harm and the need to maximize well-being.

To establish the beneficence, I assured the participants that their identities were protected and hidden to avoid the minimal risk in participating in this study like being afraid, ashamed, and embarrassed. For me to be able to that, I encouraged them to change their account name to a code name or alias so that during recording their identity were not exposed. More so, the grade 1 teachers were benefited in the sense that their voices, challenges, and difficulties in implementing the MFAT were heard. Hence, this study gave opportunity to the participants to express their ideas and insights on how to change or improve the program and find solutions to the issues that arose in their respective schools.

As a researcher, I ensured that my participants were treated with the utmost care and protection by conducting our interview online to ensure their safety during this pandemic time. Further, the results were informed to them. Also, it was presented comprehensively in the study in Chapters 4 and 5 so other researchers and readers would know the outcome, then may use it as a reference for future researches.

To ensure more the beneficence of the study, I made sure that the participants were informed about the result of the study. All the findings and results were disseminated to them after the data analysis. I directly sent a copy of their transcribed responses to their respective e-mail. Lastly, I ensured that throughout the process of sharing and disseminating the information, their rights were protected and accommodated properly.

As a researcher, I ensured that the data to be collected were kept safely in a password-protected folder. Data were stored in two or three devices to ensure back-up copies. However, no one could access the data except the principal researcher unless the participants permitted to let the other parties like my adviser and researcher panels check and verify it. The gathered data would be kept for three (3) years after the completion of the research study. After that, the researcher would destroy it to prevent unauthorized persons to access the data.

The third principle is **justice**. This principle aims to have a fair distribution of benefits and burdens to the individuals involved in the research. The responsibility of the researchers is to make sure that the means used to select research participants are equitable. The participants who can benefit in the study must not be excluded without reasonable reasons (Pelling, 2019).

To address justice, I made sure that in selecting participants, it was fair, justifiable, and no bias. Also, I assured that those identified participants were qualified based on the selection criteria of the study. They decided for the time and date of our interview that was done via Google Meet or Zoom Meeting.

Furthermore, the participants were given due credits for all their contributions to the conduct of the study. Also, I did not allow my participants to spend money on our virtual interview. If the participants had no stable internet connection, I gave them enough load for them to have a data. Aside from that, I gave token to the participants as a sign of recognition for their efforts in the study.

The questions that I asked during our virtual interview and group discussion were relevant and anchored to the purpose and research questions of the study. After transcribing the data gathered, I sent a copy of the transcriptions through e-mail to the participants for them to validate and modify their answers. Also, I would inform them about the outcome of the study.

Lastly, the principle of data privacy, advocated by Bryan and Bell (2007), emphasized that participants should be treated with care and no harm, prioritized their dignity, ask consent prior to the conduct of the study, protect their privacy, ensure anonymity, participants should participate according to the conditions stated on the informed consent, no exercise of coercion or pressure and adherence of Data Privacy Act (R.A. 10173).

To establish the principle of data privacy, I made sure that the participants received and signed the informed consent form before the virtual interview as proof of their voluntary participation. The signing of consent form was done through e-mail by sending a scanned or soft copy to the participants. Moreover, I informed them that they have a right to withdraw from participating in the study at any stage. Besides, they participated based on the consent. Their identities were maintained confidential by using code names in the statements. I ensured to keep safely the data collected from the participants in a password protected folder. Only the principal researcher could access the data unless the participants permitted to let the other parties, like the adviser and the researcher panel, check and verify the data. Data were stored in two or three devices to assure back-up copies. Also, it would be kept for three (3) years after the completion of the research study. After that, the researcher would destroy it to prevent unauthorized persons to access the data.

In a nutshell, the participation of the selected untrained grade 1 teachers and their experiences, ideas, and insights were significant in this endeavor. Hence, the above-cited steps and concrete measures in the trustworthiness and ethical consideration were treated and addressed properly throughout the conduct of the study.

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the study about the lived experiences of the untrained public elementary teachers on the implementation of Multi-Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT) in teaching learners. The responses of the participants of the study gleaned through online in-depth interviews and focus group discussion. I analyzed thoroughly the data and extracted the core ideas with the help of the expert. The core ideas were identified from the transcription and themes were constructed afterward. These include the coping mechanisms, suggestions, and recommendation of the participants on the implementation of Multi-Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT).

Experiences of Untrained Grade 1 Teachers on the Implementation of Multi-Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT) in Teaching Learners

After analyzing the responses of the participants about their experiences on the implementation of MFAT, six (6) major themes emerged: (1) meeting learners with learning and special needs; (2) observing learners who lack focus and energy to tasks; (3) lacking information and training on the nature of assessment; (4) encountering in-denial and uncooperative parents; (5) having time constraints and inconsistent assessment schedules; and (6) having difficulties in finding and preparing the location.

Meeting Learners with Learning and Special Needs

In a classroom, it is inevitable to have learners with difficulties in academics. In order to screen and identify them, an assessment tool is used. As the participants conducted the MFAT in their classroom, they met learners who had difficulties in numeracy, reading, writing, or psychomotor skills and with special needs. In short, they encountered learners with learning difficulties and special needs.

In relation to this, IDI-02 shared:

> "Ano jud siya maam ba murag naa jud siyay something jud sa iyaha maam. Bale ang iyahang behavior kanang maka ano siya *maam…* maka basa siya pero pag dili siya makasabot--- pananglitan naa kay ipabuhat sa iyaha, mag instruction ka, dili siya makasabot maam pero makabasa siya. Then ang iya pung kuan kulang niya kanang dili kaayo siya—pagsulat niya dili siya ka—ang iyang fine motors kuan dili siya kagunit ug tarong sa iyang lapis pero maka basa siya *maam.*"

> (There was something with the student, ma'am. The behavior of the student was quite confusing. He could read but could not comprehend. Then, his fine motor skills were not yet developed since he could not write and hold the pencil properly, but he could read.)

Other participants shared same experiences as to others,

> *"Unsaon* nako pag-explain, like example like sa writing sa bata, writing or sa iyang psychomotor something, dili pa siya mu level sa iyang ka level sa akong klase. So nagahimo ko ug something. Kato siya maam and uban niya classmates kabalo naman musulat sa letter A. Siya dili pa, maglisod pa *siya.*" (IDI-04)

> (How should I explain this, like for example in his/her writing or psychomotor, he/she was not yet at the same level as his/her classmates. So, I did something to improve it. His/her classmates can already write the letter A, but he/she was still having difficulty of doing it.)

> "Pero kasagaran man gud sa MFAT maam dili siya murag sa gamay lang ang sa writing. Kasagaran man gud ato kato ila bitawng ... sa gani ngalan ana maam kanang mga motor skills kasagaran ang sa *MFAT.*" (IDI-01)

> (But usually in MFAT, it has only little activities for writing skills. Most of it were measuring the psychomotor skills.)

Meanwhile, IDI-07 emphasized that:

> "Possible reasons, kay lahi man gud mga uh- *intelligence ang mga bata so… lahi man sila ug* kuan uy kanang mao nang ma dugay siya kay lahi lahi silag behavior. Lahi lahi jud ay, inig assess

nimo. Naay— part ato sa nga time nga sa pag assess nimo ato na area, paspas. Paspas siya. Pag abot napod didto sa Mathematical wala na jud, perti na gyud siyang dugaya. Naa puy time nga didto sa writing, dili na gyud muhulat, pa hangad hangad na lang jud. Lahi lahi man jud, lahi lahi ug *attitude."*

(The possible reasons are the learners' different intelligences. That is why is takes longer time because they have different behaviors. It was really different especially while assessing them. There were parts in the assessment that were quick or easy for them to finish. But when they were in Mathematics part, they were very slow. There was also some time in writing area, they could not bear it. They just ignored the tasks. The learners' attitudes were all different.)

Then, IDI-05 shared that:

"Ah, so far po maam kay - most of identified learners maam kana ganing hmm... dili man pud sila *ingon jud maam nga kanang as in kahinaan jud gani, ana pero… need lang jud gihapon sila ug* kanang intervention maam para naay development *sa ilahang … learning."*

(So far, most of the identified learners were not exactly slow regarding this matter but they still needed intervention so that there would be development in their learning.)

Lastly, IDI-03 said that:

"Another is, kuan pud maam, naa pud koy na experience sa mga, murag matawag nato nga special child ana *gani....* Ang iyang deprensya sa hearing, kung asa siya, iadto ba sa doctor, ma assist ba niya or ana kay mahibal-an man nimo nganong dili siya kadungog. Seeing niya matingala ka, kani nabali bali, unsa dyslexia ba siya or unsa ba siya. And then iyang speaking kung medyo bulol so kuan ba siya so kana madala dala ra na nato kay di naman jud na nato ma kuan kung kuan jud diay iyang *dila."*

(Another instance, I had also experienced assessing children with disabilities or special needs. The difference was that the learners could not hear. Did she need assistance from doctor in terms of hearing problems? Also, the difficulty in seeing or dyslexic tendencies, and the student's incapability to speak properly especially stuttering since we could not control those.)

Hence, as the participants implemented the MFAT, they encountered different problems and difficulties in the learners.

Observing Learners Who Lack Focus and Energy to Tasks
During the implementation of MFAT, one of the challenges encountered by the participants was the behavior of the learners. They observed that the learners tend to be lack focus, inattentive, unruly, hyperactive, tired, unprepared, uncooperative, and uncontrollable.
As IDI-02 shared that:

"Oh, ano siya kanang wala siyay focus tapos *kaning...* dugay kaayo mi nahuman kay dili man siya sa—kanang dili siya maminaw magtuman ra siya unsay iyang buhaton. Magtuman siya unsa—oh mag instruction ka dili siya maminaw tapos wala siyay eye to eye contact and then magtuman siya unsay iyang buhaton dugay kaayo mi nahuman *niya...* Maluoy gani ko kanang iya gung, bata gud, *kay kanang pag magsulat nami no…kanang dili siya sa wala moody siya. Dili siya magsulat* usahay mag sige siyag *suroy suroy."*

(The learner did not have focus. We usually took longer time because the student would not listen, and she/he just did whatever he/she wants. If you gave instruction, he/she just ignored it and he/she could not make eye to eye contact with you. We took long time to finish. I felt pity for that learner because when we had written exercise, he/she was not in the mood to do so. The learner could not write, he/she would just wander around.)

Further, IDI-06 said that:

"Kay kung kuanon pud man gud ug kanang after class na kanang kapoy naman na sila gud. Unya whole day biya ang grade one ha, whole day biya mi ato that time. Unya mawala na na siya sa iyahang focus kay ang huna huna ana niya, hala ako nalay nabilin, unya ang uban kay nanguli na, unya kapoy napud kaayo na sa iyaha nga *part."*

(If we do it after class, it was tiring for them already. And grade one classes were whole day that time. He/she lost focus, his/her mindset was like I am the only one left, and the rest were already leaving and that was exhausting for his/her part.)

Likewise, IDI-04 also experienced same thing as she stated that:

> *"After class luya na siya, di na siya ganahan usahay mu participate. Dili sa tanan bata ing ana* assess ha, pero naa gyuy bata nga makaingon ka nga, ay gikapoy naman tingali ni. Dili siya *fully…* fully prepared na magpa assess ay *kanang…* dili siya fully kanang ready nga maminaw sa imo, mutuman kay kapoy naman *siya, gutom naman siya."*

> (After class, he/she lost interest, and he/she did not want to participate anymore. Not all students were like that during assessment though, but there were certainly some students who you could tell if they were tired already. The student was not fully prepared to assess. He/she was not giving his/her full attention to you because she/he was already tired or hungry.)

Also, IDI-05 supported that:

> *"I* encountered ah most of identified learners maam not willing to cooperate that that is why maam I need to make another way kana ganing para ma motivate pud gani ang mga *bata."*

> (I encountered most identified learners that were not willing to cooperate, that was why I needed to make another way to motivate the learners.)

Lastly, IDI-01 claimed that:

> *"Unya* lisod biya ang mga bata karon kay ang behavior nila dili na gyud nimo *ma…* ang uban dili gyud nimo ma control *ba."*

> (And children are hard to deal nowadays because of their uncontrollable behaviors.)

Based on the responses of the participants, they encountered problems on the behaviors of their learners during the conduct of the assessment that had greatly affected the implementation of MFAT in their respective classrooms.

Lacking Information and Training on the Nature of Assessment

One of the factors to have a successful implementation of a certain program is the proper dissemination of the information and its nature to the implementers. Based on the responses of the participants, many of them lacked of information and knowledge about assessment as well as on how to handle the learners with special needs since they were not included in the training for MFAT.

This concept is linked to the responses of IDI-02 who expressed her experiences:

> *"Kulang jud—*murag kulang pa jud ug kanang need pajud jud ug information about ani MFAT kay sila gud didto nga nag seminar mga pila to ka ano ang *ila…* kami kay kuan lang gud to diretso mi gipakuan mi dayon. Wala man mi nag seminar gi tagaan lang mi nya ug katong guide unsaon pag conduct ana. So kulang jud ang *ano… experience namo."*

> (It was really lacking information about MFAT since they had several days during their seminars. While us, we immediately conducted the assessment with little knowledge. We did not attend the seminar; we were only given guidelines how to conduct the assessment. So, our experiences were not enough.)

It is supported by IDI-01 as narrated that:

> *"Lisod kaayo mi kay limited amoang knowledge ba kung unsaon namo pag conduct kay wala mi* gyud kabalo unsaon jud proper nga procedure kay nag echo man sa amoa ang naka training... nag train ana pero dili gyud siya ingon nga as in nga pareha gyud sa ilang gibuhat. Walay *mga… kuan lang istorya istorya lang walay nag co… conduct ug workshop ba, wala. So murag dili kaayo…* base lang sa amoang experience nga moa na to amoang gi kuan. Nag gamit nami sa mga gi pang requirement nga mga gamiton sa bata. Pero as of nga magkuan ta ug knowledge on how to conduct sa kuan MFAT, dili gyud enough kay wala man mi kaapil sa training gud. Kung unsa gyud proper procedure in conducting MFAT, murag limited gyud amoa because wala mi na *train."*

> (It was so hard us because we had limited knowledge about how to conduct the MFAT and what are the proper procedure. The trained teachers did the re-echo to us, but it was not the same as what they did there. We just had a chit chat but no proper conduct of workshop. We used the required materials for the learners but in terms of knowledge on how to conduct the MFAT, what are the proper procedure in conducting assessment, it was not enough for us because we were not trained.)

In addition, IDI-06 claimed that:

> "Then isa pud is ang pag handle kay wala man kaayo mi *kanang…* kumbaga seminar or workshop something u*nsaon pag handle sa ing ana nga bata gud… na dili siya enough ba. Ay murag* nakakuan man ata mi ato gi kuanan mi ni maam pero murag dili kaayo siya ingon nga enough *gyud ba… pila rato one day… ana something. Unya dili biya na basta basta no ang pag handle* sa mga bata ing ana. Unsaon nalang, lahi biya jud sa murag mga normal gani nga bata gyud kay lahi lahi biya sila *ug kanang… kanang…* kana siya kay focusan biya jud na nimo nga *bata na."*

> (Another thing was the way they handled it. We did not have seminars or workshop on how to handle the learners with disabilities. I mean, I think we were guided but it was not enough. It was only one day. Then, it was not easy to handle those kinds of learners. Those learners were different from normal children. They needed more attention than usual.)

Another point emhapszied by FGD-01 as stated that:

> "Based on my experience as a grade 1 teacher while ahh during sa implementation sa ng MFAT since ahhh di ako trained ng MFAT, though naay trained teachers sa amoang grade level but then, lahi man gud tong ikaw gyud mismo ang nakapaminaw sa speaker. *Ahhh…* sooo though wala mi na trained but then kailangan mag implement so. First experience is symepre makuratan jud ka as untrained teacher. Pero teachers man jud ta wala tay laing mahimo *mo mo implement."*
> (Based on my experience as a grade one teacher during the implementation of MFAT, though there were trained teacher in our grade level, it was much better if you yourself were able to listen to the speaker. We were not trained but it was compulsory to implement the MFAT. So our first experience was of course, shocked since we were untrained. But we are teachers, we have no choice but to implement.)

FGD-07 agreed that they were untrained in MFAT but had to implement MFAT:

> *"Yes* maam *ahhh…* tinood gyud na sa amoa nga school *aahh…* kung baga dili gyud ko trained na unsa ni person nga naay training ani nga MFAT and murag as far as I *remember…* dili sya klaro nga re-echo para sa akoa then diretso *diretso na."*

> (Yes ma'am, that is true. In our school, we were not trained about MFAT and as far as I remember, that was not a clear re-echo for me. Then we immediately proceeded on assessment.

Hence, FGD-06 confirmed that:

> *"Okay so, first I really find it difficult kay wala man jud koy firsthand training aning MFAT so* mas mayo jud unta to nga naka- na train jud ang tanan kay lahi raman gyud nang re-echo sa na trained jud ka.

> (Okay so first, I really found it difficult because I do not have a firsthand training regarding MFAT. So it is much better if all were trained. It is really different if you have training than just a re-echo.)

Thus, the participants had a hard time implementing the MFAT because they found themselves unknowledgeable about the process and the assessment itself.

Encountering In-denial and Uncooperative Parents

Parental involvement in a child's education plays a vital role in their development. Also, they are considered as partners of the teachers in teaching and molding their holistic aspects. However, in the experiences of the participants during the implementation of MFAT, they encountered parents who were uncooperative, unsupportive, and in denial about their child's needs and difficulties.

In relation to that, IDI-02 shared that:

> *"Naglisod pud ko sa iyaha kay iyang … iyahang parents in denial man gud dili gani accepted na* ano siya. Oh nya wala, dili mag cooperate tapos naay mga time ato nga kadtong after one-week *ato, mag ano na sayo man … kanang usahay kanang mag sundo siya so bisag mga …mga 25* minutes lang naa naman iyang papa nya ako nalang pud siyang pa kuanon. Di nalang pud namo tiwason pagka next napod na kuan kay ang iyang papa man gud kanang in denial. Di siya kasabot sa iyang anak, iya man ganing *ginabunalan."*

> (I also had a hard time with my learner because his/her parents were in denial and refused to accept their child's condition. They did not cooperate and one time, his/her parents arrived too early during our assessment, even if it was just for 25 minutes. I had no choice but to stop and continue

it by tomorrow because his/her father was in denial. He did understand his child, he even abused him/her.)

Also, IDI-01, FGD-04, IDI-06-01 and FGD-01 acclaimed the same experience they said that:

"Naa koy bata nga kana bitawng nabantayan nako nga murag *there's* something wrong. Then ako siyang gipangutana ang parent nga ing ani ing ani ing ani siya sa school, mu ingon man gud ang parent nga, hala dili man siya ing ana sa balay, ana bitaw. Hala dili mana siya ing ana sa balay, ingon ko nga dili gyud pwede sir kay maski pag follow sa instructions maski pagsulat dili jud siya *murag something ing ana…. Ana siya dili jud na… ana ko nga okay raba sa imoha sir nga kuan siya…* ay dili dili kay wala *nako na… mga* ing ana bitaw *maam."* (IDI-01)

(I had a learner before, and I noticed that there was something wrong about him/her. Then, I told the learner's parent that their child acted different at school. The parent said, "my child is not like that at home.". Then I said, "I do not think so because even just by following instruction or writing, he/she could not follow." I asked the parent if it is okay, then he/she said "no" because they had not observed his/her child doing like that. Like that instances ma'am.)

"Ang uban pod katong mga gini*kanan nga… medyo naay unsa ilang mga anak… kanang... dili* sila ano *ba… murag i-*ingana ba *kanang...* denial *sila."* (FGD-04)

(There were some parents with struggling child. It was like they were in denial about it.)

"*Kuan first ang uban man gud parents kay in denial. Naka experience ko ug bata… ay ano man* pud gud siya maam, dili pud na namo na siya ma ingon nga *kanang...* kay murag tama ba ang sa *kanang MFAT kay is kato man tung mga bata diba na kanang... kanang ano ug kana*ng special needs? Ohh... unya naa may uban ba nga kanang in denial nga parents nga dili ing ana ilahang *mga anak. Like kanang klaro kaayo ba nga late kaayo ang anak kana…Lisod siya kay kanang* syempre kanang in denial, dili ka masuportahan sa parents. Ana gud, kung naa kay i-ano sa iyaha mu deny nga ing ana, dili man ing ana akong *anak."* (IDI-06)

(First, some parents were in denial. I experienced having a learner that was different. Am I correct that this MFAT is for the learners with special needs? Yes, then there were some in denial parents that would not believe that their child is having a difficulty. Like it was obvious that the child is a late bloomer. It was hard of course because the parents were in denial, they would not support you. If you had something to say to them, they would still deny their child's problem.)

"Unya kay ano lagi ang parent, may problem ako sa parent kay dili siya opened dili niya kaya ma-accept na yung bata niya, yung anak niya naay kanang ing-ana na difficulty.*"* (FGD-01)

(I had problem with my parent because he/she was not open minded, and he/she could not accept that his/her child has difficulty.)

Correspondingly, FGD-05 expressed that:

"Nya ang ginikanan pod, basi dil- *kapoyon magpabalik so… mao to nga kanang diha lang siya room…* pili ra gyud kaayo ang bata so makita naman siguro nimo maam no nga kini na bata mao jud—mao gyud ni siya ang pinaka hinay sa *among room."*

(And the parent might not want their child to return to school after class, so I just let the learner stayed in the room. There were only few of them so you can really tell if the learner was having a hard time learning in class.)

IDI-07 added that:

"Ah, issues at challenges una kay pag kuha nimo a—pag identify nimo sa bata magpahibalo paman sa ka sa parent imo siyang i—itest so naay *mga...* naa koy parent na okay lang dayon. Naa puy parent na dili *sila musugot."*

(The issues and challenges at first were identifying the child and informing the parents that you had to test him/her. I had parents who accepted and okay with it but there were also some who did not allow.)

Hence, IDI-03 pointed out that some parents had no care and did not assist the learners in their education:

"Kulang siya sa pag assist kay nahibal an nako didto pag ubos sa kinder muana ang teacher nga ay maam ana jud na maam ang mama walay pake, usahay man gud naa pud ang factor sa tong ginikanan, so mao na siya akong mga na experience kanang mag conduct ug MFAT."

(Then, I heard from his/her kinder teacher that the learner was lack of assistance from his/her parents. There were some parents who had no care for their child. Sometimes, the parents were the factor of the child's performance. That was what I had experienced in conducting MFAT.)

Hence, as mentioned by the participants, not all the parents of their identified learners were supportive and cooperative with regards to the assessment. Some dened the results and even contradicted it.

Having Time Constraints, and Inconsistent MFAT Schedules

As the participants implemented the MFAT, two of the problems identified were time and schedule. For them, MFAT needs a lot of time to be completed since it has several parts. Then, they were only given limited days to finish and consolidate the results. That is why, the participants expressed their sentiments to give them enough time and a proper schedule to conduct the assessment so that it would not affect their class, could implement well, and focus solely on the identified learners.

In relation to that, IDI-02 expressed her sentiment:

"Then kulang ug time no kay dili man jud ingon nga katong gi hatag na one-week dili man jud maano gud nimo siya kay kuan man gud jud siya na bata gud naa jud siyay… kinahanglan jud siya… tutukan jud. Then among bata ato is mga 30 plus ata mi mga 34? So kulang ug time."

(Then, there was lack of time because the one-week allotted to us was not enough for the learner that needed more attention. Then our class was consisting of approximately 30 to 34 learners? So it has really lack of time.)

Also, IDI-04 mentioned about having difficulty on completing the assessment in one session, as she said that:
"So far lang jud sa experience namo for two years, kuan lang siya mu kuha lang siyag taas nga time jud sa imong pagtrabaho… Oh naay uban maam nga di jud nimo mahuman ang tibook jud nga… phase sa tools bitaw di nimo siya mahuman ang parts sa tools. Murag imong huna hunaan next... ugma napud. Though dili man namo hutdon gyud no ang parts sa tools no. Ah ugma nalang pud ana ana, sunod napud ani ani. Mao ng sa akoa... ang sa akoa lang ang time jud maoy challenge sa maestra maski sa bata."

(So far with our experience for two years, it was very time consuming for your work. There were some situations where you could not finish the entire phase and the parts of the tool. As if you had to think about it tomorrow. Though it was not necessary to finish all parts in the tool. This one is for tomorrow; next time will be this and that. So, time was what really challenging for me and even for the learner.)

It is supported by FGD-07 and IDI-07 did the same thing as they said that:

"Yet, ang process man gud dili siya ingon nga one time setting mahuman na tanan… sa isa ka bata ang akong napansin… maka assess ka sa iyaha kung intoto lang gyud ka nag--assess sa iyaha, dili pagyud na mahuman isa ka adlaw. Kay sa akoa man gud naa koy seven na mga gipili. Unfortunately, sa seven, ang isa ka bata maka—ma pila ka days. Kana siya… human ana, dili lang kani lang pud ang atoang i- atubangon…i-work out pa nato ang ilahang reading intervention para sa ilaha so murag naga doble ba… Ah, sa akoa maam kay ang akong problem—main issue man gud ang time constraints gyud kay tungod sa kadaghan ug activity." (FGD-07)

(The process was not like a one-time setting. In assessing one student, one day was not enough. In my case, I had seven chosen students. Unfortunately, one out of seven students had taken several days to finish the assessment. And that was not the only thing to do, we also had to work out for their reading intervention. So, it was like that our work has been doubled. My main problem or issue was the time constraint because of too many activities.)

"So, mag take jud siyag time, oo. Kay after kuan mana, gina observe na namo after man gyud mi mag kuan no so 3 o'clock mag end among kase so 3 to 4. Dapat unta mag assess mi ana, so isa ra gyud ka bata ang i-assess namo ana pero dili pa gyud siya mahuman ana nga one hour, pagka next day balik siya lahi napod nga activity, mubalik balik man gud kay kailangan nimo ang—ang kuan sa bata ang iyaha ganing ah unsa na tawag ana uy nang iyahang behavior niya ang kanang… murag ka willingness niya nga ikuan gani siya i-test, kailangan man nimo pa uyon uyunan so taas siyag time, pag assess sa iyaha dili siya mubo." (IDI-07)

(It took a lot of time. We observed that our classes usually ended at 3 o'clock so we conducted it around 3 to 4. It was supposed to be one child in each assessment, but we could not end it just one hour. So, we had to repeat the same learner on the next day with a new activity. It was necessary for us to observe the learner's behavior and willingness before we tested her/him. We really had to persuade the learner, so it took too much time.)

In addition, FGD-03 mentioned that:

"Half day—half day man gud pud sa isa ka *classroom…* so afternoon session ko, morning ko mag *MFAT… balikon nako ang bata nga kinahanglan ug assessment so sa morning mi. so ang…* morning session na teacher, magklase siya. So mao na ang problem *namo."*

(It was half day session in each class. So, I was assigned in afternoon session, I conducted the MFAT in the morning. I asked the identified learner to be back in the morning for the assessment. So, the teacher assigned in the morning session has started her class already. So that was our problem.)

Aside from that, IDI-01 shared her difficulty in conducting assessment during class hours, as said that:
"Ah syempre kay naa pa guy klase maam no nya ah need baya jud siya ug kanang enough time gani maam kay daghan kaayo ug kadtong mga activities na ipahimo sa mga bata para ma identify nimo kung ang ilahang strengths ang ilahang weaknesses ana gani maam so kinahanglan gyud siya ug kanang kanang igo gyud na *time."*

(Of course, for you still had class. And then you needed to give enough time for the learners because there were so many activities that they needed to do for you to identify their strengths and weaknesses. That was why you really need enough time.)

Furthermore, IDI-06, FGD-01, FGD-05, and IDI-05 have pointed same thing they said that:
"Unya lisod pud siya maam kay ang pag… pag ano namo sa time, pag manage sa time, oh. Kay kuntahay *ahh…* I assess namo na ang bata, unya naa pa mi gi *handle'an* nga ubang bata, unsaon mana *siya?"* (IDI-06)

(Managing our time was hard, ma'am. For example, I assessed a learner and handled the remaining learners at the same time in our class, what should I do with that?)

"Since marami yung, akoa lang na klase mam ha, kay average man is 45 per section. So kuhaon nimo ang isa ka bata para mag conduct ka ng MFAT sa kanya. So unsaon nimo ang 44 and then imagine grade 1, so lisod jud siya. But then kailangan nimo gihapon nimo mag conduct kay pangayoan man ka og *report."* (FGD-01)

(Since my class was consisted of 45 students, I had to separate the identified learner from the rest of the class to conduct the MFAT. How could I manage the rest of 44 grade one learners? It was hard. But then, you still had to conduct the assessment anyway because they asked for the report.)

"Ang pag implement lang, syempre daghan tag mga bata sa class- dira magklase no? so ang morning session *ko…* suppose ipabalik ang katong na ten-- nakita namo na mga bata *nga…* ngaaa dapat siya I conduct, pabalikon. Pero kay mahadlok man ko magpabalik kay dili na baya na school hours *no?" (FGD*-05)

(Since we had a lot of learners in one class and I was in morning session, so I asked the ten identified learners to return to school after class to conduct the assessment. But then I was afraid to have them back at school since that was not school hours anymore.)

"*Lisod mag… kanang mga… sa bata bitaw nga dili kaayo ba kuan labi anang wala mi kaayo* gamit unya mag conduct pud mi sa amoang kuan *kay…* kanang class hour bitaw. Experienced na *sa… samok gyud kaayo, dili namo ma focus jud tanan tung bata nga among gi screen kay…* because kanang ang uban is saba kay class hour man gud siya. During class hour man namo gi *conduct."* (IDI-05)

(It was actually hard especially to the students and the lack of materials. Then we conducted the assessment during class hours. I had experienced that, and it was a disturbing. We could not focus all the identified learners because of the noise since we conducted the assessment during class hours.)

Lastly, IDI-03 concluded that:

> *"Dugay jud siya mag*—dugay jud siya mahuman maam kay daghan baya to siyag process maam no nya dili man pud nimo i-gamble ang bata nga muingon ra ka o sige kuana na—muingon man ka gang—kailangan pa ka mu explain—mao ni siya ang mga letter ha mao ni siya mga letter sige daw bi pangitaa daw ang dako ug gamay ana ipares daw kanang mu—di man pwede muingon ka o sige ah mao ba na sige sige ba-- balikon pa jud nimo iexplain kay naay uban na giingon na nimo dili pajud niya ma gets, mao to siyay makapadugay *maam."*

> (It definitely takes a lot of time because there are so many processes, and you cannot gamble the learners to do this or do that. You had to repeat and explain to them since there were learners whom you had instructed already but still did not understand anything. So it was time consuming.)

Therefore, along the way in their implementation of the tool, the participants expressed that it took lot of time to assess the learners using it.

Having Difficulties in Finding and Preparing the Location and Materials

Materials and location are some of the aspects in the implementation of the assessment that need to be considered as it greatly affects the outcomes. And based on the responses of the participants, they encountered problems in terms of the materials and location during the conduct of the assessment in their respective classrooms.

As IDI-05 shared that:

> "My experience in the implementation of MFAT in teaching learners ah was not easy po maam. Aside sa mga ah, paper works ah I need to prepare sa mga materials na gagamitin po para sa MFAT *maam... Tapos need pud siya maam nga ang kanang ang imoha pung place sa pag conduct kay kanang conducive kanang dili gani siya kanang saba kay samot man pud maam na ma maunsa ang attention sa *bata."*

> (My experience in the implementation of MFAT was not easy. Aside from paper works, I still had to prepare the materials to be used for MFAT… Then I needed to ensure that the venue for the assessment was conducive and not noisy to avoid distraction to the learner's attention.)

In addition, FGD-06 said that:

> *"Kami pa magprepare so dili pa pud kayo siya enough ang time nga iprepare siya kay dili pud* siya basta basta ang mga materials so ato ipa siya ipang—ipang laminate ana tapos for implementation na dayon kay mangayo na dayon sila kay i-consolidate na ana *ana."*

> (We had to prepare the materials by ourselves, so the time was not enough since it was not just simple materials. We had to laminate it and then used immediately for implementation since they asked for consolidation already.)

Further so, FGD-07 shared that:

> *"Provided mi sa materials pero soft copy lang so we have to prepare everything then uhm, ikaduha, kanang mag assess ka sa bata… no so, you have to observe gyud kung kinsa gyud ang imohang ih… assess."*

> (We were provided with materials, but they were only soft copies. So we had to prepare everything. Secondly, you still had to observe who to assess.)

FGD-01, also said that:

> *"Ahhh ang ang naging problema ko lang during implementation is yung materials since daghan* kailangan nga mga materials ang I provide ng school. Kung hindi kaya ng school, so kay teacher man ka, kailangan nato i-provide para ma implement maka *conduct ka."*

> (My only problem during implementation was the materials since there were plenty of materials that need to be provided by the school. If the school could not provide it all, since you are a teacher, you had to do it so that you could implement and conduct the assessment.)

Aside from materials, FGD-03 shared about the problem of having no proper location for assessment, as she pointed out that:

"Ang difficulties lang po sa, wala man space ba na didto lang mi sa kuan, sa classroom lang mi mag implement so syempre saba jud kayo sa classroom. Limited lang gyud kayo among—among spaces gud so ma distorbo jud among gi conductan namo sa MFAT so maka affect jud siya sa iyang *performance*... kay pareho jud mi nga dili maka concentrate tungod sa kasaba sa klase kay sa amoang school *maam."*

(Our difficulty was the lack of enough space to implement the tool. So we did it in the classroom and it was definitely noisy. The space was limited. So the learner that we assessed got disturbed and it affected his/her performance because we both could not concentrate due to noise inside our school.)

It is supported by FGD-05 and IDI- 01 as they said that:

"Ang problema kana man gung magpa balik sa kuan ba—oo nya, kung sa classroom pod, problem pud kayo kay nagklase ka nya *mag*... mag conduct pa gyud ka ana, daghan baya *kaayo*... So gubot kayo ang room *ana*... oh ana *maam lisod kaayo."* (FGD-05)

(The problem was when you asked the learner to return in school. Also, if it I conducted it inside my classroom, it was still problematic since I had class and there were a lot of learners. So the venue was really messy, and it was hard.)

"Sa area pa jud sa room kay mag ambak ambak biya ng MFAT, naa silay kuan nga mag ambak ambak, so limited ang area because kay naa pud uban bata *nagklase."* (IDI-01)

(The area also in the classroom was not enough since MFAT had interactive activities. There were other learners who had their classes as well, so it was very limited in terms of area or space.)

Therefore, the participants found the implementation of assessment difficult because they lacked materials and no proper area/venue wherein they could conduct the MFAT properly.

Coping Mechanisms of Untrained Grade 1 Teachers on the Implementation of Multi-Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT) in Teaching Learners

The participants mentioned their ways to cope with the challenges they encountered during the implementation of MFAT, and themes were elicited from the transcription. Based on their responses, five (5) themes emerged these are: (1) setting flexible schedules; (2) being resourceful in devising materials and learning task; (3) providing coordination and support to teachers from heads, colleagues, and experts; (4) establishing open communication and cooperation of parents; and (5) finding ways to get the interest of the learners.

Setting Flexible Schedules
In order to implement better the MFAT despite its nature that it would take much time to conduct, participants did set flexible schedules for assessment as well as for remediation in giving interventions to the learners. They pointed out that having remedial classes and separate schedules helped them assess the learners properly and able to give interventions.

In line with this, IDI-01 shared that:

"Ang akong gibuhat ato maam katong na identify gyud namo nga bata na murag lisod gyud siya, dapat gyud siya tarungon murag i-proper gyud na pag conduct, gi special nako siya, gi ingnan nako ang parent nga ilahi nako ug adlaw ang mag screen sa iyag MFAT. Dili nako i-dungan sa class hour bitaw. Kato lang pung mga identified nga mga bata pero gamay raman *murag*... duha lang man gud to sila nga murag lisod ba nga kinahanglan gyud siya i-*thorough nga pag gu*... screen kay para ma identify gyud unsay problema niya or ma recommend kung asa siya dapat. So gi special nako silage oras, wala nako gi *kuan*... gi ipon. Bale gipa balik nako ang parent ani nga oras para i-conduct ang *MFAT."*

(What I did when I figured out that the learner had difficulty and must be conducted properly was, I told the parents that she/he needed to be assessed in a separate day. I did not combine the assessment during class hours. It was not that much either, there was only around two learners who needed thorough observation so that I could identify what were their problems and could give recommendation. Basically, I asked the parents to return them during this specific time for MFAT.)

Further, FGD-01 narrated that:

"Uhm in our school since ang problem is same lang gihapon sa other teachers from other school na yung *time…* half day half day session lang yung grade 1 namin sa school. Since morning session ako, the whole morning dili ko mag touch sa MFAT since ang—kay primary baya ta no kailangan baya nato magpabasa baya sa mga bata so padayon lang gihapon ko sa akong klase the whole *morning and then afternoon… Before pud nako sila gipabalik sa school, kadtong isa isa lang sa* ka bata sa akong duha ka identified na ma include sa MFAT.

(Since our school has the same problem as the other schools which was the time. We only had half day sessions in our grade one. Since I was assigned during morning session, I did not touch any matter about MFAT in the morning. Since, we are primary teachers, our main target is to teach them how to read, so I continued my classes the whole morning and then in afternoon, I assessed one identified learner out from the two who were included in the MFAT.)

It is supported by IDI-05, who said that:

"*Usahay* kay kanang pagka next day pud maam, ah murag ana lang mga lima ra jud ang amoang limit maam kay taas taas man pud gud siya na kuan *assessment.*"
(Sometimes we conducted it on the next day. We only limit into 5 learners since the assessment is quite long.)

More so, IDI-06 shared how long would it take for her to do the assessment as she said that:
"*Two* days, three days. Ana... dapende pud sa bata nga imong gi assess, lahi lahi man gud sila ug kanang kuan pud gud no *needs.*"

(The learners had different needs, so it was usually around two or three days of assessment.)

Correspondingly, FGD-04 mentioned:

"*Oh* gina conduct namo during *sa amoang…* vacant time. *Kay…* half day raman pod *mi.*"

(Oh, we conducted it during our vacant time since we only had half day of class.)

After assessing the learners, IDI-02 shared that she conducted remedial class, as she said:
"*Pagkahuman* ato siya namo pag ano pag conduct sa iyaha then naga ano kog remedial remedial inst—remedial *class.*"

(After we assessed the learner, I gave him/her remedial classes.)

It is supported by FGD-03 who stated that:

"*Sa* amoa kato gihapon maam remediation lang po sa katong kuan katong na assess namo unya katong kuan na jud kato ganing kanang medyo ano na jud tabangonon *jud kaayo.*"

(For us, it is still the same ma'am, remediation for those who were assessed especially those who really need intervention and help.)

Similarly, FGD-06 shared that:

"*So kanang upon identi ahh upon identifying sa mga bata so mao to siya na identify na ang mga* bata noh mao ni sila jud ang kanang naay mga difficulty or kanang unsa nganong naay mga problem jud na dpat jud i- include siya sa MFAT. So para sa akoa ang gihimo na intervention ani *is ang continuous jud nga remediation…So need jud siya ang constant jud nga remediation unya* one on one jud ka dapat sa bata. Dili pud siya pwede nga naka identify na ta sabayon nato sila para isa ra atong kanang kuan. Para sa akoa, mao jud na siya ang kanang pinaka dapat natong buhaton, one on one remediation unya continuous remediation constant communication sa mga *parents.*"

(So upon identifying the learners, we figured out who has more difficulty and why they had problems and must be included in the MFAT. So, for me, the intervention that I did is continuous remediation… So, it is a must to have constant remediation and one-on-one assessment with the learner. It is not right to conduct all the learners at once for our benefit. For me, it is a priority to have one-on-one and continuous remediation and constant communication with the parents.)

Further, IDI-07 shared how she managed her learner during their class:

> *"During* sa klase, murag mas focus—murag ... mabantayan nimo pirmi, halimbawa pareha atong bata nga dili musulat, so kanang time sa klase oh bantayan nako siya pirmi siya murag naka focus aside sa mga bata nga daghan so murag mas priority ang akong pagbantay sa iyaha, maban—libut libuton jud nako siya muan—mamo—imonitor ba tapos naay remedial, naa juy remediation pagka mabilin na *sila."*

> (During classes, it seemed like you can focus on that learner. For example, those learners who did not want to write, so during classes, I gave more attention on them than the others. So, it was a priority to observe him/her. I monitored the learner and then there was remedial every time she/he was the only one left.)

Lastly, IDI-03 shared that:

> "Then ang among klase before, pag sugod sa klase mag kuha jud kog bata katong mga bata na na gi ... *identify nako kuwaon nako sila. Halimbawa sa buntag maam kay among klase man kay* magsugod og naay specific na time before pa ko magsugod po ang mga bata gina hatagan nako ug activity to kuhaon sa nako ug kadali po *siya."*

> (Then in our class before, once the class started, I called the attention of the identified learners. For example, in the morning, before we had our class on that specific time, I gave my remaining pupils some preliminary activities to do and then I called the identified learner for a while for short remidiation.)

With that responses, participants pointed out that their one way of coping the problems during the implementation of MFAT was setting flexible schedules in order to assess well the learners. Also, after their assessment they immediately gave intervention through remedial classes.

Being Resourceful in Devising Materials and Alternative Tasks

Despite being untrained teachers in implementing the MFAT, the participants still made different coping mechanisms in order to address the lapses and challenges that they encountered and the needs of their learners. Some of these was being resourceful in devising materials and alternataive tasks.

In line with this, IDI-04 who pointed out that:

> "Sa akoa lang gyud no, ang naka nindot man gud sa MFAT kay, though naa nato tanan tools, kita *pud teacher no kay kuan man ta nga teacher kanang... kailangan ta mahimong resourceful. So bisag dili ta... dili ta creative jud siguro lain lain man gyud ang tao no, mahimo nalang jud tang creative no."*

> (What is nice about MFAT is that it strives us teachers to be resourceful, although some tools were already available. So even if we are not creative, even with differences, we turned to be creative in the end.)

It is supported by FGD- 02 as said that:

> "Mao to unya materials ug choices sa materials ug kanang amoa mam ang pamaagi ug mogawas ang pagka resourceful sa teacher noh sa materials na *magamit."*

> (Then for the materials and choices for the materials, our resourcefulness in terms of making materials was used.)

More so, IDI-06 shared that:

> "Unya paghuman sa materials, syempre lack man, wala kay laing mabuhat mao to ikaw mismo *teacher kay para lang ma ano nimo imong mga estudyante, para lang ma... unsa ni... ma ano* lang to nga activity para sa iyaha. As a teacher ikaw nalay kusang mu kuot ug *bulsa."*

> (And then after the materials, since they were lacking, you had nothing else to do so as a teacher, for you to be able to assess your learner or give activities, you had to use your own money.)

Also, IDI-05 shared about her intervention:

> *"Ah there are interventions I did to cope the issues maam and challenges like kanang visualizing* ah real objects mga pictures and videos to get their interest, another one maam ah let the pupils

work together kanang pwede siya sa small group or big group maam para pud ma develop pud ang ilahang *confidence."*

(There were interventions I did to cope the issues and challenges like visualizing real objects such as pictures and videos to get their interest. Another one was to let the pupils work together like in small or big group to develop their confidence.)

Lastly, IDI-02 narrated that:

"Naa koy mga kuan sa iyaha mga coloring books na ginapa ano sa iyaha tapos activity sheet more on hands ano cap—mga clay nga akoa na siyang na naa ko—naa man ko diri reading corner dapit, diha nako siya ibutang na didto nako siya tagaag mga activity sheet ... nga kani akong mga ubang estudyante maka sabot man pud sa iyaha so dili napud siya ano *distorbohon."*

(I gave the learner some coloring books and hands on activities such as clays and I placed him/her in the reading corner, and he/she did the activity there. So, the rest of his/her classmates had understood her/him, in that way he/she was not disturbed.)

Hence, participants used various ways to handle and provide the needs of the learners that were identified during the assessment. Also, they tried to address the problems by being resourceful and strategic.

Providing Coordination and Support to Teachers
from Heads, Colleagues, and Experts

One of the coping mechanisms that appease the problems of the participants with regards to their materials and location needed during the implementation of MFAT was the collaboration and support received from their colleagues, school heads, and experts. They were supported by their colleagues and school heads in preparing and providing the materials as well as in disseminating information about the tool and how to solve the problems encountered during the implementation.

In relation to that, IDI-02 shared that:

"Sa material sa MFAT ano siya ahh ginatagaan mi sa among principal naa gyud tuy mga bond paper mga laminator mga say tawag ana kanang pang—ipang laminate na cellophane unsay tawag ato uy. Ginasupportahan mi ni sir tapos pero ang uban kami may nagpalit sa tong mga bola katong mga kamiy nag provide katong mga mga sanina nga nga ipasuot sa ila polo shirt ug katong short pants diba naa man to siya nya katong mga gamit *uban."*

(Regarding the materials in MFAT, our principal provided us some supplies such as bond papers, laminators, and laminating films. Despite being supported by our Sir, we were the ones buying the essentials such as clothes, balls, and other materials.)

It is supported by IDI-05 as she narrated that:

"Mostly pag... kato pung sa pag re-echo maam ba kay didto man pud gud na time na ah gi—gi kuan nami gitagaan pud mi sa mga materials gani maam tapos ang amo nalang gi himo is amoa *nalang gi gipang... gipang buhat nalang jud namo maam, gipang print namo, tapos amoang* gipang—basta kay gipang ready nato namo maam kay para pag administer namo sa sa MFAT murag ma matuloy tuloy na *maam ba."*

(During our re-echo ma'am, we were given materials and what we did is we worked on printing and preparing them to made them ready. In that way when we administered the MFAT, it was continuous.)

Correspondingly, IDI-01 also supported it as said that:

"Parehas anang mga balde, mga baso, mga plato provide na siya sa school asta katong mga naa man guy mga picture picture pa ato. Provided to siya materials pero kami ang nagbuhat. Ang mga materials ato kami ra gyud *murag...* nag reproduce. Pero ang mga materials gikan sa skwelahan namo. Provide to sa *amoa."*

(Just like the bails, cups, and plates, they were all provided by the school even the pictures. We were the ones reproducing the materials. But they were all provided by the school.)

Similarly, FGD-06 conveyed that:

"Ahh ang pinaka support ahh support jud ahh nakuha jud nako ahhh is from my co-teachers every now and then jud naga share share dyud mi og mga ideas unya especially pud sa akong isa ka kauban na siya man jud ang murag MFAT coordinator gari mag rely pud ko kung ay naga ano pud ko kung unsa iyahang ginapaminaw jud pud nako siya kung unsa ang iyahang mga gina-istorya na mga dpat himoon kung unsa jud ang kanang makita sa bata *na mga problema."*

(The very support that I received was from my co-teachers. Every now and then, we shared ideas. Especially that one teacher who was also our MFAT coordinator, I relied on her and listened to her advices about the problems that could be seen in that child.)

Furthermore, FGD-02 narrated that:

"Sa amoa kay kuan gihapon same ra no. Ang amoang ginakuan kay i-refer namo sa amoang trained teacher. I-refer *namo...* amo na sad gina refer lang namo sa trained teacher kay sila man ang hawd mo man assess kay naka training *man."*

(It was the same thing for us. We referred it to our trained teacher. Then, we also refered it to the trained teachers because they were more knowledgeable about it.)

Also, IDI-04 narrated how her colleagues help her during the implementation:

*"Nakadumdo*m ko, kani man gud na level kay mag meeting man gyud mi. Mag meeting gyud mi *kung unsay... hala oy unsay unsay problema nato, unsay...unsay kinhanglan nato. Among grade* head mu meeting na siya sa amo nga, ay kailangan ing ani siguro atong buhaton. Pag i-istorya pud namo kay sir, si sir pud mu support ra pud na siya sa amo kung unsa ang kailangan namo. Luckily, nagpasalamat pud mi no kay... kay sir sa atong supervisor no with our principal nga makasabot gyud sila nga sir pwede kanang tagaan mig time. Katong last namo nga kuan sa MFAT, murag na okay okay nato kay *maka...* maka hatag ganig taas taas nga time so far, so far *jud."*

(I remember that in our grade level conducted meetings. We discussed about our problems and needs. Our grade head led us on what to do. When we talked to our Sir, he also supported us on our decisions. We were lucky and thankful that our supervisor and principal because they were very understandable when it comes to asking for enough time. The last time we had an MFAT, it was okay because we were given longer time so far.)

It is supported by IDI-06, who added that:

"Naga open ko sa amoang kauban na teacher. Si sir *pud...* nag ano pud, si sir sa amoa ako pung *gi open nga problema... na materials ing ana. Nagahatag pud si sir pero dili lagi pud ingon nga* enough... Naga open kog ing ani ang problema, naga hatag silag suggestions mga advices mga *ing ana."*

(I opened up to our co-teachers and even to our Sir about our problems in the materials. Our Sir provided us something too, but it was just not that enough… I opened up about certain problems and they gave suggestions and advices.)

Another support statement from FGD-04, who emphasized the importance of the support given by the others. As she mentioned:

"Ah syempre sa—dili man gyud nato na mabuhat no nga kita lang. Syempre ang sa materials—sa atong principal, syempre mangayo ta ug materials sa iyaha ug—ug mga gagmay na strategy na ishare sa atoa—sa ato mga trained teacher, mangutana ta sa ilaha kay wala baya ta na trained mangutana ta unsaon to, nya pagkahuman i-ana—pareha sa gi ingon ni maam kanya kanya naman gyud tag conduct no though wa ta—wa ta na train. Mao ra to, nya sa mga kauban *mangutana rapud."*

(Of course, we cannot do this by ourselves. We should ask for support from our principal for the materials and some strategies shared from trained teachers. We can ask from them since we are not trained.)

In addition, IDI-07 narrated that:

"So before mag start ang mga teachers nag-- mag sabot man gyud mi ana so mag himo mig ug mga—sa mga kuan no sa mga—mga ilahang mga materials so iya—kuanay lang gyud mi kanang iyahay mi ug kanang--motivate sa among kaugalingon ay—iyahay mig kuan gina motivate namo

ang *isa't* isa para kay kabalo jud baya mi nga naa man jud sa kada room ba—kada group sa bata naa jud—maskin naa pud nang kuan, naa napud nang sped karon pero naa jud gihapoy masulod lahi sa amoa. So iyahay mi ug kuan motivate, among gina motivate among kauban nga mga teachers na go go laban lang! Tapos ang among principal, naga support jud sa *amoa."*

(So before we started, we talked and motivated each other since we all knew that there was always at least one student with special need who could be in our class even if there was SPED school now. So we keep on motivating each other and saying, "go go, fight!" Then, our principal also supported us.)

IDI-03 narrated how they prepared their materials for MFAT, she said that:

"Provided na siya maam nya kami lang magtrabaho kanang kung tagaan mig coupon bond tapos kung apekihan na jud sa oras maam gusto na jud mi, hala mag iyahay mig photocopy pag naa man pud naa man gud koy mga laminator po, ako personally ako naa koy laminator tapos ang school pud kada grade murag gitagaan pud yatag laminator and then naa pud koy mga kauban na teacher, naa pud silay laminator murag ana maam ba. Lahi naman gud sa DepEd maam, kay kung pwede naa tay ato naa jud tay ato no, naa pud miy sarili sariling printer, ana *ba."*

(We were provided already with the materials. We only had to prepare if only if we were given some coupon bond. Then if we did not have more time anymore, we just photocopied it ourselves since we had our own laminator. Also, our school provided each grade level with the laminator. Same with my co-teacher, they also had their own laminators. It is just different with DepEd ma'am, if possible, we should own some equipment.)

Another, IDI-01 mentioned how her co-teacher helped her to transfer her one learner in a SPED school:
"Katong sa una katong naa man gud ko sauna man gi recommend nako siya nga mag transfer gyud siya sa SPED School because di gyud siya pwede, murag need jud siya ug kanang special ba nga education. Ang nag tabang sa amoa is kato among guidance nga si maam. Siya ang nag tabang ug kanang coordinate jud siya sa SPED school kay maam aron ma transfer didto ang bata. Kato nga time man pud gud kay naa pa si sir *oh…* siya pud *usahay mu recommend."*

(There was one time I recommended a learner to transfer to a SPED school because he/she needed a special education. Our guidance teacher helped us in terms of coordinating with the SPED school to transfer him. That time our Sir was still around, and he recommended us too.)

It is supported by FGD-01 as pointed out that:

*"So nakita man gud nako nah ang kato na bata dili jud siya puwede i-*mainstream. Since dili ko hawod mohatag or moooo hatag unsang learning styles niya man gud kay lahi baya gud nang *kanang ahhh ano graduate kanang SPED diba? So siya kay kailangan siya i… ano unsay tawag* ani kailangan siya talaga ma assess ng kanang ano gyud ba kanang mas katong trained jud trained *jud na teacher like diraa sa Tagum sa isa ka skul na SPED center… So after ana mam, naa nay* result ang problem ana pud nako. Na found out nako na ang isa sa akong mga estudyante is need *ng … naa siyay special need ba. So since dili ko SPED teacher, ni reach out napud nako ang* among kauban na ang major niya ay *SPED."*

(So, based on what I had seen on that child, he/she should not be mainstreamed. Since I am not a graduate SPED teacher and not an expert about that. And his/her learning style was different from others so the learner must be assessed by someone who was trained like those teachers from SPED center school in Tagum… So, after that ma'am, the result came out and we found out that he/she was indeed with special needs. So since I am not a SPED teacher, I reached out again to our co-teacher who was major in SPED.)

Based on the participants' responses, they asked and received support and help from their colleagues, school heads and supervisor so that they could address the needs for implementation of the MFAT.
Establishing Open Communication and Cooperation of Parents
Since one of the problems encountered by the participants during their implementation of MFAT was having parents who were in-denial and unsupportive, they took extra effort to convince and inform them so that their mindset would change. They communicated with them and explained the benefits and significance of the assessment for them to be able to understand more the behavior of their children and helped them in giving interventions.
In relation to that, IDI-02 shared that:

*"Akong gi hinay hin*ay silag pasabot na ingun ana pero wala nako siya gi bigla kay ano baya nang mga parent nya pagkahuman ang iyang ginikanan paghuman nakasabot rapod sila nakita napud gud nila iyang bata ila iya gung anak gud kung unsa gyud diri *sa room."*

(I explained it to them slowly, to the parents, so that they could understand it eventually. The parents slowly observed how their child acted inside the classroom.)

Similarly, IDI-05 informed her parents about the result of assessment and encouraged them. As she said:

"Akoa pud ginaunsa ang ilahang parents maam nga kanang kuan pud kanang para tabangan pud nila ang ilahang anak kay nakita man pud kay nakita man gud sa result maam na ingun ana kanang need ang ilahang bata ug kaning kuan murag educational services pud gud maam. So mao lang pud to ang amoang kuan na tabangan ninyo inyohang anak kay para pud naa puy learning development na *mahitabo."*

(I also encouraged the parents to help their children because it could be seen in the result that the learners really needed education services. That is all that I want to say, help your child so that there would be learning development.)

Also, IDI-06 stated that:

"Kuan mao to gipasabot nako sa ilaha nga ing ana, sige di ka mu kuan... ing ani nalang te, tabangi nalang ko kay kuan man pud gud to siya maam. Ako siyang gi... gi kuan pud ba para mahadlok lang ang parent nga kanang te dili gyud ni siya maka kuan ba maka pasar kay daghan kay siyag mga kumbaga checklist ing ani ba nga wala niya ni na aim. Ing ani ba, unya palihog nalang pud ko te bi ug tinabangay nalang ta ani kay para ma proceed siya ug kanang grade two. Mga ing ana ba, kay daghan man kaayo siyag kumbaga kanang mga competencies dili niya ma kuha ba. Mga ing ana gud. Uhm... kay kuntahay muadto pud siyag grade two, sa grade one na teacher man gihapon na ma balik. Mao tung gipasabot nako, gi explain ana ana. Kita mag tinabangay nalang ta ani nga te bi. Mao ra pud to ning ano ra pud siya... So far kay kung dili hadlokon di pud mu *kuan.... Kung dili nimo hadlokon di pud mu kuan... So far mu ano man pud sila, kailangan lang* gyud nimo *hadlokon."*

(I made sure that the parent had understood the learner. I warned them that their child might not pass the grade one because he/she had many unaimed indicators in checklist. I asked the parents to help me so that their child could proceed to grade two. Since he/she has a lot of competencies that were not achieved. That was why I really explained to them that we really need to work together for their child… So far if we did not remind them, they would not make any actions. So, we really need to warn them.)

Furthermore, FGD-01 narrated that:

"Ako jung gi storya sa jud ang parent. So before nako sila gi identify as included sa MFAT, akoa sa pud gitan aw ang ilang assessment sa kindergarten diba naa man na silay record pud so kung— ang akoang nasa isip is nakita pud nako sa kato sa ilahang assessment before, so saka nako gipatawag ang attention ng parent. So pag—dili man gud pwede na mag anha ang bata na hindi na class hours na sila lang, dapat naa gihapon ang mama kay simbako maunsa baya sila kargo gihapon sa teacher so nag—naa miy kasabutan—naa miy agreement nga kana nga time magbalik siya for the assessment. Swerte lang ko kay out sa akong 45 ka ano pupils, dalawa lang akong na include sa *MFAT."*

(First, I talked to the parents. Before I identified the learners to be included in MFAT, I checked first their previous assessment in kindergarten. If I noticed similarity findings in the previous assessment, I called the parents. Aside fromt that, it was not safe for the learners to go to school after class hours by them selves, so the parents should be there with them in case of emergency. I usually told the parents about the allotted time for assessment. I was lucky enough to only had 2 identified learners out of 45 students.)

More so, FGD-07 also pointed out that:

"Kung wala juy support sa ginikanan Maam, dili gyud to mahuman. No, kay dili man nila isend especially sa amoa, naa man miy letter na ipadala sa ilaha. Then kung dili sila mu respond ana dili gyud sila mu support so—*kay ahh… nasultian man namo sila nga incl*uded ilang bata sa MFAT *ana… ahh…* Kung dili sila muadto pasabot ana—spe—especially sa parents, wala gyud

sila nag support so maglisod gyud pud ta no? ... Ang akong gihimo ahh constant ahh communication sa parents through *letter.*"

(If there was no support from the parents, it could never be done quickly. Since they did not let their child to return in school. Like, we sent letter to them and if the parents were still unresponsive and unsupportive with their child, even if you already told them about the inclusion of their children in MFAT, if they did not allow their children then it meant that they did not want to support you. Then that could give us a hard time, right? … What I did is constant communication with the parents through letter.)

In addition, FGD-02 pointed out that parents' support is very important in the assessment. As she said that:
"*Number one jud ang parent. Ang support jud sa parent and number one nga kinahanglan.*"
(The number one is the parents. Their support is the most important.)

Likewise, FGD-06 emphasized that:

"*Constant communication jud sa parents nila nga suportahan jud nila ilahang anak nga ma-*accomplish jud ni nga kanang kuan nga program. Kay lisod man kaayo kung mo motunong siya karong adlawa pagka sunod adlaw dili na pud. So mao jud na siya ang kanang intervention nga kanang akoang makita ani nga program nga kini *sa MFAT.*"

(Constant communication with the parents and their support for their child to accomplish this program are important. It would be hard if the assessment is inconsistent. So, that is the intervention needed for MFAT.)

Further, IDI-01 shared that:

"*Wala bitaw sila nag supak, murag wala gud sila materially wala gud sila ga support, ang ila* lang support ato is sug... sugot lang gyud sila unsa akong gi sulti sa ilaha. Wala gyud sila nag murag nag hesitate nga mu ana diskumpyado. Ning ana lang sila nga kung ikaw maam kung unsa gyuy dapat sa iyaha. Ikaw raman gyuy nakabalo kay ikaw may nagtudlo. *Mao ra gyud… okay ra* sila, wala kaayo mu ingon nga nag supak supak. Murag mao na gyud to ilang support kay muingon tag material wala man gyud sila naga kuan gyud. Ilang murag cooperation nalang nila ang ilahang *support.*"

(The parents were being neutral the entire time. They did not refuse, did not give material support, they just keep on agreeing. They did not hesitate or not complacent. They just gave all their trust to me and depended on me. They did not have any complaints; their support was through their cooperation only.)

Moreover, IDI-03 narrated that:

"*Kung naa puy sign of autism ang bata, gina ingnan jud nako ang parent nga maam maayo ani* maam or ante, pa assist nimo siya kung asa siya kung profound ba iyang pagka autism or dili ba kase pag profound man gud kato na gyud tong murag naa na juy mga signs nya murag kuan na jud siya ba. Nya kung dili pa man gud profound dili pa kaayo grabe, pwede pa siya ma assist and then prangkahan jud nato nako siya nga kung ibutang nimo siya diri sa normal, maglisod siyag *learn.*"

(If the learner had a sign of autism, I immediately told the parents. Let the learner be assisted if he/she has profound autism or not. Because if its profound, signs might be severe. And if it were not profound, he or she could be assisted. I honestly told them that if they put their child in a regular classroom, it could be difficult for them to learn.)

Lastly, IDI-04 mentioned that they had meeting together with thei parents about the assessment. As she said that:
"*Gi meeting man gani yata namo tung mga parents ato nga time.*"

(I think, we even conducted a meeting for the parents.)

Thus, the participants tried their best to convince and inform their parents so that they could help them throughout the implementation of MFAT as well as in giving interventions.

Finding Ways to Get the Interest of the Learners

Since grade one learners tend to get easily distracted by their environment, the participants kept on motivating the learners during the assessment. Based on their responses, they conditioned them by getting their interest, and letting them feel that they loved and cared.

In relation with this, IDI-05 shared that:

> *"Ah, kay because maam there are learners maam na need more attent*ion kanang ingon ana pud gani maam murag kanang kinahanglan pud jud nimo sya na aside sa attention murag ma feel pud nila nga naay puy love para pud ma-- ma catch pud ang—ma catch pud na nimo ang ang interest *sa bata."*

> (There are learners who need more attention. Not only attention but you have to let the learner feel the love as well and get his or her interest.)

Another, IDI-04 shared that:

> "Actually gani kato among mga gipangbuhat last time, mangita nalang jud mig pamaagi, ay atong pa snakon sa ang bata bi kay murag gikapoy ni, usahay gani patulgon nalang sa namo kadyot after class kay kami biya dianhi no kay among klase biya kay until kuan biya gyud to among klase, *three."*

> (What we did the last time was actually, we found ways. Like, we let the learner ate his/her snacks because he/she was tired already. Sometimes we even let him/her had a nap for a while after class, since our class ended at three o'clock.)

Likewise, IDI-07 said that:

> *"Kailangan imoha jung imotivate ang bata, kanag feel at—*feel along home lang gyud siya, nga dili siya ma hadlok sa imo hmm imoha gyung, mama mama gyud ka. Kailangan taas gyud imong *pasensya. Oo, unya kay kuan… Syempre kay ikaw man ang teacher nila, sa scho*ol man jud ikaw man jud ang mama mama, during ana nga time, oh dili napud siya mu answer, halimbawa dili na siya musulat didto naa man jud koy isa ka bata nag dili musulat, mag hangad hangad naman siya, ituyok tuyok naman niya ang papel tung sa writing, so ihug hug napod, oh dili ja—dili diri diri dong, tarungag sulat niya, nya motivated palakpakan palakpakan dayon ho! Pagkadaghan jud nimog ipraise praise jud nimo kay kung dili jud na nimo gamiton, masuko ka wala na dili na mahuman, *undang."*

> (You need to motivate the learner. Make them feel at home, do not let him/her feel scared of you. Since you are like a second mother to her/him. You need a lot of patience. Of course, since you are the teacher, you have to stand like a mother to them. For example, some learners are uncooperative, you have to motivate or praise them. If you would not do that and you let yourself, get mad, then it would be over.")

Hence, IDI-06 pointed out that:

> *"Kini* ing ani ang buhata ma sunod dayon, dili biya ing ana pud. Sa ila kay imo pud biya na siyang pa uyon uyonan pud. Unya daghan pud biyay mga kanang mga activities nga ilahang buhaton. Di pud siya ing ana ka *dali."*

> (We could not convince the learners finish everything at one time. You had to persuade them. Also, they had a lot of activities to do, and it was not that easy for them.)

Therefore, the participants were able to sustain the attention of the learners by giving motivation, getting their interest, and letting them feel that they are loved and cared.

Insights of the Untrained Grade 1 Teachers Regarding the Implementation of MFAT that Can Be Shared to Other teachers, Education Administrators, and the Division Office

This part focuses on the insights of untrained public elementary teachers on the implementation of Multi-Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT) that can be shared to others. Consequently, from the participants' responses seven (7) major themes manifested: (1) MFAT as a valuable tool cater the needs of learners, (2) intensification of parent cooperation in MFAT implementation, (3) provision of financial support and MFAT tools and materials to teachers, (4) provision of MFAT trainings and seminars to teachers, (5) provision of set time for teachers to conduct MFAT assessment, (6) a call for proper psychological and medical assessment or treatment to SPED children, and (7) a call for MFAT teachers to be resourceful, patient, cooperative, and committed.

MFAT as a Valuable Tool to Cater the Needs of Learers

Assessment serves as a part of the teaching – learning process. It is used to assess and evaluate the abilities and learning outcomes of the learners. And MFAT is also a kind of assessment that used for grade one learners. Based on the responses of the participants, they saw the MFAT as valuable tool since they could be able to identify the needs, abilities, strengths, and weaknesses of the learners. Also, it served as the basis for their instructional planning and in addressing their needs.

In relation with this, IDI-02 shared that:

> *"Okay,* oo maayo siya jud ma ano siya kanang importante jud siya para ma address ang mga ang needs sa—sa bata oh ang ilang panginahanlan kay kung imo lang gud na siyang kuan dili nimo siya tagaan gud ug pagtagad, ano pag abot niya sa sa sa higher grades murag, dapat sa lower grades pa, sa grade one pa siya i-ano noh sa amoa or sa kinder ba kay pag abot niya sa higher grades mas ma—dili nimo ma kuan dili nimo ma correct gani sa gamay pa siya maglisod naka pag ano na ma higher grades na siya. So dapat jud ang MFAT murag wala naman gud na run karon na atong mga niagi nga ano pero dapat jud naa jud na siya kay aron ma address nimo ma *unsa iyang kulang unsa iyang gi kinahanglan kay the more… mag ma worse man giha*—ma the more man gud ma ano pagka abot na niya ug higher *grades."*

> (It is good. MFAT is very important to address the needs of the learners. As early as grade 1 or kindergarten, teacher must look out to the student who needs an attention so that in the higher year, it is not difficult to address the student. Conducting MFAT is necessary to address the needs of a student at an early phase and not worsen the situation especially in the higher years to come.)

Furthermore, IDI-04 and IDI-03 supported it as they stated that,

> *"Sa mga teachers kita mga teachers importante kay siya* nga mabal an nato unsay kulang sa bata, unsay need sa bata *diba…* Ang purpose man gud sa MFAT murag ang goals sa MFAT is ma *agapan nimo ang bata or makita nimo diritso ang bata unsay… unsay challenges sa bata, unsay* kakulangon sa bata, unsay *need."* (IDI-04)

> (For us teachers, it is important to know the needs of the learner. The purpose and goal of MFAT is to work on the weaknesses of the learner and to look for the deficiencies and challenges of the learner.)

> *"Iyang learning styles maam na mailhan nimo na bata ay na mapansin nimo nohhh na murag di* naminaw pero kuan diay kanang nakasabot murag ingana naay ingana na bata ba so importante kay siya kay mahibal an nimo tuhogon jud nimo kung sa dagom pa ug hilo matuhug jud nimo. Ahhhh kining bataa ni diri siyang dapita kining bataa ni diri siyang dapita kining bataa ni murag dako pa jud kaayog kog labangunon murag ingana ko tapos makita pud nako na dako pakog *labangunon." (IDI*-03)

> (Through their learning styles, I could observe that the learners were not listening, but it turned out that they understood the lesson. So MFAT is important because I could be able to know that they had deficiencies. As their teacher, I could see that I still have a lot of work to do with him.)

Further, IDI-05 said that:

> *"For* me maam MFAT is one of the in—one of the important tool because it evaluates the *learner's strengths and weaknesses and identify also learner's disability that need educational services too."*

> (For me, MFAT is one of the important tools because it evaluates the learner's strengths and weaknesses and also identify learner's disability that needs educational services too.)

Another, IDI-06 pointed out that:

> *"Importante* man pud gud siya no kay sa ing ana syempre kana *ah…* makatabang pud biya na nga *tools nga ginagamit kay para pud ma address ang ilang mga weakness unya dili… oh mga* weakness sa bata no. Depende pud siya kay para pud dili pud siya ma behind sa other niya nga *mga classmates."*

> (Of course, it is important. The tool can also help us address the learner's weaknesses. However, it depends for we do not want the learner to be left behind by his/her classmates.)

Also, FGD-01 emphasized the use of MFAT for instructional planning. She said that:

"Ang MFAT murag assistance nato for—for us teachers kung unsa ang atong mga instructional planning kay everyday naa tay lesson plan and then ang atong lesson plan baya kanang sa isa lang—diba ah DLL naman ta karon no? Usually DLL. Downloaded from-- from the division, downloaded from the other division and then para lang kuanon—ratsada lang ratsada ana ana ana, and then… ang MFAT makatabang sa teacher kung unsaon ni—kay nakaila man siya, base sa result—nakaila man sya sa iyang estudyante so teacher kabalo napod siya unsa pud ang angay ihatag para sa iyaha. Para sa iyahang estudyante, since iba iba sila ng learning styles. Yun lang po."

(MFAT is like an assistance for us teachers to know what to do with instructional planning because every day we have a lesson plan. Then in our DLL, it is usually downloaded from other division. MFAT is helpful since teachers already know the capability of the learner based on the result. So teachers can now determine what should be given to him/her since they have different learning styles.)

Supported by FGD-05 as stated that:

"Um, importante siya in the sense na para ma address ug matagaan dayun ug pagtagad katong bata nga naay problema. Ang imohang teaching strategy, nya imong himuon.

(It is important in the sense that those learners with needs and problems will be given attention. Also, for the strategy that you will make.)

More so, FGD-07 also said that:

"Importante gyud ang MFAT kay ahm para ma assess nato ug tarong ang bata."

(MFAT is important since we can assess learner properly.)

It is supported by FGD-02 as she asserted that:

"MFAT man gud is ang--- ang importance is para gyud sa mga bata na matabangan nato sila… ma assess nato sila para pud naay--- makatabang ta in our own para maimprove pud sila … ma feel pud nila nga kanang naa pagyud silay kanang gina value pud nato sila… makit-an ang mga strength nah … so ang importance ani sa bata ma assess nato sila."

(The importance of MFAT is to help and assess the learners. To help them in our own way to improve and make them feel that they are valued since we help them finding their strength. So the importance of this is we can be able to assess them.)

Also, it was affirmed by IDI-07 the use of MFAT to assess the learners with special needs that were mainstreamed in regular class. As she affirmed that:

"Importante siya kay ngano ganiha sa giingon na nako, maskin tuod naa na siyay SPED karon na time pero pag naa na ang mga bata sa room naa juy mulahi. Naa gyuy lahi na ana pa nga time ma identify nimo, so kailangan ma assess jud siya sa MFAT para ma tutukan nimo siya, mas mahatagan nimo siya ug importansya."

(MFAT is important just like I said earlier. Even though there are already SPED schools nowadays, there are still some children who seem to be different from the rest inside the regular classroom. There is one different and you can identify it. So it is important to assess that learner through MFAT for you to be able to give him/her attention and importance.)

Lastly, IDI-01 conlcuded that:

"Mao ng importante ang MFAT para ma identify nimo sila, maka recommend ka nga ing ani ni siya. So mahatagan siya ug special nga attention nga para gyud sa iyaha. So kay aron ma kuan man gud siya, okay man pud ang MFAT bisag… bisag tuod trabaho para sa teacher but mas okay siya kay ma identify nimo ang bata unya mabutang nimo ang bata kung asa jud siya dapat. Suited jud sa iyaha ang behavior para sa iyang learning kay kung pareha gud sauna nga walay MFAT no, sagol tanang bata."

(That is why MFAT is important so that you can identify and recommend the learners. So they will be given special attention that fits for them. Although MFAT is a tough task for teachers but

it is still nice since you can be able to identify the needs of the learners and put them in their suited learning pace, not like before that we do not have MFAT, the students are mixed.)

Based on the responses of the participants, they emphasized that MFAT is really important in knowing and addressing the needs of the learners as well as the other educational concerns.

Intensification of Parent Cooperation in Conducting MFAT

Parents are considered as the first educators of their children. Also, they serve as the partners of teachers in monitoring and educating them. So in implementing MFAT, their participation is vital. Based on the responses of participants, they suggested to intensify the cooperation, acceptance, and support of the parents to their child's assessment as well as in giving interventions since some of them were in-denial. Also, they pointed out that it was better if the parents also had their own orientation or let them observed the procedure of the assessment. Through that, it could give them awareness on the importance of the assessment. This emerged as one of the themes.

In relation to this, IDI-02 said that:

*"Siguro kinahanglan nako ang kuan ang cooperation s*a parent then then mag gahin nalang jud ug time para lang jud sa iyaha at least mga mga or 30 minutes or one hour. Ana aron ma then ang kina—ang labaw jud ang ang parent jud nga ma ano niya ma accept niya ang bata aron aron dali ra kaayo ang kuan madawat niya kung unsa iyang *anak."*

(I needed the cooperation of parents of the identified learner. An hour or at least 30 minutes of their time was good enough for the learner. Also, the parent should accept the situation of their child.)

Aside from that, IDI-04 pointed out the importance of introducing the tool to the parents through orientation as she claimed that:

Hopefully, ma orient pud ang parents about ani. Ing ana jud siya ka importante jud, kung gusto *ta ang bata… bata gyud mu succeed siya sa iyahang learning kuan… kailangan gyud ta kabalo* gyud ta unsa ang *bata."*

(Hopefully, there is an orientation for parents about MFAT. If we want them to succeed in their learning, we should really know the learner.)

In addition, IDI-01 suggested that:

"So kinahanglan mas gwapo gani kung mag conduct kag MFAT naa ang mama bitaw para aron kuan nalang dili naka maglisod ug explain kay sila mismo makakita man kay mostly gud sa mga bata karon maam mga hyper jud kasagaran sa bata *karon."*

(It will be nice if the parents are present when conducting MFAT to the learners. It will help them understand their child well especially now that most of them are hyper.)

Lastly, IDI-03 narrated how hard to have communication with her other parents. She said:
"Importante akong gina communicate ang parent jud maam as in problema lang jud kaayo maam kung ang parent dili pud nimo ma hagilap whooooo wala sa messenger walay cellphone mao jud kaayo ang lisod. Atngan pa nimo kung mag sundo jusko Lord imbis muoli na unta ka maam dli nalang saka muuli *maam."*

(Communication with the parent is very important. The only problem for teachers is when the parents are unreachable. It is hard if they have no messenger and no cellphone. So, you have to wait for them after class when they get their child. Instead going home early, you cannot do so yet.)

Thus, the participants reiterated that they really need the support and cooperation of their parents.

Provision of Financial Support and MFAT Tools
and Materials to Teachers

Another theme that emerged is the provision of financial support and MFAT tools or materials to teachers. Participants emphasized that they should be provided and supported for the production of MFAT tools or materials so that they could easily implement the assessment and not use their own money. Also, they asked for the materials to be used in the intervention.

In line with this, IDI-02 shared that:

"So dapat unta kuan dapat kanang naa untay mag mag support sa mga teacher—sa mga materials nga gigamit ana aron ang mga teacher dili na makakuot sa ilang sa a—sa kuan sa kaugalingong pocket para ihh ikuan para igasto lang iano i—sa mga bata na nagkinahanglan. Dapat naay

mosupport unta naay hmm ang atong mga kuan then murag si sir naga ano man—naggahin man siya pero kulang pa *jud… Dapat maam mag provide sila ug support sa mga teachers ana. Support nga ano siya kanang ah… financial siguro maam para sa mga kuan para sa mga g*amitunon sa *mga bata."*

(In making the tools and materials, I think it is better if there is someone who will support for the production of materials instead of using the teacher's own pocket money. Though, Sir supported us but still it was not enough… They need to provide financial support to the teachers for the materials of the learners.)

In addition, IDI-06 affirmed that:

"Kana full support sa kana nga program. Dili lang kay kanang hapyaw lang nga support, full support gyud sa tanan mga needs sa teachers *...* ug sa learners. Ana *gud."*

(We need a full support for the MFAT program. Not just a simple support but a full support for the needs of the teachers and learners.)

Moreover, IDI-04 asserted to have uniformity of materials as said:

"So ang akoa lang no *...* hopefully ang sa MFAT nga tools mahimo siyang uniform ang mga gamit para dili man... dili man siya actually bug at gyud no himuon sa teacher, pero hopefully nga ma *kuan ang… mga* tools kanang uniform gyud kada *teacher."*

(For me, actually it is not a hard task but hopefully the MFAT tools will be given in uniform for each teacher.)

Lastly, IDI-03 verbalized that:

"Maam ang naka nindot gyud unta sa mga DepEd ano maam nohh para sa akoa maam noh is kanang diba ang MFAT naga conduct man gyud man please lang maam sa akoa lang ni maam *maghatag sila ug daghan na activity books maam ay kay dako kaayog tabang sa bata maam…* Something jud ba kanang concrete jud na magunitan nila ug mahimo jud nila pwede maam maghatag unta silag ing ana mga activity books, mga coloring books, mga written books dli lang gud book na pareha kabaga sa book nato kanang kanang ma enganyo ang bata kanang ma enganyo sa ginapalit *mall."*

(I hope that DepEd will provide more activity books because it is very helpful to the learners… I hope they will provide concrete materials that is pleasing and engaging to the learners like activity books, coloring books, and written books like in the mall.)

From the responses, the participants stated that they need the provision of materials for MFAT as well as in giving intervention to the learners.

Provision of MFAT Trainings and Seminars to Teachers

Conducting trainings and seminars is part of the implementation of any kind of programs. For the case of the implementation of MFAT, participants mentioned that they were not included in the training conducted in Region and Division level. That is why, they asserted that all grade one teachers should have training so that they could have more knowledge and capable in assessing and in giving interventions to the learners.

In line with this, FGD-06 asserted that:

"And I just wanted nga ma train pa gyud unta ta mga teachers ani. Makabalo na ta kung unsa atong strategy na i-apply based sa atoang mga na assess sa iyaha—sa results na atoang na assess. Unya, it also helps us to assess the child in a deeper way basing from the result since ang atong school diba— kanang we are advocating na no one should be left behind. So, mao ni siya kanang MFAT na program importante gyud pud siya pero unta hatagan pud ni siya kanang kuan sa--- ahh sa mga higher nato nga kanang unsa baning mga supervisor sa atong division nga itrain pud unta ta nilag tarong kay para mas ma kuan pa unta ta ba—kanang mas macapable pa ta—kanang mas makuan jud nato unsa juy purpose ani nga kanang program kay lisod kayo siya kung dili ta hanas ani nga ano kay dili baya jud nato ni *field."*

(I just wanted that all teachers should be trained. Because it will help us to determine what strategy www.ijrp.org to apply based on the result on how we assess the learner. It will also help us to assess the child in a deeper way since we are advocating that no one should be left behind. So, I hope the higher ups

will take action to train us more and to make us capable enough to do this program more successful to both teachers and learners.)

It is supported by IDI-05, as she said:

> *"Ah* kung ako lang pasabot maam na kanang murag kanang every time maam ba na kanang mag mag administer ani na assessment kanang dapat sa jud maam na ang mga teachers ahh itrain sa *jud daan."*

(I think it is better to train the teachers well, before letting them administer assessment to the learners.)

Further, IDI-02 claimed that:

> *"Then more* trainings nya seminar how to deal with these pupils no kay para sa akoa nakalitan mi igo rami nag igo ragud mi nagbasa atong ano nya diretso na hands-on sa bata so kinahanglan jud ug trainings unta jud para jud ma matutukan gyud masabtan gyud kung kung unsa ang dapat buhaton aning mga bata nga nga na belong *ani."*

(For me, teachers need to have more training and seminar on how to deal with these pupils because, for me, we were shocked. We just read the guide and immediately conducted hands-on to the learners. It definitely needs a proper training to fully understand on what we really need to do with them who belong in special learners.)

IDI-06 verbalized that:

> *"Kung* full support lang pud no ang DepEd or something provided jud *tanan… seminars, materials… Like sa pag… pag* support sa kanang tagaan mig mga teachers ug seminars kanang seminars gyud or workshop ba ron... ana *ba."*

(If only the DepEd will support fully or provide something for all like seminars and trainings… The support that teachers really need is giving them seminars and workshops.)

More so, FGD-07 narrated that:

> *"Unluckily, dili gyud ta trained no? A*-ako dili gyud ko trained ani. Though naa man tay mga ideas pero basi--- *gusto pa gyud nako ang deepened nga… unsa ba… kanang… basig naa lang* tay kulang pa gyud nga unsa na--- na knowledge kay especially dili ta trained nga mga teachers and then murag naa pud--- naa pud siyay specialty siguro gyud ani nga--- especially sa mga SPED *na teachers no so… mas kabalo gyud sila so. Kung naa ray proper training pud para sa atoa…* matagaan gyud tag-*exact knowledge. Nga ma assess ang mga bata and then… makabalo pud ta* unsa ang mga stra-strategy ug mga approaches na fitted *nga… para sa atoang mga concerned nga mga… identified nga mga learners no so… ma assess pud nato sila ug tarong no so mao na* siya ang akong *kuan… idea."*

(Unfortunately, we were not trained. I am not a trained teacher. Although I have some ideas, but I want to deepen more my knowledge about it because we were not trained teachers. It is an advantage to SPED teachers because they have knowledge. If there is proper training to this, we can assess the learners properly and able to give the type of strategy and approach suited to the learners.)

Furthermore, FGD-02 said that:

> *"Naa* gyud siyay training murag division-wide training for all teachers gyud dili lang kay magsulat lang ug kanang--- kanang isa nga participant ana or duha dapat tanan teachers ang maka attend para gyud kuan gyud ta well--- equipped jud ta ba kanang knowledge gyud ta ba knowledge gyud isa baya sa need kon tama ang MFAT. Dili baya gyud na kanang pataka lang kag ano kanang ingon. Kinahanglan gyud maka attend gyud ta tanan og training. Kato lang akoa *maam."*

(There should be a division-wide training for all teachers not only for one or two teachers. I hope that all teachers can attend to be fully equipped with knowledge on what is the right thing to do when implementing MFAT. We should not mindlessly say anything. It is necessary to attend the training. That is all.)

Another similar response by IDI-01 as pointed out that:

> *"So kung dapat kung pwede ang tanan na teacher especially sa grade one, i*-train jud sila tanan about anang *MFAT…* Murag mao nay dapat *nga…* dapat pag implement sa MFAT para matarong nimo siya og conduct, matarong og identify, ug labaw sa tanan dapat well trained jud ang mga *teachers para maka identify jud silag tama. Dili nga murag kuan lang… kanang makabalo jud* sila sa dapat buhaton, unsay mga tama nga procedure, ma conduct siya og *tarong."*

> (If possible, I hope all teachers in grade one will have a proper training about MFAT… The teachers should be well trained in order to conduct and identify the learners correctly. We need to know what to do and the procedure for us to conduct it properly.)

It was agreed and supported by FGD-05 as she stated that:

> *"Uhm,* pareha gihapon sa uban no nga ilahang suggestion nga kinahanglan i-train ang mga *teachers…"*

> (Like what the other said, teachers need a proper training.)

Another support from FGD-01 as she responded that:

> *"My* recommendations to our DepEd officials and sana *ahh…* marami kasing teachers sa grade one na hindi *trained eh…* mag conduct sila ng ano training ng lahat ng—ng grade one *teachers."*

> (My recommendation to our DepEd officials is that training for all grade one teachers because not all teachers are trained.)

Lastly, it is supported by FGD-03:

> *"Para* sa mga DepEd officials more training lang para gyud unta sa tanang grade one *teachers…* kana lang *maam."*

> (To the DepEd officials, more training for all grade one teachers.)

   Hence, teachers were vocal about the necesseity and importance of having training and seminars about MFAT for them to be knowledgeable and capable in conducting the tool to their learners.

Provision of Proper Time Allocation for MFAT
   In order to implement well the assessment and could focus in assessing the learners, the participants suggested to have proper time allocation to conduct the MFAT. They pointed out that the time given to them to implement the assessment was not enough. They were asking to conduct it during non -class hours. Also, they mentioned that they need more time to assess, plan, and make interventions for the learners.
   In relation with this, IDI-06 asserted that:

> *"Tagaan* pud mig time ba nga dili mag conflict kay syempre mag handle pa mig mga normal unya naa pay gi assess nimo. Di pud biya lalim no, grade one biya na, lower biya na gamay lang nimong talikod wa na nag pinatyanay na biya na. Mao nay problema. Unya di man pud ka ka focus kay nag assess ka, sige pud kag pangasaba. *screams* hooy sumbong diri sumbong didto. Oh asa namang focus ana sa inyong duha. Sa imong learners ug ang ikaw. Ma wa napud ka sa imong pasing sa imong pag *assess."*

> (I hope they will give us enough time to avoid conflicts with our normal classes and the assessment. It is not easy to deal with grade one learners because they are very hyper and that is the problem. And then you cannot even focus properly during the assessment because you have to discipline the learners. Where would be the focus between you and the learner? The pace of your assessment would be lost.)

It is supported by FGD-05 as she said:

> *"Ang* recommendation nga unta hatagan pug time para maka conduct ug MFAT nga dili during school hours kay kung school hours mag suffer pud ang imohang *klase."*

(The recommendation is hopefully we will be given time to conduct MFAT that is not during school hours. Because if it is during school hours, your class will be suffered.)

Furthermore, it was also supported by IDI-07 as verbalized that:

"Unta tagaan unta siyag time kanang pagtake gani nila ug MFAT test, dili dali dalion so unta dili lang kay ana lang na day, taas—ug pwede two weeks? Three weeks ana? Taas jud siya kay para ma identify jud, matarong jud nimog assess ang mga bata."

(I hope they will give time in taking the MFAT test. It should not be rushed. It needs two or three weeks in order to identify and assess the learners properly.)

Also, IDI-03 narrated how long would it take for her to conduct the assessment as she shared that:
Ang isa ka bata maam, uy makuan gud siya maam uy dugay dugay pud at least makahuman pud *kag mga… Para sa akoa maam no mga… kung imo jud siyang huna hunaon maam no, kanang* mag assess gud ko maam no kay mag assess ko sa iyaha, dili man nako siya mahuman karon adlawa maam mu—siya gihapon na bata pagka ugma dili nako makuan ma—two days? Man si— two settings? Murag ana maam ba. Dili siya pwede nga humanon nimo diha diha dayon kay wo— di nimo ma di man jud nimo maklaro kay daghan man *to."*

(If we think of it properly, one learner is quite difficult to handle. It would take more time. I really cannot finish the assessment in one day. You cannot just finish it suddenly; it has a lot of process.)

Aside from that, IDI-04 shared that:

"Ang bata bitaw nga kung mu assess man galing ta miski gani no ang mga doctors like mga pedia... developmental pedia mu assess man gani siya sa bata for or half half a day sa usa lang ka bata oh kay para lang pud jud ma assess niya ang tama nga assessment. Kailangan dili jud siya kanang dali dalion. Ing ana lang gyud *siya."*

(If we assess a learner, it needs to have a proper schedule. Even developmental pedia doctors' asses a child for half a day. The assessment on the identified learner needs an ample time to conduct properly.)

Lastly, IDI-01 also suggested that:

"Kanang separate nga schedule para sa pag conduct sa MFAT, dili idungan sa *klase…* Kung mag ma train na ang teacher, makahatag jud ug lahi nga time para sa pag conduct sa MFAT, dili nang i-apil sa klase. Pareha bitaw sa una sa SReYA since murag wala na may SReYA karon, dapat kanang MFAT ang i-puli. Unya before mag start ang school year, mag conduct na ug MFAT para ma identify nimo daan ang bata kung para ba jud siya diri nga classroom or didto ba sa other nga *classroom."*

(A separate schedule to conduct MFAT that is not during class hours… If the teacher will be trained, he/she can give time to conduct MFAT and not during class hours. Just like the SReYA before, MFAT should be the alternative. Before the school year starts, MFAT should be conducted to identify the learner at an early stage and assign them to the suited classroom.)

From the responses of the participants, they really need more and separate time for MFAT in order for them to conduct the assessment effectively.

A Call for Proper Psychological and Medical Assessment
or treatment to SPED Children

Another theme that surfaced is the call for proper psychological and medical assessment or treatment to SPED children. The participants asked for a proper assessment like psychological test for learners with disabilities by SPED teachers or any experts. Since they were more knowledgeable in handling those kinds of learners. Also, they were vocal about the matter that those identified learners must be given proper intervention by sending them to a SPED center school or SPED class.
In relation with this, IDI-04 shared that:

"Ang nahitabo man gud maam kay kung mupili ka atong mga bata nga dapat bantayan lang nimo *nga there's something wrong... there's something ana. Sa akoa lang importante kay siya para sa* tanan bata. Like pagsugod sa bata pag enroll sa akoa lang, gusto ko siya mahitabo nga mag psychological test *sa bata."*

(What happen is you only choose a specific learner with special needs to give your attention. For me, it is important to all students. Like when enrollment time, I want to have a psychological test for every student.)

More so, IDI-05 said that:

"Kung mga learning disability na gyud maam kay murag need na jud na siya sa kana ganing sa mga school gani maam nga naay kanang special needs jud gani maam. Kay para ma address jud kung unsa ang ilahang problem sa ilahang sa about sa ilahang learning devel*opment."*

(If in terms of learning disability, I think they need a school that offers special class to those with special needs. So that, their learning development problem will be addressed.)

It is supported by FGD-01 as she narrated that:

*"Gamit ang MFA*T na ano na result, mapakita nako sa akong co-teacher na major ng SPED na uy kailangan jud ni siya i-assess og utro kay base sa akong MFAT result naa juy problema ang bata. Unya kung i-insist ang bata na isulod sa akong klase, dili gyud siya matambalan. Dili *siya...* kay lahi man gud atoang lahi man ang learning style sa akoang mga sa normal ...sa normal lang *ba na ... na setting. Unya ang kanang ing-*ato na bata kailangan man siya og kanang sarili pud *niya na ano learning style. And then ako dili ko...wala koy k*akayahan na mohatag man gud ato. *And then...* ahhh fortunately kay sila nay nag estorya katong co-teacher nako ug katong parent na adto gud nila sa school. Na send din siya sa SPED Center. Oh na send gyud ang bata. And then ahhh karon ang bata improving na siya kasi ing-*ana man gyud ang ... kung sa doctor pa ba* tama na nga reseta. Tama na tambal ang nahatag sa patient so ing-ana. So nag develop ang bata and then luckily nasa mainstreamed na siya ahh so mao lang to *siya maam."*

(With the MFAT result, I could use it to seek advice to my co-teacher who is major in SPED. That the learner needed to be assessed again because based on the result, the learner has a problem. And if they insisted to put the learner in my class, the problem of the learner would not be addressed properly because they have different learning style when it comes to normal learners. Those learners with problems had their own learning style. And then, fortunately the parent of the learner was referred directly to my co-teacher and eventually the learner was transferred to the SPED Center School. As of now, the learner is improving because he/she is already at the right school to develop the learner's ability.)

Similarly, FGD-03 uttered that:

"Dapat jud to sila sa kuan sa SPED center kung naa gyud ing-ana na case. Oohh ohh case to case *lang po."*

(They need to be admitted to the SPED center if there is a case.)

Lastly, IDI-01 reiterated that:

"Ang hangyo namo nga kung kuan... kung naa gyuy ma identify ang teacher nga bata nga naay disabilities, dapat ilahi gyud siya diritso maam. Kay useless man gud mag conduct kag MFAT ma *identify nimo ang bata nga... nga naa siyay murag dili siya pareha iipon sa* uban bata. Unya di man gihapon siya i- lahi, iipon man gihapon sa among *... among classroom."*

(My only favor is that if there is an identified learner that has disabilities, he/she should be transferred immediately to a proper class. Because it is still useless to conduct MFAT if you have identified a learner who is different with other learners then you would still not separate him/her.)

Based on their responses, participants wanted to address and help those learners with disabilities by sending to them a SPED school or SPED teachers since they are more capable and more knowledgeable enough to teach well those learners.

A Call for MFAT Teachers to be Resourceful, Patient, Cooperative, and Committed

The last theme that emerged is a call for MFAT teachers to be resourceful, patient, cooperative and positive. The participants pointed-out that having patience and love for learners, encouraging each other, flexible/versatile, dedicated, committed, resourceful, and optimistic in work were their suggestions in order to surpass the challenges and problems during the implementation of MFAT.

In relation with this, IDI-04 claimed that:

> *"Kita teachers no kay we are expected to be… resourceful. We are expected kana bitawng nag*
> expect najud ang mga tao sa atoa nga kaya nato tanan, kaya nato buhaton tanan. Sa akoa lang
> jud siguro is, dili man siya bug at dili gyud siya bug at, ang ako lang gyud ma suggest is tagaan
> lang gyud siya ug taas na pasensya labaw na sa mga bata. Labaw na ug makabalo naka sa result
> sa assessment nimo sa *bata."*

> (We teachers are expected to be resourceful. People expect us that we can do everything. It is
> not that hard but for me, it needs patience when it comes to the learner especially if you already
> know the result of the assessment.)

It is supported by FGD-02 as she said that:

> *"Dapat* lang pud mga kuan patience naa juy kanang dugang ano siya kanang pasensya no sa pag
> handle aning mga *bataa."*

> (You need to have more patience to handle those identified learners.)

Another support from IDI-05 as she pointed out that:

> *"Dapat pud maam kanang since ang kani siya na kind of assessment kay very time*-consuming
> man gyud siya maam no so we have more kanang patience gani maam nga amoa jung ihatag sa
> mga bata kay para pud sa *… for* the good of our *learners."*

> (Since this kind of assessment is very time consuming, we need to have more patience to them
> and that is also for the good of our learners.)

IDI-06 also suggested that:

> *"Siguro ana nalang encouragement nalang sa teacher ang mahatag and then kay wa man tay*
> *laing… maam kay atoa manang profession so mao gyud patience gyud. Trabaho man nato na*
> *kana…* trabaho man nato na. wa tay mabuhat gi-sweldohan man *ta sa gobyerno."*

> (I think, we should give encouragement to the teachers because that it is the nature of our
> profession, so patience is a must. We work in the government that give us the salary, and with that
> we must work well.)

In addition, FGD-01 shared that:

> *"My suggestion to… to my co-teachers in… in our school and to… to other school… … m*-more
> flexible ang task teachers in the implementation of the MFAT pero I know all teachers, flexible
> man ta. But then, kanang sometimes, kanang mag--- low morale na ta ba like lalo na sa kanang
> *mga… sapaw sapaw na gud baya ang mga reports nya lalo ang MFAT gina conduct siya*
> *beginning sa klase and then wala pa gani nato na… na kanang--- wala pa nahimutang ang kanang*
> butang sa--- sa atong classroom like tung mga records tapos left and right reports here comes ang
> *MFAT na need ng much time na pag implement. So ang ano… my suggestion ahh… ano lang…*
> positive lang tayo always, yun *lang."*

> (My suggestion to my co-teachers is that be more flexible with the task in the implementation of
> MFAT. I know we are all flexible but sometimes we are in our low morale, loads of reports,
> records here and there, and there is this MFAT that need much time to implement. My suggestion
> is that be positive always.)

In addition, FGD-03 pointed out the importance of collaboration and seeking help to MFAT coordinator as she said:
> *"Kuan* maam, para sa akoa uhm collaborative work lang po--- sa mga teachers--- co teachers sa
> school kay kami ra man gud magtinabangay then mag seek lang pud ug help sa coordinator kay
> sila man ang naka train jud *ana."*

> (For me is collaborative work for teachers and co-teachers, because it is just us who can help one
> another and also, we can seek help to the coordinator since they are trained.)

It is supported by FGD-05 as she said that:

"Collaborative gihapon ana naay tinabangay na kung ma---kung pwede gani unta katong trained na teachers mao ra unta tong mu assess sa mga bata kung dili ma train tanan ang mga--- tung gi re-echo lang--- kato jung na trained gyud mao gyud tong mu assess. Anyway, gamay raman ang bata nga ikuan niya I assess--- halimbawa tag duha *ana."*

(Still have collaboration and help one another. If possible, if not all grade 1 teachers will undergo training, only those trained teachers should assess the students. Only the trained ones are the one who should assess the students.)

Another support was from FGD-06 as she mentioned:

"Kato kanang collaborative work pud kanang through your kanang grade level *ingana."*

(We need to have collaborative work within your grade level.)

Futhermore, IDI-03 said that:

"Basta lang pud ang maestra pud dli man pud ma iwasan na kapuyon kay tao lang man pud ta sa imo put to our mind na importante siya na butang para ma identify nato ang capability satong bata iyang learning styles. Kung asa siya kusgan, kung asa siya hinay. Para kay mao naman ni *atong.... atong gipili na trabaho noh*h teaching na profession ato lang jud ibutang satong heart and mind na mao jud ni atong trabaho. So dapat ang teacher kay papaano dedicated pud siya bisag pungot pero kay ibutang satong hunahuna na diri ta gibutang sa Ginoo so gamiton pud nato ang gihatag sa ato na gift gihimo man ta niyag teacher so diri gyud teaching gyud para gyud ni sa mga bata so satong heart jud para ni sa mga bata. kay abi nimo maam para sa akoa bisag unsa pa ka gwapo sa program sa gobyerno kung kami mismo kita mismo na mga teacher nega kaayo ta kay kuan wala gyud siya *useless."*

(It is inevitable to the teachers to feel tired because they are also human. MFAT is very important to identify the capability of learners' learning styles. What their strengths and weaknesses. This is our job; teaching is our profession, and we must keep it in our mind and heart. We have to be dedicated even if there are some learners who gave us headache. This is where God put us, so we must use the gift of God properly to teach the students. Whatever the program will be implemented by the government, if the teacher is not dedicated and always negative then it is useless.)

Hence, IDI-07 pointed out that:

"Mao jud nay pinaka una, kay kung love na nimo imong mga estudyante, mangita jud kay paagi nga ma identify nimo sila unsaon nimo sila pagtabang nga mudako unta sila na okay gyud unta uy mao man gyud na atong pinaka mission pinaka goal nato nga teacher ba na mapadako nato ang mga bata unta nga tarong. So unahon jud nimo, love nimo imong mga bata kay diha man gud dili naka—di naka mag bagutbot ana siya *tanan."*

(If you love your students, you always find ways to identify them on how to help them in growing to be better. It is our main mission and goal as teachers. You need to love your student first so that you would not waste your time complaining about them anymore.)

Dedication, love, collaboration, resourcefulness, patience, and flexibility are all positive traits that participants had suggested in order to implement successfully the MFAT.

After a numerous review and analysis of the transcriptions of the participants' responses, the themes and the core ideas were formulated. They helped to easily understand the results of the study which are all about the lived experiences of untrained public elementary teachers on the implementation of MFAT in teaching learners.

DISCUSSIONS

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore and understand the lived experiences of untrained public elementary teachers on the implementation of Multi-Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT) in teaching learners. To gather substantial data, online in-depth interview and focus group discussion were used using the validated interview guide questions given by the validators. The selected participants were asked on the three research questions of the study. Then, all the questions formulated had been answered by them who expressed significant data that have undergone thorough analysis through the help of the experts.

Experiences of Untrained Grade 1 Teachers on the Implementation of Multi-Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT) in Teaching Learners

These untrained grade 1 teachers who were chosen to be the participants of the study shared their different experiences on the implementation of Multi-Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT). From the transcription of their responses, six (6) major themes emerged: (1) meeting learners with learning and special needs; (2) observing learners who lack focus and energy to tasks; (3) lacking

information and training on the nature of assessment; (4) encountering in-denial and uncooperative parents; (5) having time constraints and inconsistent assessment schedules; and (6) having difficulties in preparing the location and materials.

Meeting Learners with Learning and Special Needs

The data collected based on the questions regarding the experiences encountered by the participants on the implementation of MFAT revealed that they met learners who had difficulty in reading, numeracy, writing, psychomotor skills, and with special needs. This implies that there were grade one learners who struggled to perform formal academic activities and had shown learning difficulties. Hence, teachers were able to know their level, lacking and difficulties through the assessment tool.

In line with this, Juntereal (2019) emphasized that Multi-Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT) assess those who have difficulty in seeing, hearing, applying fundamental information, understanding, focusing, walking, climbing, grasping, and communicating. This is one of the programs imposed by the DepEd to help increase access to quality education of the learners with learning difficulties and needs. In this study, the participants used MFAT to assess the learners' difficulties and needs in learning.

According to Karunanayake et al. (2020), the first persons to notice the difficulties of the learners in academics are the classroom teachers. They help to gather information about them through assessment. Examples of learning difficulties are severe difficulties in reading, spelling, writing, and arithmetic. As well as those who exhibit clumsiness in hand and eye coordination tasks, difficulty in associating speech sounds with the symbols in writing and reading. Also, the other signs that can be observed in learners with learning difficulties are having difficulty in expressing their ideas or thoughts, lack of understanding on time and distance, doing guessing when reading and get easily distracted. In this study, participants had met learners who had learning difficulties and special needs.

Observing Learners Who Lack Focus and Energy to Tasks

Unfocused and uninterested behavior of learners in the classroom cause disruption and slow speed in their learning pace. Just like what happened to the participants as they implemented the tool. The behavior of learners during the assessment was found to be one of the problems they encountered. They observed that the learners tend to be uncooperative, unfocus, unruly, tired, unprepared, and uncontrollable. And they pointed out that some of the reasons why their learners behaved that way were because they were already eager to go home, not in the mood to do the task, and got distracted by the environment. Also, these factors contributed also to the reasons why the participants need more time to complete the assessment since they needed to condition first the learners before they could proceed to the activities.

In connection with this, learners need a healthy environment to increase and improve their performance like in assessment. Thus, it is important to keep the learning environment clean, quiet, comfortable. Furthermore, one of the priorities of the educators is to create an ideal and conducive learning environment considering the combination of several factors like lighting, control of noise and temperature. The extent of the enhancement of students' learning depends on the environment, and location within the school (Usman & Madudili, 2019). The learners of the participants could not focus during their assessment because of the noise and distraction due to their peers as they could see them leaving and going home. They were already uncomfortable and unwilling to participate.

Moreover, the intrinsic motivation of Self-determination Theory refers to the tendency of a child to see the novelty and enjoyment of the activity, interested to learn, extend, and explore. When a child is intrinsically motivated, she/he would be willing to engage in a task and would find it interesting and satisfying (Domenico & Ryan, 2017). The learners were seen to be uninterested, uncooperative, and unwilling during the assessment since they were already tired. Also, they did not find the assessment interesting, too difficult, and lose motivation to do the task because of that, some teachers thought of ways to motivate their learners.

Lacking Information and Training on the Nature of Assessment

Information and training could be a great help to successfully implement a certain program or tool since they the implementers knowledge and expertise as to how to use and apply that in the field. But in the case of the participants, they revealed that they had not attended formal training on how to implement the MFAT as well as how to handle and what interventions should be given to the learners with special needs. Because of that, they experienced difficulties during the implementation of MFAT since they implemented it despite having a lack of information, experiences, and training on the nature of assessment.

In relation to that, Suryaningrum et al. (2016) as cited by Suharsiwi & Pandia (2020) pointed that teachers still had difficulty in early detecting the developmental growth of their students using the assessment tool. The problems that they have experienced were the lack of teacher expertise in performing detection and insufficient awareness of teachers on special needs of students. Like in the experiences of the participants, they encountered problems with the procedure of the assessment since they had limited experiences and knowledge about the assessment and in dealing with learners with special needs.

Also, it is known that assessment has a great influence and implication on the teaching and learning process and that it could be employed and conducted to achieve good outcomes. Also, it is significant that learners with special needs could get benefit from the assessment so that they could participate well in school since they would be addressed based on the result of the assessment and eventually could adapt to society. However, the teachers in schools are not all trained professionals in determining and assessing learners with special needs (Gutuza et al., 2016). Also for the experiences of the participants, they knew the significance of the assessment tool to their learners however they were disappointed that not all grade 1 teachers were included in the training for MFAT.

The result aligned to the Albert Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1997). It referred to the confidence of a person's ability to carry out behaviors required to produce specific achievements in results. Self-efficacy represented confidence and ability to control one's own motivation, actions, and social environment (Forsyth & Carey, 2009). All grade 1 teachers are mandated to conduct the assessment tool in their classrooms however some of them are not confident and have difficulty implementing well the tool to their learners since not all were trained in MFAT.

Encountering In-denial and Uncooperative Parents

Parents' acceptance and cooperation are the vital keys to achieve great outcomes of the learners' development. Because, as the parents accept the standing and real level of their children with special needs in terms of academic performance, they may

help them by supporting and assisting in their activities. However, the parents of the identified learners of the participants were in denial and uncooperative. When they knew the results and observations from the teachers about their child's performance, they denied and contradicted it. Because of that, teachers had difficulty giving assessments and interventions to their learners since they did not receive support and cooperation coming from them.

In connection to the results, Suharsiwi and Pandia (2020) stated that teachers have difficulty in interacting with the parents about the situations of their children. Parents also see their child's issues differently from the teacher. Also, they do not take seriously the problem and conditions of their children. While other parents are hesitant to ask for a consultation with experts regarding the development of their child. They have a lack of information about it which can affect the psychological condition of their children in the future.

Also, every time the parents found out that there is something wrong with their child through diagnosis or assessment, they tend to be shocked. That situation would be considered as their most difficult experience. In some cases, parents' first reaction when they know their child has difficulties in learning, they tend to be negative and feel like in grief. Families might adapt the result easily and think for actions to help their children or deny and resist the diagnosis (Blacher,1984, Marvin & Pianta, 1996 & Falik, 1995 as cited by Yulianti & Denessen, 2018).

This result is gleaned through the Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model. As he mentioned in his model that microsystems include any connection or relationship that has direct interaction with the child, such as family, friends, and school setting. The other one is mesosystem which describes the interrelationships of different microsystems. Best example of it is the involvement of the parents in their children's schooling which can give positive influence on their academic performance and competence by supporting them in their activities (Ashiabi & O'Neal, 2015). This could relate to the situation of the teachers, parents, and the learners with special needs. If the parents, who have direct interaction and relationship with the learners, would support and accept the teacher's suggestions and recommendations for their children, it would greatly affect their development and performance. Then this would lead to positive outcomes, like their needs would be addressed.

Having Time Constraints, and Inconsistent MFAT Schedules

Based on the data collected from the responses of the participants, the factors that affect the effectiveness of implementing MFAT were the time and schedules. Most of them stated that the assessment itself took a lot of time to finish because of the many activities on it. Aside from that, they were not given the exact and separate schedule for the assessment. That is why there were forced to conduct it during their class hours, and it caused conflict with other learners and works inside the classroom.

In relation to this, one of the factors for the slow implementation of a new assessment is that it consumes a lot of time to conduct and to understand, which is opposite to an easy standardized test. Also, it needs more people to involve, the observation must be done several times, the learning phases would take longer time to do as well as the different instruments and modalities (Lebeer et al., 2015). Just like the nature of the implementation of MFAT. It also consumed a lot of time to complete since it has many activities or phases.

Moreover, Young et al. (2018) mentioned in their study that thorough assessment is time-consuming. The amount of time needed is considered as one of the problems for teachers who may not have extra time while conducting the assessment inside their classrooms. Since they also need to attend to their other students and responsibilities in the classroom. Like what happened during the implementation of MFAT of the participants, some of them conducted it inside their classrooms. Then, they encountered the problem of managing their class and the identified learner at the same time during the assessment.

Having Difficulties in Preparing the Location and Materials

Implementation of the assessment is easier and more achievable when there are available materials and designated location or area. That two aspects would help the teachers to have a smooth and successful implementation of the assessment in their schools. However, participants pointed out that they were not provided with materials beforehand and some of them were forced to conduct during their class hours. Then, they found that their classroom as an unconducive location for assessment since they could not focus properly on the identified learners because they had to attend at the same time the other learners.

This is supported by Butarbutar et al. (2018) as they stated in their study that one of the challenges in the implementation of assessment is the lack of available space. In order to be able to do properly the assessment, they need a place to work and store the students' output and the materials. If the location or area is unavailable, it will hinder and delay the implementation of the authentic assessment. Like what happened during the implementation of MFAT by the participants, their assessment was disturbed due to the noise made by the other learners inside the classroom.

Also, Zhao et al. (2020) mentioned that they found in relevant studies that despite teachers' positive attitudes towards implementation of the program, they still failed to implement the changes due to the factors like resources and materials. The participants also experienced the same. They were having difficulty implementing the MFAT as some of the materials or resources were not provided to them aside from time and lack of training.

Hence, as the free primary education program was implemented at schools, now, the teachers have encountered learners with disabilities and special needs in their classrooms. Since these learners still need to be assessed, this gives challenges to the teachers in providing better classroom support. They face huge difficulty in getting information through assessment for the increased number of learners with special needs (Gutuza et al., 2016).

Coping Mechanisms of Untrained Grade 1 Teachers on the Implementation of Multi-Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT) in Teaching Learners

Along with the challenges faced by the teachers on the implementation of Multi-Factored Assessment Tool, they managed to develop coping mechanism to overcome such challenges. After analyzing the transcripts of the responses of the participants, five (5) themes emerged as their coping mechanism, these include: (1) setting flexible schedule; (2) being resourceful in devising materials and learning task; (3) providing coordination and support to teachers from heads, colleagues, and experts; (4) establishing open communication and cooperation of parents; and (5) finding ways to get the interest of the learners.

Setting Flexible Schedules

Setting schedules is one way to carry out well the procedure of a certain activity. Teachers believed that setting flexible schedules make their implementation easier and successful as they could focus properly in assessing the learners since there were no disturbances and noises from the other learners. Moreover, they also included in their schedules the giving of interventions through remedial classes. During that sessions, they could focus on teaching and addressing their needs after getting the information of their deficiencies through MFAT. They continued the remedial classes until they could see the improvement on their learners.

In relation to this, Balinas et al. (2017) stated in their study that the schools facilitate programs in the formal curriculum for the literacy development to some of their learners. One of those is the integration of intervention programs to address the needs of the learners especially those who need more special attention in the aspect of literacy. Particularly, they implement half-day remediation classes every week. The participants also did the same. They initiated to conduct remedial sessions, almost every day, after their half-day classes. It is one way of giving intervention to those learners who need more attention and with special needs.

Aside from that, Johnson (2017) emphasized that to enhance their scholastic performance, remedial instruction with parental participation should be done to the children with learning disabilities. It is significant to utilize multifactorial assessments and to devise an individualized education plan for these children with learning disabilities. Before they could give remedial classes to the identified learners, participants as first the consent of their participants so that they could return their child in school for remedial. This kind of intervention helps the learners with difficulties and special needs to improve and give individual instruction.

Further, scheduling time for assessment allows students to have enough length of time to complete a test. They needed extra time to do the process such as in written text, use tools and equipment, and to complete the tasks. Also, students who cannot focus on the entire testing period or who easily get distracted or needed more time for relaxation break in order to gain back the concentration and alertness to complete a test (Kansas, 2020). Since, there are a lot of disturbances and noises inside the classroom, the participants had set different schedules for the assessment so that they learners could focus on performing and answering the assessment tool.

Being Resourceful in Devising Materials and Alternative Tasks

Teachers are like jacks of all trade. Despite being unexpert in some aspects, teachers still tried to find any possible means and ways to overcome difficulties in work. Being resourceful is one of their strategies. Devising available resources was one of the coping mechanisms of teachers in order to create materials and learning tools needed in the assessment. Lastly, they gave alternative tasks like differentiated activities to the learners as some of their interventions.

According to Etiubon (2015), resourcefulness of the teachers is the response to the inevitable changes of the needs of learners to make them prepared to surpass the emerging challenges in education. Also, they find ways to overcome challenges in teaching and assessing learners and know how to use means to solve the problems in different ways despite working in difficult situations. They use skillful application of making alternative or innovative materials to broaden and assess the learners' knowledge and skills. Despite being unknowledgeable enough in teaching learners with special needs and asked to reproduced the materials for the assessment, the participants still tried to be creative in addressing them all. They coped them by being resourceful in overcoming the difficulties.

Moreover, teachers give different tasks based on the developmental level of learners and difficulties. Teachers provide learning opportunities for learners to express themselves. Examples of it are showing images/drawings, telling about real-life experiences, tiered tasks, rearranging furniture to allow individual or group discussions, and using varied text and materials (Celik, 2019). One of the interventions of the participants in addressing the needs and deficiencies of the learners was giving different or alternative tasks like coloring books, hands-on activities, story books, images, and manipulative objects. They provided differentiated materials based on their performance and learning level.

Providing Coordination and Support to Teachers
from Heads, Colleagues, and Experts

It takes a community to implement well a program in an institution. Teachers could not face alone the processes and responsibilities in implementing a certain program in their classrooms without the help from others. They depend on the coordination and support coming from their school heads, colleagues as well as form the experts in order to implement it successfully since they are more knowledgeable in that matter. Everyone must work together in order to provide quality education to the learners and help them develop holistically.

According to Chakraborty and Kaushik (2019), support from the external organization and resource people like experts, special educators and SPED schools are needed by the teachers. Also, they need help from more knowledgeable persons within the institution who can guide and help them in classroom practices related to the learning development aspects of the learners with special needs and their assessment. In their responses, participants pointed out that they needed help and support from other persons such as SPED teachers, trained teachers, and colleagues to address the needs of learners as well as to know the proper procedure of the assessment.

Moreover, it was emphasized that teachers are highly in need to collaborate with their colleagues about the matter of identifying and discerning the educational needs of the learners and advices about their education and approaches to use for interventions. Also, the most frequently utilized collaboration is the sharing of knowledge and information, teaching activities useful to achieve quality education for learners (Mallillin, 2019). The participants shared how their co-teachers help each other. They had meetings, orientation, re-echo and brainstorming about the matter and problems encountered during their assessment.

Aside from that, the lack of funding and insufficient support from the school principal has consequences on the effectiveness and sustainability of the school activities like conducting assessment. Without their support and enough resources, teachers would be unlikely to be effective in their work (Boitumelo et al., 2020). Participants emphasized the importance of the

support of their school head in implementing the MFAT. One factor to have successful implementation is the provision of materials from the school heads.

Establishing Open Communication and Cooperation of Parents

Through communication with the parents, teachers can inform them about the status of their child in the school. It is a vital step to have coordination between the parents and teachers which is significant for monitoring and updating the educational progress of their child. For the participants to have a successful implementation of MFAT, they asked for support from their parents so that they could assess their child properly and give intervention. Various ways were done just to communicate and inform the parents about their significant role and participation in assessing their child.

Parents' and teachers' communication and cooperation are significant in achieving the goals for the improvement and development of the learners. However, there are still unaware parents about the problems of their child's development and abilities for some reasons. That is why, there are some who are late in handling and addressing their child's needs (Pandia, 2020). The participants made effort just to inform the parents about their child's status and needs by having short a conference, sending letters and constant communication.

As Adams et al. (2016) cited the following statements from different authors: Active communication of teachers and parent is important for mutual decision making and ideas for the improvement of learners' development and performance. It may be done in different ways (Taylor et al., 2009). Also, Lee and Low (2013) noted that communication between parents and teachers is important for them to be able to share ideas, information and collaborate for the betterment of the child. This will be effective if both are honest and supportive of each other's duties, roles, and responsibilities (Unger et al., 2001). In connection, the participants explained to the parents their responsibilities in the education of their child especially that they needed more attention and helped from experts. Also, they were honest to them about the deficiency of their child that they needed immediate assessment and intervention.

Finding Ways to Get the Interest of the Learners

Interest is a strong motivator that ignites learning and willingness to accomplish a task. Primary learners need captivating motivators to sustain their interest and focus during the activity. If they find something uninteresting and tiresome, they get easily bored and unwilling to listen and perform the activity. That was what happened to the participants while conducting the assessment. To kept the learners interested in the assessment, they motivated them. Also, the participants made the learners felt that they were loved, cared, and valued.

In relation to this, Filgona et al. (2020) stated that as teachers, you should consider your students' needs, desires, aspirations, and behaviors so you will be able to encourage them to learn and do the tasks. You should build an atmosphere that motivates them because if they not, they will be unlikely to listen to your class and do the tasks. It is your responsibility to maintain their interest in learning and doing the tasks such as the assessments. In connection to the results of the study, the participants stated that when they conducted the assessment, they made sure that the interest of the learners was sustained. They mentioned that they motivated, persuaded, and captivated their interest for them to participate in the assessment.

Further, this theme is seen through the Self-determination theory. It is mentioned in this theory that one of the basic needs that affect the motivation, performance, and increased involvement of persons is the relatedness in which it refers to the interaction with other people, sense of belongingness in a community and the feeling that being liked, loved, and respected by the classmates, peers, and teachers (Domenico & Ryan, 2017). Same as what the participant did to their learners during assessment, to get their interest and motivate them during the assessment, they made them felt that they are loved, valued, and cared for. By doing so, they felt that they were not rejected nor forsaken nor punished.

Insights of the Untrained Grade 1 Teachers Regarding the Implementation of MFAT that Can be Shared to Other teachers, Education Administrators, and the Division Office

The participants in this study shared their insights on the implementation of Multi-Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT). From their views and experiences, participants' responses emerged in seven (7) major themes namely: (1) MFAT as a valuable tool cater the needs of learners; (2) intensification of parent cooperation in MFAT implementation; (3) provision of financial support and MFAT tools and materials to teachers; (4) provision of MFAT trainings and seminars to teachers; (5) provision of proper time allocation for MFAT; (6) a call for proper psychological and medical assessment or treatment to SPED children; and (7) a call for MFAT teachers to be resourceful, patient, cooperative, and committed.

MFAT as a Valuable Tool to Cater the Needs of Learners

It is inevitable to have at least one learner with learning deficiencies, difficulties, and disabilities in a regular classroom. So the Department of Education aims to identify those learners who are mainstreamed in public regular schools as early phase as possible. As they wanted to help and cater earlier the needs of those learners so that in higher years to come, they would not struggle in their schooling. Then they would successfully develop as capable and independent citizens and individuals. One of their solutions was the implementation of MFAT in public elementary schools specifically in grade one level. This assessment helped the grade one teachers to provide the information needed in making appropriate intervention plans in order to address the needs of the learners.

In relation to this, Richards et al. (2016) stated that students are assessed to know their baseline (levels of performance before instruction or intervention), areas of strengths, and needs. The outcomes of the assessment are analyzed and utilized to make effective evidence-based instruction that best meets the students' needs. It is a must to accept diversity and differences in a favorable way. The learners of the participants in the study are assessed using the MFAT to know and identify their difficulties, needs and abilities. Results were the basis to make effective and appropriate interventions and teaching instructions to address and cater their needs.

In addition, Multi-Factored Assessment Tool would help the teachers to provide the information needed in making appropriate intervention programs. Further, using the observation checklist and interview with the parents or guardians, teachers

can validate the behavior and responses of learners during the assessment. Upon conducting the MFAT, teachers ensure that the materials needed for the assessment are labeled properly, complete, and arranged. Aside from that, teachers must prepare the place wherein the assessment will be done and allocate separate time intended for MFAT (Llego, 2020). Based on the responses of the participants, they were able to identify the deficiencies, needs, and difficulties of the learners uing MFAT.

Inclusion is described as a process of addressing and reacting to the diverse needs of all the children and youth by increasing involvement in learning, communities, and cultures, as well as reducing exclusion from education. Also, it entails improvement, modification, and changes in teaching content, strategies, and approaches with the shared aim to cater all the children's needs. Also, it believes that it is the responsibility of the teachers to educate all the children (Imaniah & Fitria, 2018). MFAT is in line with the inclusive education program as it aims to address and help those learners with special needs to improve despite being in regular classrooms. Participants modified their teaching approaches based on the level of the learners.

Intensification of Parent Cooperation in Conducting MFAT

The success of a certain educational program also depends on how the parents react and support to achieve its goals. As for the implementation of MFAT, parents were found to have a lack of support, understanding, and cooperation during the conduct of assessment on their children. Many parents were in denial of the results of the assessment. With that, teachers faced difficulties in utilizing the tool with their learners. Also, it affected the effectiveness and success of the program during its implementation phase. The participants suggested intensifying the parents' cooperation in conducting assessment through orientation, communication, or conference for them to have awareness and know the importance of it to their child's development.

According to Roxas et al. (2019) the challenges of having in-denial parents of the learners with special needs must be addressed by inviting them in a discussion about the importance of education to their child with special needs so that they could help them improve and harness their abilities. Another way is by conducting orientation to the parents and asking support from the government for financial assistance in addressing the problems in the SPED program and inclusive schools. Similarly, the participants also suggested the same way that parents should have orientation so that they could have information about the MFAT and the importance of it in addressing the needs of their children.

Teachers have a huge impact on parents' decision to get involved in their children's education. Teachers who reach out to parents and encourage involvement are more likely to inspire them to participate in their children's education and in assessment. Teachers who motivate and encourage parents' participation and establish good relationships are better able to provide support needed for children's education (Collier et al., 2015). Having communication with their parents could encourage them to participate and cooperate during the implementation of MFAT.

In the study of Islam (2019), he mentioned that he conducted meeting between teachers and parents who are less participative in their children's education. It is to encourage them to communicate more with the teachers and school. By informing them through meeting and forming partnerships, it improves the learners' achievement level. Hence, involving the parents in the education of their children through parent-teacher meetings has a positive effect on the children's school outcomes. In connection, it was also pointed out by the participants during the interview that parents should have meeting about MFAT prior to its implementation. So that, they would be aware of it and encourage to work together in giving interventions to the learners. By doing that, learners' performance and learning outcomes may be improved.

Provision of Financial Support and MFAT Tools and Materials to Teachers

If the teachers were given financial support and enough tools and materials for MFAT, for sure they had been at ease and effectively implement the assessment in their respective schools. Materials are the primary means of gathering information and testing the abilities and capabilities of the learners. Without these, teachers could not immediately and effectively access the learners. That is why the participants suggested having provision of financial support and materials to have a successful implementation of the assessment tool.

Funding may not have a direct effect on inclusive assessment, but it is needed. Government supports mainstreaming inclusive education through the provision of financial support and incentives to public schools. Moreover, funding is a significant factor in providing high-quality learning programs to help teachers develop their ability to teach and assess children with disabilities in inclusive settings (Chakraborty & Kaushik, 2019). Since one of the teaching and learning processes of teachers is giving assessment to the learners like the MFAT, the department and the government must give financial support in terms of the materials so that teachers could easily implement the MFAT. Just like what the participants expressed about this matter. They implemented a program, yet they were not provided with complete materials.

According to Larco et al. (2018), the participants in their study confessed to have a lack of consistency when implementing the program like assessment tool but still adhere to the sequence. In response to required administrative decisions, they mentioned that collaboration and support in providing necessary resources resulted in the primary pattern. Also, they expressed the need for materials or resources required for effective implementation. Similarly, participants also expressed their desire for the provision of materials for the implementation of MFAT program. Since there were some of them were not provided or had incomplete materials.

Provision of MFAT Trainings and Seminars to Teachers

Trainings and seminars play an important role for teachers to be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge about a new program mandated by the department that needs to be implemented and applied in schools and classrooms. If the teachers had no experience or training in the program specifically on MFAT, they could not implement it effectively and properly since they were unknowledgeable and unexpert on how to conduct it to their learners. Thus, to effectively achieve its aims, they should equip the implementers through training and seminars.

In connection with that, Crouse et al. (2018) mentioned that there are developmental activities and programs mandated to implement in some schools. But teachers are vocal about their sentiments in seeking out and requesting training in those areas in which they feel less skilled and confident like conducting assessment. Through that, they perceive that they will enhance their professional skills which leads to mastery and expertise in performing the profession. In relation to the insights of the participants, they were vocal about their desire to have training and seminars for all grade one teachers about the implementation of MFAT. They

admitted that they were not skilled and confident enough to perform and conduct the assessment. That is why they suggested having provision of training and seminars so that they would be knowledgeable about assessing learners with special needs.

More so, it is important to give knowledge on assessment and testing. Teachers should be educated or trained so that they would appreciate the importance and purpose of the assessment, if not, the quality of classroom instruction and assessment will not improve. To be knowledgeable, expert, and skilled in conducting tests and assessments, teachers need professional development opportunities like training and seminars. Because attending those professional training would equip them with the concepts and challenging nature of the assessment and updated them with the assessment practices (Sultana, 2019). If the participants would be provided with training and seminars for MFAT, they wouold be knowledgeable and skilled in assessing learners with special needs. Also, they would know the proper procedure of the assessment.

Provision of Proper Time Allocation for MFAT

Allocating time is part of planning activity so that you can achieve the target. It also contributes to make your activity done effectively and properly since you prioritize and focus on that during your time. Like what the participants expressed during the interview. They wanted to have separate and ample time to conduct MFAT so that they could implement it and assess the learners properly since some of them had problems conducting assessments during class hours.

In the study of a Canadian educator, Brackenweed (2008) as cited by Gainey (2020) found that teachers reported having a significantly high level of stress as a result of a lack of support for inclusive education. The primary stressors are the tasks that clashed with the teacher's instructional time like assessment, paperwork, time management, insufficient time for teachers in managing learners with special needs. In the case of the participants, they were having problems during the instructional time since they had to conduct the assessment at the same time. It gave them stress in terms of managing the class. They did not have separate time for assessment. Because of that, they were forced to conduct the assessment on several days since they only had limited time during class hours.

As cited by Larco et al. (2018), Cegarra (2008) stressed the importance of identifying the time management dimension in scheduling the tasks, where the efficiency and continuity of the process affect the scheduler's cognitive demands. Furthermore, such time management affects the scheduler's productivity in terms of time spent on scheduling task and enabling activities for the remaining time (Jackson et al. 2004) as well as workload smoothing which has been shown to affect the decision quality (Gonzalez 2005). Allocating time for assessment can be achieved by having time management. Participants asked for time allocation intended only for the assessment since it affected their efficiency and continuity in conducting it. For example, as they stated that they could not focus and had a smooth transition of the procedure of the activities because of the disturbance and limited time.

A Call for Proper Psychological and Medical Assessment
or treatment to SPED Children

Many teachers in public schools are not equipped and experts in handling and treating learners with special education needs. A psychological and medical assessment to be conducted by professionals should be given to them to gather relevant information regarding their abilities, difficulties, and needs. Also, it is to know deeply the causes and factors of their difficulties and deficiencies. As well as to use it as the basis for finding possible solutions to their needs. Then, after assessing the learners, proper treatment and support must be given afterward in order to address immediately their needs and give intervention.

According to Roxas et al. (2019), the utilization of standardized assessment tools for categorizing learners is highly recommended. The learners with disabilities can be diagnosed and consulted by psychometricians and physicians to identify their needs. Based on the responses of the participants, this was also their suggestion. They need to be assessed further by doctors like psychometricians and physicians.

Schools that have children with special needs should improve their learning infrastructure and provide necessary facilities. Also, a child with special needs should be diagnosed and assessed by a professional like the SPED teachers in order to arrive or make a program for individualized education to cater to and address the needs of the child. (Mensah & Badu-Shayar, 2016). In addition, Ahmad (2015) said that students with learning disabilities are identified usually at school by the teachers through observation, diagnosis, and assessment. Then afterward, the students are referred to special educators who will try to determine and identify the traits and deficiencies present in the students. Based on the responses of the participants, some of them referred their learners to a SPED teacher so that they could assess by them thoroughly. Also, they even mentioned that those learners must be transferred to SPED schools. So that their needs would be properly addressed and catered.

A Call for MFAT Teachers to be Resourceful, Patient,
Cooperative, and Committed

Despite the challenges, problems, and issues encountered by the teachers during the implementation of MFAT, they still displayed resourcefulness, patience, cooperation, and commitment. They believed that staying optimistic helped them surpass the struggles in assessing and teaching the learners with special needs. They remained true to their profession and thought nothing but for the betterment and holistic development of their learners.

According to Lebeer et al. (2015), resourcefulness is the response of the teachers to the various needs of learners and to prepare them to overcome the challenges in education. In other words, teachers' resourcefulness is the result of considering the learner's capabilities and giving them opportunities to engage in bringing out usable ideas and creativeness for better living. It emphasizes how teachers have ideas to change for better learning and the work of the learners. As the participants mentioned that materials were important for assessment, they became resourceful in finding ways to address the problem of the materials for assessment and intervention.

Further, teachers must be resourceful in devising different ways to deal with situations in which learners become easily distracted so that the whole process of assessment will not be affected. Also, staying to be more patient in repeating every instruction that you said to the learners such as basic instruction, concept, key terms, and so on (Bhoothalingam, 2018). Moreover, assessment requires patience and understanding. It is advised to used age-appropriate language during the assessment to ensure that the learner

reacts correctly to the stimuli (Kirby, 2018). Just like what participants said that if teachers would not do it with all their heart and soul, the assessment would be difficult. Also, patience is really a must since some learners could not easily get the instructions and have problems in their behaviors. And the best way to speak with them was to put our mind and heart so that they would feel that they are valued and loved and able to do the task.

Lastly, in order to provide quality education for learners with special education needs, collaborative work between trained or special educators and other teachers is required at school. They should collaborate, and coordinate their experiences, ideas, knowledge and competencies so that the learners can have meaningful learning until they could work independently (Buli-Holmberg & Jeyaprathaban, 2016). Participants emphasized the importance of working together with colleagues in order to effectively implement the assessment.

Implications for Teaching Practice

Multi-Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT) has been implemented in all public elementary schools particularly in grade 1 one level in order to identify those learners who had seen to exhibit learning difficulties, special needs, and disabilities at early age. The assessment tool has been helping the teacher to identify the needs of the learners which are basically important for instructional planning and interventions. The study successfully gathered the experiences, coping mechanism and insights of the teachers on the implementation of MFAT in their respective classrooms. Their overall perspectives were summarized through the continuum which presented the general themes that emerged from the varied responses of the untrained grade 1 teachers. This study provided an avenue for all the school administrators, teachers, students, and Department of Education Officials to understand the lived experiences of untrained public elementary teachers on the implementation of MFAT.

In the light of results of the study, the Department of Education Officials may conduct evaluation on the effectiveness of MFAT implementation to all public elementary schools. As they evaluate, they may consider to have another set of trainings in MFAT especially for those grade 1 teachers who are still untrained about the assessment so that they can acquire sufficient knowledge and understanding on how to implement the MFAT. They may also help the schools and teachers in providing special educators or professionals who can give official and further diagnosis after detecting some problems on learners based on the results from the assessment. They may improve the implementation of MFAT by extending time allotted for MFAT considering the nature in conducting the assessment. Further, they may allocate financial support for the materials needed for the assessment and interventions to the teachers. They may consider this study to find a solutions to the different issues and challenges faced by untrained grade 1 teachers in the implementation of MFAT.

The School Administrators may conduct thorough in-service training on the implementation of MFAT for the remaining grade 1 teachers since the Division Office could not afford to include all the public grade 1 teachers in Division-wide training. In addition, they may conduct as well learning action cell (LAC) regarding the proper interventions to the learners identified with special education needs and learning difficulties. Through that, teachers may acquire appropriate strategies and approaches in addressing the needs of the learners. Further, they may include developmental funds in MOOE to fund the materials needed for MFAT and interventions. They may also provide proper time allocation intended only for the assessment so that teachers could focus and effectively assess the learners with special needs. Aside from that, they may also conduct general orientation about the assessment to the parents of the learners to give them awareness of its implication to their children. Since, there are a lot of parents who are unsupportive, uncooperative, and in-denial to the status of their children.

The grade 1 teachers may improve their practices in the implementation of MFAT and use it effectively to help and address the needs of the learners. This may give them motivation to continue with the implementation despite challenges and problems may encounter. Further, they may think of ways to sustain the interest of the learners during the conduct of assessment by motivating them, since grade 1 learners tend to have short span of attention. They may continue being committed, patient, and resourceful in assessing, teaching, and helping the learners. In addition, the practice of setting flexible schedule for remediation classes and assessment to the learners may continue. They may remain coordinated and collaborate with their colleagues by sharing ideas, knowledge and experiences that may be helpful and essential in instructional planning and coping the challenges that they may encounter during the implementation. Lastly, they may strengthen their communication with their parents regarding the situation and standing of their children at school and have more patience in dealing with them.

Furthermore, results of the study may give idea to the parents to develop stronger connections and relationship towards school and teachers. This may be ground to build strong partnership and collaboration with the parents to the teachers in school. Also, they may see the importance of the assessment tool to the development of their children.

In addition, for the learners who are the main recipients of the program, this may be key to receive enhanced assessment and may appreciate the efforts of the teachers in assessing and identifying their needs and deficiencies. This may encourage them to cooperate with their teacher during the assessment as for all these endeavors are for their own good and benefit.

Finally, because everyone wanted to have effective quality education and no child must left behind, helping teachers among stakeholders of the school must be valued through implementing MFAT that is helpful and beneficial to the students.

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