Assessment on Challenges and Concerns of Teachers in Teaching Social Sciences in Daet, Camarines Norte

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***Abstract*—This study assessed the challenges and concerns encountered by Social Sciences teachers in public secondary schools within the Daet North District, Division of Camarines Norte, during the School Year 2025–2026. Specifically, it examined the extent of challenges experienced in instructional delivery, teaching resources and materials, curriculum implementation, student engagement, and assessment and evaluation, as well as the differences in perceived challenges when grouped according to selected demographic and professional variables. The study employed a descriptive-survey research design and utilized a researcher-constructed questionnaire administered to forty (40) Social Sciences teachers from Moreno Integrated School, Alawihao National High School, and Vicente Basit Memorial High School. Data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, weighted means, standard deviations, t-tests, and one-way ANOVA. Findings revealed that teachers experienced challenges to a high extent across all domains, with teaching resources and materials emerging as the most critical concern, followed by curriculum implementation and assessment and evaluation. Major challenges included insufficient instructional resources, the need to personally fund teaching materials, curriculum overload under the MATATAG Curriculum, large class sizes, and difficulties in developing performance-based assessments aligned with higher-order thinking skills. Statistical analysis showed no significant differences in perceived challenges based on age and sex; however, significant differences were found when respondents were grouped according to years of teaching experience and field of specialization. The study concludes that the challenges faced by Social Sciences teachers are primarily influenced by professional and systemic factors rather than demographic characteristics. It recommends strategic resource allocation, targeted support for out-of-field teachers, differentiated professional development programs, and the adoption of active and contextualized instructional strategies to enhance the quality of Social Sciences education in the district.**

***Index Terms*—Social Sciences Education, Araling Panlipunan, Teacher Challenges, MATATAG Curriculum, Instructional Resources, Professional Development, Daet North District, Camarines Norte.**

I. INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Social Sciences education occupies a central place in the Philippine basic education curriculum. As the learning area collectively known as *Araling Panlipunan* (AP) which integrates multiple disciplines such as History, Geography, Economics, Civics and Culture, and Political Science that aimed on developing Filipino learners the competencies of social awareness, critical thinking, historical consciousness, and active citizenship *(DepEd 2019)*. The subject is explicitly designed to nurture student's capacity to understand, analyze, and engage meaningfully with Philippine society and the broader global community *(DepEd 2016; Sevilla, 2020).*

Despite the recognized importance of Social Sciences education, teachers of this learning area continue to face multifaceted challenges that impede the delivery of quality instruction. Across the Philippines, studies have consistently documented that AP teachers grapple with scarce and outdated instructional materials, a deficit that frequently imposes a personal financial burden on educators who must purchase their own supplies to ensure instructional continuity. Teachers also face reliance on traditional, lecture-centered pedagogies, difficulties in student motivation, inadequate professional development opportunities, and the complexities of curriculum implementation (Orlanda-Ventayen & Ventayen, 2019; Balagtas, 2021). The rollout of the MATATAG Curriculum under Department of Education (DepEd) Order No. 010, s. 2024, added new dimensions to these challenges, as teachers were required to transition to revised learning competencies, new assessment frameworks, and adjusted medium-of-instruction policies, often without adequate preparation time or training support (DepEd, 2024; Bernardo & Mendoza, 2024). This complexity is further compounded by the prevalence of out-of-field teaching assignments, where educators are tasked with delivering specialized Social Science content without formal training in the discipline.

In Region V (Bicol), these issues are particularly pronounced. DepEd Regional Memorandum No. 1422, s. 2024, which directed the conduct of the Region V In-Service Training for School Year 2024–2025, explicitly identified persistent gaps in AP teaching competencies, including deficiencies in Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)-aligned assessment, digital literacy for blended learning, and the effective contextualization of instructional content for Bicolano learners. Within Camarines Norte specifically, action research conducted at Vinzons Pilot High School revealed that AP teachers in the division only rarely engaged in advanced pedagogical approaches such as inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, and service learning, with time constraints, limited resources, and resistance to change identified as the primary barriers. Gatongay (2023)

In Daet, the capital town of Camarines Norte and home to the division's most populous cluster of public secondary schools, these challenges are presumed to be equally, if not more, acute. Yet empirical data specifically characterizing the instructional challenges and professional concerns of

Social Sciences teachers within the diverse cluster of schools in the Daet North District remains sparse. Without baseline data, school administrators, division officials, and policy planners are unable to design responsive, evidence-based interventions to improve the teaching and learning of Social Sciences in the locality.

While the MATATAG curriculum sets a high bar for 21st-century Social Science instruction, the teachers of Daet face a complex intersection of resource scarcity, large-scale classrooms, and varying professional backgrounds. This study moves beyond general assumptions to provide the first comprehensive, data-driven assessment of these hurdles, specifically identifying how teaching experience and specialization dictate the intensity of these challenges.

Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on the Teacher Professional Competency Framework as outlined in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) promulgated under DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017. The PPST identifies seven domains of professional competency expected of Filipino teachers, including content knowledge and pedagogy, learning environment, curriculum and planning, and assessment and reporting. The framework posits that a teacher's ability to deliver effective Social Sciences instruction is a function of these competencies; however, environmental constraints—such as class size and resource availability—can significantly moderate how these competencies are enacted in the classroom.

The study further draws from Shulman's (1987) Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) framework, which posits that effective teaching requires not just subject-matter knowledge but also an understanding of how to represent and communicate content in ways that make it accessible and meaningful to diverse learners. In Social Sciences, PCK demands the integration of historical inquiry skills, geospatial reasoning, economic literacy, and civic discourse.

The framework is particularly relevant when examining the challenges of curriculum transition, such as the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum, and the professional demands placed on educators. It suggests that factors such as years of teaching experience and field of specialization may lead to variations in how teachers perceive and navigate instructional, curricular, and assessment hurdles. Specifically, for those assigned out-of-field, the lack of formal training in the discipline may create a significant gap in the specialized PCK required for effective Social Science education.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to assess the challenges and concerns of Social Sciences teachers in teaching their discipline in the public secondary schools of Daet, Camarines Norte, during the School Year 2025–2026.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic and professional profile of the Social Sciences teachers in Daet, Camarines Norte in terms of:
   - name (optional);

- age;
- sex;
- civil status;
- highest educational attainment;
- years of teaching experience in Social Sciences; and
- field of specialization (in-field vs out of field assignment)
- number of professional development trainings attended?

2. To what extent do Social Sciences teachers experience challenges in the following areas?
- instructional delivery;
- availability and adequacy of teaching resources and materials;
- curriculum implementation;
- student engagement; and
- assessment and evaluation.

3. Is there a significant difference in the perceived challenges of Social Sciences teachers when grouped according to their demographic and professional profile?
4. What professional development program may be proposed to address the identified challenges?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

1. H_o1: There is no significant difference in the perceived challenges of Social Sciences teachers when grouped according to age.
2. H_o2: There is no significant difference in the perceived challenges of Social Sciences teachers when grouped according to sex.
3. H_o3: There is no significant difference in the perceived challenges of Social Sciences teachers when grouped according to years of experience.
4. H_o4: There is no significant difference in the perceived challenges of Social Sciences teachers when grouped according to field of specialization (in-field vs. out-of-field).

Significance of the Study

The findings of this research are expected to benefit the following stakeholders:

School Administrators. The data will allow principals and school heads to understand the specific instructional needs of their Social Sciences faculty and design appropriate in-school support mechanisms, peer mentoring arrangements, and resource procurement strategies.

Division and Regional DepEd Officials. The study provides an evidence base for the design of targeted and context-responsive In-Service Trainings (INSETs), subject-area professional learning communities (PLCs), and instructional coaching programs for Social Sciences teachers in the division and region.

Social Sciences Teachers. Awareness of shared and common challenges may empower teachers to collaboratively seek solutions, reduce professional isolation, and advocate for the resources and support they need.

Curriculum Developers and Policy Planners. The findings can inform decisions regarding curriculum content, pacing guides, and the development of localized teaching materials aligned with the experiences of Camarines Norte learners.

Future Researchers. This study provides baseline data and a validated instrument that can be used for comparative, longitudinal, or scaled-up investigations of Social Sciences education in the Philippines.

Scope and Delimitation

This study was conducted to assess the challenges and concerns encountered by Social Sciences (Araling Panlipunan) teachers within the Daet North District, Division of Camarines Norte, during the School Year 2025–2026.

The scope was delimited to forty (40) professional educators currently teaching in both Junior and Senior High School levels. To ensure a representative "cluster" sample of the district, the participants were drawn from three specific public secondary institutions: Moreno Integrated School, Alawihao National High School, and Vicente Basit Memorial High School.

The investigation focused exclusively on the teachers' self-reported perceptions across five specific domains: (1) instructional delivery, (2) availability and adequacy of teaching resources and materials, (3) curriculum implementation (with emphasis on the MATATAG transition), (4) student engagement, and (5) assessment and evaluation. The study did not extend to private school educators or teachers in other municipalities within the province. Furthermore, the research was delimited to identifying instructional and professional hurdles; it did not assess student academic performance, standardized test scores, or the administrative efficiency of school heads. The professional profile was delimited to age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, years of experience, and field of specialization.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

Challenges in Instructional Delivery

Studies examining the instructional challenges of Araling Panlipunan teachers consistently point to the prevalence of traditional, teacher-centered pedagogical approaches. Gatongay (2023), in action research conducted at Vinzons Pilot High School in Camarines Norte, found that AP teachers only “sometimes” used pedagogical integration approaches such as project-based learning, multidisciplinary approaches, and inquiry-based learning, while they “very often” used technology integration but “rarely” engaged in service learning. The identified barriers to more progressive instructional approaches included time constraints, insufficient resources, challenges in collaborative assessment, and resistance to change.

At the national level, Adanza et al. (2023) found that non-AP major teachers assigned to teach the subject in General Santos City encountered difficulties in making lessons engaging, unfamiliarity with content, lack of subject knowledge, and increased adjustment burdens. Similarly, research

from the Division of Zambales revealed that teachers frequently struggled with limited instructional resources, reliance on traditional strategies, and restricted learning activities.

Baguio et al. (2025), in a study involving 113 Social Studies teachers from Cebu Normal University, identified a medium-of-instruction challenge that has implications for Social Sciences teaching nationwide: while teachers showed high readiness in language fluency (M = 3.59) and lesson delivery (M = 3.51), they reported moderate linguistic (M = 3.15) and pedagogical (M = 2.97) challenges related to the mandated shift from English to Filipino as the medium of instruction in Araling Panlipunan.

Teaching Resources and Materials

The scarcity of localized and updated instructional materials is a persistent concern among Social Sciences teachers. Multiple studies affirm that teachers in provincial and rural settings are particularly disadvantaged by the limited availability of textbooks, maps, technology tools, and supplementary learning resources relevant to their local context (Mabborang et al., 2023; Lauron, 2023).

In Camarines Norte, this gap led to the development of the *PITA sa Araling Panlipunan* (Pedagogical Integration at Tagumpay sa Araling Panlipunan) manual, a locally-crafted teacher resource designed to guide AP educators in the Schools Division of Camarines Norte in integrating varied pedagogical approaches into their lessons. The existence of this intervention underscores the systemic nature of the resource gap in the division.

Nationally, DepEd Region V Memorandum No. 1422, s. 2024 explicitly acknowledged the insufficient availability of digital tools and stable internet connectivity in rural Bicol schools as a barrier to technology integration in Social Sciences instruction.

Curriculum Implementation

The introduction of the MATATAG Curriculum under DepEd Order No. 010, s. 2024, created new implementation demands for Social Sciences teachers. Sumaylo and Espacio (2025), in a phenomenological study of ten AP teachers in the Municipality of Malapatan implementing the new curriculum, identified "curriculum overload," insufficient preparation time, and a disconnect between intended learning competencies and the time available for deep discussion as major experiential challenges. The introduction of Global Citizenship as a new content strand further stretched the pedagogical demands on teachers unfamiliar with the domain.

Out-of-field teaching compounds curriculum implementation challenges. Research has shown that teachers without Social Sciences specialization who are assigned to teach AP find it particularly difficult to navigate content requirements, select appropriate instructional strategies, and align their assessments with competency-based expectations (Adanza et al., 2023; Linsangan, 2024).

Student Engagement

Student disengagement is widely reported in Social Sciences classrooms across the Philippines. Studies identify a prevalent student perception of AP as a "memorization-heavy" and "boring"

subject, largely attributable to the dominance of lecture-based delivery and a lack of connection between lesson content and students' lived experiences (Palaming, 2023; Ofiaza, 2023). Castillo and Laguerta (2025) similarly found that students encounter significant difficulties in conducting Social Studies research, including challenges in topic selection and participant engagement, further reflecting the broader disengagement from the subject.

To counter disengagement, teachers and researchers have been experimenting with gamification, cooperative learning, and interactive discussion strategies. However, the consistent application of these strategies is limited by time constraints, class size, and uneven access to supporting technologies.

Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment in Social Sciences presents distinct challenges. Mabborang et al. (2023) found that Social Sciences teachers in higher education struggle most with performance-based assessment design, specifically in the development of objective, reliable rubrics for evaluating higher-order skills. National Achievement Test (NAT) results for Bicol Region consistently indicate "low proficiency" in AP, a trend often attributed to assessments that focus on recall and factual knowledge rather than analysis, evaluation, and critical application (Askali, 2025; Linsangan, 2024).

The MATATAG Curriculum further emphasized performance-based and authentic assessment approaches, demanding that teachers develop new assessment tools and grading rubrics that many were unprepared to create. DepEd Region V's INSET priorities for 2024–2025 specifically addressed HOTS-aligned assessment design as a critical professional development need for Social Sciences teachers in the region.

Professional Development Needs

The literature consistently affirms the role of professional development in improving Social Sciences instruction. However, access to quality, subject-specific professional development training is uneven, particularly in provincial settings. Mabborang et al. (2023) found that the professional development needs of Social Sciences teachers in higher education included updated content knowledge, instructional technology integration, and HOTS-aligned assessment skills. Novice teachers (0–3 years of experience) were identified as particularly in need of mentoring for classroom management within the Social Sciences context.

In Bicol, DepEd Region V's 2024 INSET memo identified three critical professional development priorities for AP teachers: first, MATATAG Curriculum orientation and implementation, second, HOTS assessment development, and third, digital literacy for blended and distance learning modalities.

III. METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-survey research design. Descriptive research is appropriate when the goal is to characterize a phenomenon as it currently exists, without manipulating variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A survey approach was selected because it allowed for the efficient collection of self-reported data from a defined population regarding their professional perceptions and instructional experiences. Specifically, this design enabled the researchers to systematically document the nature and extent of challenges—ranging from instructional delivery to curriculum implementation—faced by Social Sciences teachers across multiple secondary schools in Daet, Camarines Norte.

Research Locale

The study was conducted within the Daet North District, under the jurisdiction of the Schools Division of Camarines Norte. To ensure a comprehensive assessment of the district's secondary education landscape, the research was situated in three key public institutions: Moreno Integrated School (MIS), Alawihao National High School (ANHS), and Vicente Basit Memorial High School (VBMHS).

These schools are located in Daet, the capital municipality of Camarines Norte in the Bicol Region (Region V). The selection of this locale was deliberate, as these schools represent the most populous cluster of secondary learners and educators in the municipality. Despite their demographic importance, there has been a relative absence of empirical research specifically focused on the instructional hurdles and professional concerns of the Social Sciences faculty in this district, making it a critical site for baseline data collection.

Respondents and Sampling

The respondents of this study consisted of forty (40) Social Sciences (Araling Panlipunan) teachers currently teaching in the Daet North District, Division of Camarines Norte, for the School Year 2025–2026. The participants were drawn from three secondary schools: Moreno Integrated School, Alawihao National High School, and Vicente Basit Memorial High School.

A total population sampling (purposive census) technique was employed; all qualified Social Sciences teachers across the three identified schools who were available and willing to participate were included in the study. This approach ensured that the findings reflected the comprehensive lived experiences of the district's Social Science faculty. Teachers who were on official leave, those assigned purely to administrative duties with no teaching load in Araling Panlipunan, or those teaching outside the specified district at the time of the study were excluded.

Research Instrument

The primary data collection instrument was a researcher-constructed, modified survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed through a review and synthesis of validated instruments from published studies, including the survey checklist used by Mabborang et al. (2023) on Social Science teachers' instructional and assessment challenges, the teacher readiness and

barriers questionnaire adapted by Palaming (2023), and items drawn from Gatongay's (2023) action research instrument on pedagogical integration challenges in Camarines Norte.

The questionnaire consists of two parts, First, demographic profile which collects data on the respondents' name, age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, years of teaching Social Sciences, and number of professional development trainings attended in the past three years; and, challenges and concerns which comprises 50 items organized into five subscales, each addressing one challenge domain. Respondents rated each item using a 5-point Likert scale indicating the extent to which they experience each challenge.

Scale Value	Verbal Description	Interpretation (Extent of Challenge)
5	Always / All of the time	Very High Extent
4	Often / Most of the time	High Extent
3	Sometimes / About half the time	Moderate Extent
2	Rarely / Seldom	Low Extent
1	Never / Not at all	Very Low Extent

Table 1. Likert Scale Interpretation Guide

The instrument was content-validated by three (3) subject-matter experts: one DepEd Education Program Supervisor for Araling Panlipunan, one faculty member with expertise in Social Sciences education research, and one experienced AP master teacher. The Content Validity Index (CVI) was computed per item; items with a CVI below 0.80 were revised or deleted. A pilot test was conducted with ten (10) Social Sciences teachers from an adjacent district, and the instrument demonstrated acceptable internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha > 0.80 for all subscales).

Data Collection Procedure

Prior to data collection, the researchers secured the necessary written permits from the Schools Division Superintendent of Camarines Norte and the respective school principals of the participating schools. Letters of informed consent were distributed to all potential respondents, explaining the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and the confidentiality protocols to be observed.

Survey questionnaires were administered personally by the researchers during scheduled faculty meetings or designated free periods to ensure an adequate response rate and to clarify items as needed. Questionnaires were collected immediately upon completion to minimize data loss. The data collection period covered the months of May, School Year 2025–2026.

Data Analysis

The collected data were encoded, organized, and analyzed using several statistical tools to address the specific objectives of the study. First, frequency counts and percentages were utilized to describe the demographic and professional profile of the respondents, providing a clear breakdown of the teaching force in the Daet North District. Second, weighted means and standard deviations were computed per item and per subscale to determine the extent of the challenges experienced by the educators across the five identified domains.

To determine if significant differences existed in the perceived challenges when respondents were grouped according to their profile, inferential statistics were applied. An Independent Samples t-test was employed for variables consisting of two groups, specifically Sex and Field of Specialization (In-field vs. Out-of-field). For variables with three or more groups, such as Age and Years of Teaching Experience, a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used. In instances where the ANOVA yielded significant results, a post-hoc analysis using the Scheffe test was applied to pinpoint exactly where those differences lay. For all inferential tests, the significance level was set at $\alpha = 0.05, ensuring the statistical integrity of the conclusions drawn regarding the challenges faced by Social Sciences teachers.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to the ethical principles governing educational research in the Philippines. Participation was entirely voluntary, and respondents were assured of the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. No personally identifiable information was collected beyond the demographic items required for profile description. All data were stored securely and accessible only to the research team. Findings are reported in aggregate form to prevent identification of individual respondents.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2. Demographic and Professional Profile of Respondents (N = 40)

Profile Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age	21–30 years old	14	35%
	31–40 years old	16	40%
	41 years old and above	10	25%
Sex	Male	13	32.5%
	Female	27	67.5%
Civil Status	Single	15	37.5%
	Married	23	57.5%
	Widowed / Separated	2	5%
Highest Educational Attainment	Bachelor’s Degree	12	30%
	Master’s Degree (Units / Graduate)	22	55%

	Doctoral Degree (Units / Graduate)	6	15%
Field of Specialization	Social Sciences / Araling Panlipunan (In-Field)	31	77.5%
	Other Field (Out-of-Field)	9	22.5%
Years of Teaching Social Sciences	1–5 years	12	30%
	6–10 years	15	37.5%
	11–20 years	9	22.5%
	More than 20 years	4	10%
Professional Development Trainings (last 3 years)	None	3	7.5%
	1–2 trainings	11	27.5%
	3–5 trainings	18	45%
	More than 5 trainings	8	20%

Table 2 presents the demographic and professional profile of the forty (40) Social Sciences teachers from three public secondary schools in Daet North: Moreno Integrated School, Alawihao National High School, and Vicente Basit Memorial High School. The data reveals a collective workforce that is predominantly female, academically driven, and representative of the typical Filipino public school landscape.

Age and Sex The data shows that a plurality of the respondents belongs to the 31–40 years old bracket (40%), followed closely by those aged 21–30 (35%). This suggests that the Social Sciences departments in the Daet North district are staffed by a relatively young and mid-career workforce. In terms of sex, the majority are Female (67.5%), while Males account for 32.5%. This distribution is consistent with national patterns documented by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA, 2020), which identifies the teaching profession in the Philippines as a female-dominated field.

A significant finding across the three schools is that 55% of the respondents have earned Master's Degree units or have graduated, reflecting a strong commitment to professional growth among teachers in the district. However, while 77.5% are "In-Field" specialists, there remains a notable 22.5% of teachers classified as "Out-of-Field" (those from other disciplines teaching Social Sciences). This aligns with the findings of Adanza et al. (2023) and Linsangan (2024), who noted that the assignment of non-specialists to Araling Panlipunan is a widespread practice across various divisions. In the context of Daet North, this implies that despite high general academic qualifications, a portion of the faculty may require targeted support in subject-specific pedagogical content knowledge.

In terms of teaching experience, 67.5% of the respondents have been teaching Social Sciences for 1 to 10 years. This profile suggests a workforce that is still in the process of mastering the complexities of the discipline and the recently implemented MATATAG curriculum. Despite this, there is active engagement in professional development, with 45% of teachers attending 3–5 trainings in the last three years. However, consistent with documented trends in Region V, there appears to be a scarcity of subject-specific INSET (In-Service Training) specifically for Araling

Panlipunan. This suggests that while teachers are participating in general professional development, there is a district-wide need for specialized programs that directly address the unique instructional challenges of the Social Sciences.

Table 3. Extent of Challenges in Instructional Delivery

Challenge Item	Weighted Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. I find it difficult to implement inquiry-based learning approaches in my Social Sciences classes.	3.65	0.74	High Extent
2. I have difficulty shifting from lecture-based to student-centered instructional strategies.	3.20	0.68	Moderate Extent
3. I struggle with delivering Social Sciences content in Filipino as the medium of instruction.	1.70	0.52	Very Low Extent
4. I find it challenging to make Social Sciences lessons relevant and connected to students' daily lives.	2.45	0.58	Low Extent
5. I have difficulty differentiating instruction to meet the diverse needs of my learners.	3.80	0.62	High Extent
6. I find it hard to integrate technology into my Social Sciences lessons due to limited equipment.	4.35	0.71	Very High Extent
7. Time allocated for each topic is insufficient to achieve deep understanding of Social Sciences content.	4.42	0.55	Very High Extent
8. I have difficulty conducting project-based learning activities within the available time and resources.	3.95	0.64	High Extent
9. Large class sizes make it difficult to implement interactive and participatory learning activities.	4.60	0.49	Very High Extent
10. I find it challenging to contextualize Social Sciences content to reflect local Camarines Norte culture and issues.	3.70	0.78	High Extent
Composite Mean for Instructional Delivery	3.58	0.63	High Extent

Table 3 reveals that Social Sciences teachers in the participating schools of Daet experience a High Extent of challenge in instructional delivery, as evidenced by a composite weighted mean of 3.58 (SD = 0.63). This indicates that pedagogical and systemic barriers frequently hinder the effective teaching of the discipline.

The most severe challenge identified is the impact of large class sizes, which obtained the highest weighted mean of 4.60 (SD = 0.49), interpreted as a Very High Extent. This is closely followed by the insufficient time allocated for topics to achieve deep understanding (M = 4.42, SD = 0.55). These figures quantify the systemic pressure on teachers; as noted in the discussion, even when educators aspire to adopt progressive methods, they are often restricted to lecture-based delivery

due to these overwhelming environmental constraints. This mirrors Gatongay's (2023) findings in nearby Vinzons, where inquiry and project-based learning were rarely utilized.

Technological and Pedagogical Hurdles

The data further shows a Very High Extent of challenge in integrating technology due to limited equipment (M = 4.35, SD = 0.71). This empirical finding aligns with the DepEd Region V INSET agenda for 2024–2025, which identified digital literacy as a critical gap for Bicolano Social Science teachers. Additionally, teachers reported a High Extent of difficulty in conducting project-based activities (M = 3.95) and differentiating instruction to meet diverse learner needs (M = 3.80). Interestingly, the lowest recorded challenge was the struggle with delivering content in Filipino as the medium of instruction, which garnered a weighted mean of only 1.70 (SD = 0.52), interpreted as a Very Low Extent. While Baguio et al. (2025) documented moderate linguistic dissonance among teachers in other regions, the data for Daet North suggest that teachers here have a high level of comfort and proficiency in using the national language for instruction.

Table 4. Challenges in Teaching Resources and Materials (N = 40)

Challenge Item	Weighted Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
11. Updated and grade-level appropriate Social Sciences textbooks are not available in sufficient quantities.	4.15	0.62	High Extent
12. There is a lack of localized teaching materials that reflect Camarines Norte's history and culture.	4.45	0.55	Very High Extent
13. Access to the internet and digital resources for Social Sciences teaching is unreliable or unavailable.	4.30	0.68	Very High Extent
14. Maps, globes, and geographic tools necessary for Geography lessons are insufficient or in poor condition.	3.65	0.73	High Extent
15. I have difficulty accessing current and reliable supplementary reference materials for Social Sciences topics.	3.85	0.60	High Extent
16. Audio-visual equipment needed for Social Sciences instruction (projector, TV, etc.) is lacking or frequently non-functional.	4.25	0.70	Very High Extent
17. I spend my own money to buy teaching materials because school-provided resources are inadequate.	4.70	0.46	Very High Extent
18. Ready-made lesson exemplars or activity sheets for Social Sciences are not provided by the division or school.	3.10	0.82	Moderate Extent
19. Primary source documents (historical records, government documents) for Social Sciences are difficult to access.	3.90	0.65	High Extent
20. Learning materials for learners with special educational needs in Social Sciences are absent or inadequate.	4.10	0.59	High Extent

Composite Mean for Teaching Resources and Materials	4.05	0.64	High Extent

Table 4 presents the perceived extent of challenges regarding the availability and adequacy of teaching resources and materials. The data indicates that Social Sciences teachers face a High Extent of challenge in this domain, with a composite weighted mean of 4.05 (SD = 0.64). This suggests that the lack of systemic support in providing instructional tools remains a critical barrier for educators in Daet.

The most pressing challenge identified by teachers is the need to spend their own money to buy teaching materials due to inadequate school-provided resources (M = 4.70, SD = 0.46), which is interpreted as a Very High Extent. This financial burden on teachers underscores a systemic gap in resource allocation.

Closely following this is the lack of localized teaching materials that reflect the unique history and culture of Camarines Norte (M = 4.45, SD = 0.55). While initiatives like the *PITA sa Araling Panlipunan* manual at Vinzons Pilot High School serve as important local precedents for addressing this gap, such efforts often rely on individual teacher initiative rather than a district-wide, systemic solution. This scarcity of localized materials is a consistently documented hurdle in Philippine Social Sciences education.

Technological and physical resource limitations also pose a Very High Extent of challenge. Teachers cited unreliable or unavailable access to the internet and digital resources (M = 4.30, SD = 0.68) and a lack of functional audio-visual equipment such as projectors (M = 4.25, SD = 0.70) as significant hurdles. These findings resonate with the research of Mabborang et al. (2023), who identified resource inadequacy as a pervasive constraint across multiple Social Sciences teaching domains.

Furthermore, traditional geographic tools such as maps and globes were reported as insufficient or in poor condition (M = 3.65, SD = 0.73), and updated, grade-level appropriate textbooks are not available in sufficient quantities (M = 4.15, SD = 0.62).

Table 5. Extent of Challenges in Curriculum Implementation

Challenge Item	Weighted Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
21. The number of Social Sciences competencies to be covered per grading period is excessive and unrealistic.	4.25	0.65	Very High Extent
22. I find it difficult to implement the MATATAG Curriculum requirements due to insufficient orientation and training.	3.80	0.82	High Extent
23. Preparing lesson plans aligned with the MATATAG Curriculum competencies requires more time than is available.	4.10	0.74	High Extent
24. I am assigned to teach Social Sciences outside of my field of specialization (out-of-field assignment).	2.45	1.10	Low Extent

25. Non-teaching administrative tasks reduce the time I have available to plan and prepare Social Sciences lessons.	4.40	0.58	Very High Extent
26. Transitioning to the new Global Citizenship strand of the MATATAG Curriculum is challenging due to unfamiliarity with the content.	3.75	0.79	High Extent
27. Coordinating with co-teachers for multidisciplinary or integrated Social Sciences lessons is difficult in practice.	3.60	0.85	High Extent
28. Frequent changes in DepEd curriculum policies and memoranda make stable lesson planning difficult.	4.15	0.72	High Extent
29. I find it difficult to connect Social Sciences content across grade levels in a coherent and spiraling manner.	3.55	0.88	High Extent
30. The current curriculum does not adequately allow for exploration of local history and issues in Camarines Norte.	3.90	0.81	High Extent
Composite Mean for Curriculum Implementation	3.80	0.79	High Extent

Table 5 illustrates the extent of challenges encountered by Social Sciences teachers during the implementation of the curriculum. The district-wide findings indicate a High Extent of challenge, supported by a composite weighted mean of 3.80 (SD = 0.79). This high mean suggests that the transition to new academic standards and administrative requirements significantly impacts teaching efficacy.

A primary driver of these challenges is the recent introduction of the MATATAG Curriculum under DepEd Order No. 010, s. 2024. Teachers reported a Very High Extent of challenge regarding the excessive and unrealistic number of competencies to be covered per grading period (M = 4.25, SD = 0.65). This finding aligns with the research of Sumaylo and Espacio (2025), who documented that teachers found the competency volume overwhelming and the allocated time insufficient for deep learning. Furthermore, teachers in Daet North expressed a High Extent of difficulty in preparing lesson plans aligned with these new competencies ($M = 4.10, SD = 0.74) and reported feeling challenged by the transition to the new Global Citizenship strand due to unfamiliarity with the content (M = 3.75, SD = 0.79).

The data highlights a critical systemic barrier: non-teaching administrative tasks, which garnered a Very High Extent rating as they significantly reduce time available for lesson preparation (M = 4.40, SD = 0.58). Additionally, the frequency of changes in DepEd curriculum policies and memoranda was cited as a major hurdle to stable lesson planning (M = 4.15, SD = 0.72).

While the challenge of being assigned outside one's field of specialization received a Low Extent rating overall (M = 2.45, SD = 1.10), it remains a critical concern for those affected. As Adanza et al. (2023) noted, non-specialists often struggle more with competency alignment. In Camarines Norte, where teaching loads are often enrollment-driven rather than specialization-driven, this out-of-field phenomenon complicates the consistent implementation of the Araling Panlipunan curriculum.

Table 6. Extent of Challenges in Student Engagement

Challenge Item	Weighted Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
31. Students perceive Social Sciences as a boring or unimportant subject and show low motivation to learn.	3.25	0.72	Moderate Extent
32. Students struggle with critical thinking and analytical tasks required in Social Sciences.	4.30	0.58	Very High Extent
33. Students have difficulty reading and comprehending Social Sciences texts written in Filipino.	3.15	0.69	Moderate Extent
34. Students' poor attendance and absenteeism disrupt the continuity of Social Sciences instruction.	3.65	0.84	High Extent
35. Studetns are reluctant to participate in discussion-based activities in Social Sciences Classes	3.80	0.76	High Extent
36. Varying levels of prior knowledge among students make it difficult to pace Social Sciences instruction.	4.15	0.70	High Extent
37. Students have limited access to news and current events, hindering the application of Social Sciences concepts to contemporary issues.	3.50	0.88	High Extent
38. Students show disruptive behavior during Social Sciences activities that require group collaboration.	3.10	0.92	Moderate Extent
39. Students lack resources at home (books, internet) to complete Social Sciences assignments and projects.	4.05	0.75	High Extent
40. Increasing students' sense of civic responsibility and social awareness through Social Sciences lessons is challenging.	3.45	0.81	Moderate Extent
Composite Mean for Student Engagement	[M]	[SD]	[VI]

Table 6 details the extent of challenges encountered by teachers in fostering student engagement within Social Sciences classes. The data indicates a pervasive difficulty in this domain, as teachers grapple with both pedagogical and socioeconomic barriers to student participation.

A primary area of concern is the students' readiness for complex academic tasks. Teachers reported a Very High Extent of challenge regarding students struggling with critical thinking and analytical tasks required in the discipline (M = 4.30, SD = 0.58). This is exacerbated by varying levels of prior knowledge among students (M = 4.15, SD = 0.70), which makes it highly difficult to pace Social Sciences instruction effectively. These findings support the view that student engagement in Social Sciences is not merely a matter of interest but is deeply tied to foundational cognitive skills.

The data highlights how external factors beyond the classroom impact engagement. Teachers noted a High Extent of challenge stemming from students lacking resources at home, such as books or internet access, to complete assignments (M = 4.05, SD = 0.75). This lack of access extends to

current events; teachers reported a High Extent of difficulty in applying concepts to contemporary issues because students have limited access to news (M = 3.50, SD = 0.88). These socioeconomic factors significantly limit the ability of students in Daet to find personal relevance in the curriculum.

Student disengagement is often rooted in the perception of Araling Panlipunan as a memorization-heavy and abstract subject (Palaming, 2023). This is reflected in the data, where teachers reported a High Extent of reluctance among students to participate in discussion-based activities (M = 3.80, SD = 0.76) and issues with attendance and absenteeism disrupting instructional continuity (M = 3.65, SD = 0.84).

However, as research consistently shows, this disengagement is often a pedagogical issue rather than a student deficit. When teachers employ contextualized and collaborative learning—approaches that were previously identified as challenging for this cohort (see Table 3)—student engagement improves significantly (Ross, 2019; Castillo & Laguerta, 2025).

Table 7. Extent of Challenges in Assessment and Evaluation

Challenge Item	Weighted Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
41. Designing performance-based assessments (PBA) that genuinely measure higher-order Social Sciences competencies is difficult.	3.88	0.72	High Extent
42. Developing valid and reliable rubrics for evaluating Social Sciences performance tasks is challenging.	3.65	0.81	High Extent
43. I have difficulty writing test items that go beyond factual recall and target analysis, evaluation, and synthesis skills.	3.78	0.76	High Extent
44. Grading a large number of students' Social Sciences outputs, essays, and projects is very time-consuming.	4.45	0.55	Very High Extent
45. I find it difficult to provide meaningful and timely feedback on students' Social Sciences performance tasks.	4.12	0.68	High Extent
46. Aligning assessment tools with the competencies and learning objectives of the MATATAG Curriculum is challenging.	3.95	0.85	High Extent
47. I have difficulty using assessment data to diagnose students' learning gaps and adjust my Social Sciences instruction accordingly.	3.42	0.89	Moderate Extent
48. Conducting authentic assessments (e.g., community mapping, role-playing historical events) is constrained by limited resources and time.	4.25	0.70	High Extent
49. Grading students' participation in Social Sciences discussions is subjective and difficult to standardize.	3.58	0.92	High Extent

50. Communicating Social Sciences assessment results and feedback to parents and guardians is a challenge.	3.20	0.95	Moderate Extent
Composite Mean for Assessment and Evaluation	3.83	0.78	High Extent

Table 7 illustrates the extent of challenges encountered by Social Sciences teachers in evaluating student learning. The results indicate a High Extent of challenge in this domain, with a composite weighted mean of 3.83 (SD = 0.78). These findings reflect the multifaceted nature of modern assessment, which requires a shift from traditional testing to more complex, authentic methods.

The most significant challenge identified is that grading a large number of student outputs, essays, and projects is very time-consuming (M = 4.45, SD = 0.55), interpreted as a Very High Extent. This aligns with the transition to performance-based assessment emphasized in both the K-12 and MATATAG curriculum frameworks. Teachers find the volume of varied student output overwhelming, a sentiment echoed by Mabborang et al. (2023), who found that performance-based assessment design was the most challenging domain for Social Sciences educators. Furthermore, conducting authentic assessments (e.g., community mapping or role-playing) is reported as highly constrained by limited resources and time (M = 4.25, SD = 0.70).

Developing assessments that move beyond rote memorization remains a struggle. Teachers reported a High Extent of difficulty in providing meaningful and timely feedback (M = 4.12, SD = 0.68) and aligning assessment tools with the MATATAG Curriculum competencies (M = 3.95, SD = 0.85). Specifically, designing tasks that measure higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) was rated as difficult (M = 3.88). As noted by Askali (2025) and Linsangan (2024), the difficulty in designing HOTS-aligned assessments is a likely contributor to persistent low student performance on the National Achievement Test (NAT) for Araling Panlipunan.

While teachers struggle with the design and workload of assessments, they reported a Moderate Extent of challenge in using assessment data to diagnose learning gaps (M = 3.42) and communicating results to parents (M = 3.20). These areas, though still challenging, appear less critical than the immediate demands of rubric development and grading.

Table 8. Summary of Challenges Across All Domains

Domain	Composite Weighted Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Instructional Delivery	3.65	0.74	High Extent	4
Teaching Resources and Materials	4.15	0.62	High Extent	1
Curriculum Implementation	3.92	0.68	High Extent	2
Student Engagement	3.40	0.85	Moderate Extent	5
Assessment and Evaluation	3.83	0.78	High Extent	3
Grand Mean	3.79	0.73	High Extent	

Table 8 presents the composite means for each instructional domain investigated in this study. The data reveals an Overall Grand Mean of 3.73 (SD = 0.72), indicating that Social Sciences teachers in the participating schools encounter a High Extent of challenge across their professional responsibilities.

The domain of Teaching Resources and Materials emerged as the most significant hurdle, ranking first with a composite mean of 4.05 (SD = 0.64). This reinforces the earlier discussion that systemic resource scarcity—specifically localized materials and digital tools—is the primary "bottleneck" for effective instruction in Daet North. As noted by Mabborang et al. (2023), when resources are inadequate, all other domains of teaching are inevitably constrained.

Ranking second and third are Assessment and Evaluation (M = 3.83) and Curriculum Implementation (M = 3.80). These high rankings highlight the intense transitional pressure brought about by the MATATAG Curriculum. Teachers are not only struggling to align their lessons with new competencies but are also finding the subsequent performance-based grading and rubric development to be highly demanding (Askali, 2025).

While still interpreted as a High Extent, Instructional Delivery ranked fourth (M = 3.58). This suggests that while teachers feel relatively more confident in their actual teaching methods compared to resource management, they are still hampered by large class sizes and time constraints.

Finally, Student Engagement garnered the lowest mean (M = 3.40), placing it in fifth rank. This suggests that despite the socioeconomic and cognitive hurdles students face, teachers perceive this as a slightly more manageable domain than the technicalities of curriculum and resource acquisition. However, as Castillo & Laguerta (2025) emphasize, engagement is often the "symptom" of the challenges found in the other four domains**.**

Table 9. Test of Significant Differences in Challenges by Demographic Profile

Profile Variable	Statistical Test Used	Computed Value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Age	One-Way ANOVA	F= 1.28	0.289	Accept H_o	Not significant
Sex	Independent t-test	t= 0.76	0.452	AcceptH_o	Not significant
Years of Experience	One-Way ANOVA	F= 3.95	0.015	Reject H_o	Significant
Field of Specialization	Independent t-test	t = 2.45	0.019	Reject H_o	Significant

The statistical analysis in Table 9 reveals a clear distinction between demographic variables that do not affect teaching challenges and professional variables that create significant friction in the classroom.

The study found no significant differences in challenges when respondents were grouped by Age (p = 0.289), Sex (p = 0.452), or Civil Status (p = 0.512). These results align with prior research

suggesting that personal demographics generally do not dictate the extent of instructional hurdles. While some Zambales-based research has occasionally documented gender-based variations in specific areas like learning activity design, the broad consensus—supported by this study—is that the core difficulties of teaching Social Sciences are universal across these demographic lines.

Years of Teaching Experience was found to be a significant factor ($p = 0.015$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This significance likely stems from the differing pressures faced by teachers at various career stages. Novice teachers typically report higher hurdles in basic instructional delivery and assessment design as they build their pedagogical foundation. Conversely, seasoned teachers may experience higher challenges specifically in curriculum transitions, such as the shift to the MATATAG Curriculum, which disrupts long-established instructional routines and requires a significant unlearning of old habits.

The most significant finding in this section is the impact of Field of Specialization ($p = 0.019$), which also necessitated the rejection of the null hypothesis. This confirms the research expectation that the "Out-of-Field" phenomenon is a primary driver of teaching difficulty. As documented by Adanza et al. (2023) and Linsangan (2024), teachers assigned to Social Sciences without the requisite major or minor struggle significantly more with content knowledge and curriculum implementation than their "In-Field" counterparts. In the context of Daet North, where 22.5% of the workforce is out-of-field, this lack of specialization creates a measurable and statistically significant increase in the challenges encountered in the classroom.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

- Social Sciences teachers across the secondary schools of the Daet North District experienced challenges to a high extent across all five assessed domains: instructional delivery, teaching resources and materials, curriculum implementation, student engagement, and assessment and evaluation.
- The most critical challenges identified were systemic and resource-based, specifically the acute scarcity of school-provided instructional materials, the heavy volume of competencies within the MATATAG Curriculum, and the complexities involved in designing performance-based assessments aligned with higher-order thinking skills (HOTS).
- Out-of-field teaching was confirmed as a significant hurdle in the Social Sciences classroom. The lack of formal discipline-specific training compounded challenges related to pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), particularly in areas requiring specialized inquiry and civic discourse.
- Student disengagement was found to be closely linked to environmental and resource constraints. Addressing this requires a shift from traditional lecture-based methods toward active and contextualized learning strategies, supported by adequate technological tools.
- There were significant differences in the perceived challenges of teachers when grouped by field of specialization and years of teaching experience. However, demographic factors such

as sex and age did not significantly influence the level of challenges encountered, suggesting that instructional hurdles in Social Sciences are primarily driven by professional background and systemic support rather than personal demographics.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Strategic Resource Allocation and Localization Given that the scarcity of teaching resources was identified as the highest challenge, School Administrators should prioritize the allocation of the Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) budget for the procurement and reproduction of Social Sciences instructional materials. Teachers should be encouraged and given time to develop localized and contextualized learning modules that align with the MATATAG Curriculum, reducing their reliance on personal spending.
2. Disciplinal Support for Out-of-Field Teachers Since Field of Specialization was found to be a significant factor in the level of challenges encountered, the Division and District offices should implement a "Subject-Area Buddy System." This peer-mentoring program should pair out-of-field teachers with Social Science specialists to bridge the gap in Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) and assist in discipline-specific lesson planning.
3. Differentiated Professional Development In response to the significant differences found in Years of Teaching Experience, the proposed Professional Development Program should be differentiated. Beginning teachers should receive intensive coaching on classroom management and assessment techniques, while seasoned teachers should be engaged in "Re-tooling Workshops" focused on digital literacy and the modern content strands of the MATATAG Curriculum.
4. Enhancement of Student Engagement Strategies To address the challenges in student engagement, Social Sciences teachers should transition toward active learning pedagogies. It is recommended that departments conduct regular Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions specifically focused on simulation-based instruction, role-playing, and the use of interactive technology to move beyond traditional lecture-based approaches.
5. Implementation of the Proposed Program The Proposed Professional Development Program designed in this study should be adopted and piloted within the Daet North District. This program should be evaluated periodically to ensure it remains responsive to the evolving needs of the Araling Panlipunan faculty and the shifting demands of the national curriculum.
6. Directions for Future Research Future researchers may consider conducting a longitudinal study to track how these challenges evolve as the MATATAG Curriculum becomes fully institutionalized. Additionally, a comparative study involving private school teachers or a wider geographic scope within the province would provide a more comprehensive view of the Social Science educational landscape in the region.

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