

## **Multi-grade Teaching: A Daunting Challenge for Rural Teachers**

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**ABSTRACT** Multi-grade teaching schools form the most neglected sector of the education system around the globe. As an important policy option for providing access to education for learners in remote areas multi-grade teaching needs to be recognized as such and be given the attention it deserves. However, achieving excellence in teaching and learning in rural contexts remains a challenge for teachers and other sectors of the educational change endeavors. This article aims at investigating primary school teachers' challenges of multi-grade teaching strategy in South African rural schools. A qualitative inquiry was used in the study. Multi-grade teachers were purposefully selected to participate in the study. Data were obtained through interviews. The data collected were consolidated and categorised into themes. The findings from the data reflect that teachers found teaching in a multi-grade context challenging and difficult. They report that they feel isolated and uncertain about what is expected of them in conducting lessons in their multi-grade classrooms. This paper attempts to suggest strategies that could be used in the multi-grade classrooms to ensure that classroom instruction and classroom management are improved in multi-grade contexts.