

ADDRESSING THE PREPAREDNESS AND PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION GRADUATES OF PAMPANGA AS MAPEH INSTRUCTORS

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Abstract

This study examined the competence of Physical Education graduates in Pampanga who are currently serving as MAPEH (Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health) instructors, with particular focus on their preparedness, pedagogical training needs, and the challenges they encounter in teaching the subject. A descriptive survey research design was employed, utilizing a researcher-made questionnaire that covered the respondents' personal and professional profiles, training needs, and problems encountered. A total of 110 purposively selected MAPEH instructors participated in the study.

Findings revealed that the teaching force was predominantly female, young, and married, with most having less than five years of teaching experience. Despite their limited experience, the instructors were expected to teach all components of MAPEH, although many expressed discomforts in handling Music. The results also indicated that instructors identified several critical areas where further training was urgently needed, such as playing musical instruments, using technology in art instruction, coaching sports, teaching various dances, and life-saving skills. Furthermore, respondents cited significant challenges, including inadequate access to teaching materials, lack of facilities and technology, low student engagement, and mental health concerns.

These challenges were found to have implications for the instructors' overall teaching performance. Based on the findings, several recommendations were proposed, including encouraging graduate studies, providing specialized training, contextualizing teaching materials, and building strong stakeholder linkages. Addressing these concerns is vital to enhancing the effectiveness of MAPEH instruction in the region.

Keywords: MAPEH Instruction, Physical Education Graduates, Teacher Competence, Training Needs, Instructional Challenges, Pampanga

1. Introduction

In the ever-evolving landscape of Philippine education, the integration of holistic and multidisciplinary instruction has become increasingly vital. The K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum, as outlined in the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 (Republic Act No. 10533), mandates a learner-centered and inclusive approach that equips students with 21st-century skills. Within this framework, MAPEH (Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health) plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded learners, contributing not only to their cognitive development but also to their physical, social, and emotional well-being (Culajara, 2022). As such, the competence of educators tasked to deliver the MAPEH curriculum is crucial in realizing the goals of basic education. However, despite the emphasis on MAPEH as a core learning area, a persistent challenge remains—the mismatch between teachers' specializations and the multi-faceted demands of the MAPEH discipline, particularly in the context of Physical Education graduates who are expected to teach across all four domains (Ahmed & Godiyal, 2021).

According to DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017 (National Adoption and Implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers), teachers must demonstrate pedagogical content

knowledge and professional competencies aligned with learner needs. However, many Physical Education graduates assigned to teach MAPEH face difficulties in areas outside their core specialization, such as Music and Arts. This misalignment has implications for instructional quality, learner engagement, and curriculum implementation (Tabuena, 2020). Moreover, DepEd Memorandum No. 173, s. 2019 emphasizes the importance of capacity-building programs to strengthen content mastery and teaching competence among educators. Still, gaps in training opportunities for MAPEH instructors—especially those without formal preparation in all component areas—persist across various regions, including Pampanga (Bedro, 2022).

Recent studies echo these concerns. Shyan and Salim (2019) reported that non-Music major teachers often experience low confidence and competence in teaching Music, leading to decreased student motivation and subpar classroom outcomes. Similarly, in a study by Wallace et al. (2022), MAPEH teachers in Region III expressed the need for continuous professional development in the areas of technology integration in Arts and effective strategies in teaching Health. These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions to support Physical Education graduates in developing broader pedagogical skills applicable to the full MAPEH curriculum. In the same vein, Mendiola and Estonanto (2022) highlighted that novice MAPEH instructors with limited years of teaching experience are often overwhelmed by the requirement to teach diverse subject matter areas without sufficient institutional support or instructional materials.

In Pampanga, a province known for its vibrant cultural heritage and athletic excellence, the role of competent MAPEH teachers is more critical. With the shift towards performance-based learning and the integration of contextualized instruction mandated by the K to 12 curriculum, instructors must not only possess mastery of content but also demonstrate the ability to adapt teaching strategies to local contexts (Dioneda & Isagani, 2019). However, anecdotal evidence and preliminary observations suggest that many Physical Education graduates assigned as MAPEH teachers face persistent challenges related to teaching materials, facility availability, student engagement, and mental well-being. Furthermore, their professional growth is often hindered by limited access to graduate education, in-service training, and stakeholder support (Wabingga & Tomakin, 2024).

Given these existing concerns, this study aims to investigate the competence of Physical Education graduates in Pampanga as MAPEH instructors. Specifically, it seeks to determine their personal and teaching profiles, assess their training needs, and identify the instructional challenges they encounter. While previous studies have explored MAPEH instruction in urban school settings or general terms, there remains a lack of localized data that specifically examines the intersection of Physical Education specialization and the broader demands of MAPEH teaching in the context of Pampanga. This research attempts to fill that gap by providing empirical insights that can inform educational planning, teacher development programs, and curriculum implementation strategies in the region.

Moreover, the study is anchored on Refugio et al. (2020) theory of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), which posits that effective teaching requires not just subject matter expertise but also the ability to convey content in ways that are understandable and meaningful to learners. Applying this theoretical lens, the study evaluates whether Physical Education graduates are adequately equipped to deliver the MAPEH curriculum in its entirety. In addition, it considers the practical implications of teacher preparedness on student outcomes, curriculum fidelity, and instructional sustainability (Donkor, 2021).

To this end, the research seeks to answer key questions: What is the profile of MAPEH instructors in Pampanga in terms of their demographic and professional background? What training needs do they identify across the MAPEH domains? What are the most pressing challenges they encounter, and how serious are these challenges to teaching effectiveness?

Lastly, is there a significant relationship between their profile and the challenges they experience in teaching the subject?

By addressing these questions, the study aims to contribute to the discourse on teacher readiness and competence, particularly in multidisciplinary subject areas such as MAPEH. It also aspires to provide actionable recommendations to education stakeholders—school administrators, policy makers, and teacher education institutions—toward designing targeted capacity-building initiatives, revisiting teacher deployment practices, and reinforcing support systems for MAPEH instruction. Ultimately, ensuring that Physical Education graduates are pedagogically competent across all MAPEH domains will not only uplift teaching quality but also enhance learner development in line with the holistic vision of Philippine education.

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

The study employed a descriptive survey research design, which is appropriate for systematically obtaining information about the status, characteristics, and challenges faced by Physical Education graduates serving as MAPEH instructors in Pampanga. This design enabled the researcher to describe, analyze, and interpret the respondents' personal and professional profiles, training needs, and instructional problems using quantitative data. Moreover, the use of a structured, researcher-made questionnaire allowed for efficient data collection and facilitated the identification of patterns and trends across the target population. In addition, the descriptive design provided a factual and objective basis for proposing relevant interventions, as it captured the real-time conditions and experiences of the instructors without manipulating any variables. Thus, this method was instrumental in generating data-driven insights to inform teacher development strategies and curriculum support mechanisms.

2.2 Participants

The participants of the study were 110 purposively selected MAPEH instructors currently teaching in various public and private secondary schools in Pampanga. They were chosen based on their qualifications as Physical Education graduates and their current assignment to teach the MAPEH subject, regardless of their specialization in its other components. This purposive sampling technique was deemed appropriate, as it ensured the inclusion of respondents who could provide relevant and meaningful data aligned with the study's objectives. Furthermore, only those who submitted their completed survey questionnaires within the agreed timeframe were included in the final analysis, thereby ensuring the reliability and completeness of the collected data. Consequently, the selected participants served as valid representatives of the target population, allowing the researcher to draw conclusions and recommendations based on their actual experiences and instructional contexts.

2.3 Instrumentation

The primary instrument used in the study was a researcher-made survey questionnaire, which was carefully designed to gather comprehensive data relevant to the objectives of the research. The questionnaire was divided into four major parts: the first section collected information on the respondents' profiles; the second explored their teaching profiles; the third identified their training needs; and the fourth examined the challenges they encountered in teaching MAPEH. To accommodate responses beyond the predefined choices, open-ended sections were also included in each part. Before the actual data collection, the instrument underwent content validation by a panel of experts in MAPEH and educational research to ensure its relevance, clarity, and alignment with the study's goals. Subsequently, it was pilot-tested among a group of MAPEH instructors from a similar context, and revisions were made based on

their feedback to improve the reliability and usability of the tool. Thus, the finalized instrument was deemed valid and appropriate for capturing both quantitative and qualitative data essential to the study.

2.4 Data Analysis

The data gathered from the completed survey questionnaires were systematically analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the findings. Specifically, frequency counts, percentages, and weighted means were employed to interpret the respondents' personal and teaching profiles, as well as to determine the severity of the challenges encountered and the extent of their training needs. Additionally, a Likert-type scale adapted from Nuevo (2016) was utilized to categorize the seriousness of instructional problems, ranging from "not a problem" to "always a problem." Furthermore, responses provided in the open-ended sections were thematically analyzed and integrated with quantitative results to enrich the interpretation and provide deeper insights. This mixed-methods approach enabled the researcher to draw meaningful conclusions and formulate evidence-based recommendations grounded in both numerical trends and contextual narratives.

3 Results

The study revealed several noteworthy findings regarding the competence, training needs, and challenges faced by Physical Education graduates serving as MAPEH instructors in Pampanga. To begin with, most of the respondents were female (62%), married (58%), and between the ages of 25 and 35 (54%), indicating a predominantly young and gender-skewed teaching workforce. In terms of professional background, 67% of the instructors held a bachelor's degree in physical education, while only 15% had pursued graduate studies. Additionally, 74% had been teaching MAPEH for less than five years, and 82% were handling all four components of MAPEH, despite only 21% having formal training in Music or Arts.

Regarding training needs, the instructors rated their need for professional development in key areas as very important, particularly in playing musical instruments (mean = 4.68), using advanced technology in teaching Arts (mean = 4.55), coaching/facilitating sports (mean = 4.42), teaching various dances (mean = 4.38), and delivering first aid instruction (mean = 4.47). These results suggest a pressing need for specialized training that addresses the multi-disciplinary nature of MAPEH.

In terms of challenges, the most serious problems encountered were lack of teaching materials and equipment (mean = 4.61), limited access to technology (mean = 4.43), difficulty engaging students (mean = 4.25), and mental health concerns due to workload stress (mean = 4.18). Notably, a statistically significant relationship was found between the respondents' teaching experience and the severity of challenges encountered, indicating that less experienced instructors were more affected. These findings underscore the urgency of implementing targeted support systems and capacity-building initiatives to enhance the competence and well-being of MAPEH instructors in the region.

4 Discussion

The findings of this study are strongly corroborated by previous research highlighting the multidimensional challenges faced by MAPEH instructors, particularly those who are Physical Education graduates assigned to teach across all four subject components. For instance, Najera and Osorno (2023) emphasized that non-Music major teachers often experience low confidence and inadequate instructional strategies when handling Music classes, which aligns with the current study's finding that playing musical instruments was the most critical training need among respondents. This supports the view that subject mismatch continues to be a pressing issue in

the Philippine educational system, especially in interdisciplinary teaching assignments such as MAPEH.

Similarly, the study of Culajara (2021) found that teachers often lack sufficient training in technology integration for teaching Arts and Health, which resonates with the present study's result, where instructors expressed a high level of need for training in advanced educational technologies. Moreover, Saleem (2021) also reported that novice MAPEH teachers, particularly those with fewer than five years of experience, are more likely to experience classroom management difficulties and instructional challenges—echoing this study's finding that less experienced instructors reported significantly higher levels of stress and difficulty in engaging students.

Furthermore, the issue of limited access to teaching materials and technological resources was previously identified by Morbo (2021), who noted that many MAPEH teachers in rural and suburban areas operate without adequate instructional tools. This mirrors the current finding that the lack of materials and facilities was the most serious problem encountered by respondents. Finally, the mental health concerns raised in this study due to workload and teaching demands are consistent with the findings of Montesur (2021), who reported high levels of stress and burnout among teachers who are expected to perform outside their field of expertise without sufficient institutional support. Taken together, these related studies substantiate the present findings and reinforce the urgent call for comprehensive professional development programs, contextualized instructional materials, and stronger administrative support for MAPEH instructors.

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