

IMPROVING STUDENT OUTCOMES IN MAPEH THROUGH TEACHING COMPETENCE AND ENGAGEMENT

by:

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In the Philippines, Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH) education plays a vital role in the holistic development of students. It contributes to their physical well-being, creative expression, appreciation of culture, and awareness of personal health. As a multifaceted subject, MAPEH demands an interdisciplinary approach from both educators and learners. Despite its importance, student performance in MAPEH varies significantly across schools, often reflecting disparities in teacher expertise, availability of instructional resources, and the level of student engagement. These inconsistencies pose a challenge for educators who seek to deliver effective and equitable MAPEH instruction.

Research has consistently shown that student interest and parental involvement are critical factors in academic performance, and this holds true in MAPEH education as well. A study conducted by Gula et al. (2022) found that in the area of integrated arts education, students performed better when they were personally invested in their learning and when they received encouragement or support from their families. This finding is particularly relevant in contexts where schools lack specialized materials, instruments, or sports equipment. Even in such limited environments, students who feel valued, supported, and inspired tend to make the most of what they have and succeed despite the odds. Engagement, therefore, is not just a function of available tools but also of emotional and motivational support systems.

Nonetheless, the role of the teacher remains essential. Capable and confident educators are often viewed as the cornerstone of any successful educational program. The

results of a study by Capangyarihan (2025) were intriguing: while most teachers considered themselves competent and displayed high self-ratings in instructional ability, many of them were not formally trained in MAPEH as their specialization. This lack of subject-specific expertise, especially in areas like music or physical education, may contribute to gaps in instructional delivery. Interestingly, the study also revealed that teacher competence, in itself, did not significantly correlate with student achievement. This suggests that even if a teacher is generally competent, student success in MAPEH also depends heavily on other factors such as student engagement, availability of learning materials, and teaching methodology.

This aligns with another study conducted by Jongko et al. (2024), which evaluated the attainment of MAPEH learning objectives in higher education institutions and the use of relevant instructional resources. The findings underscored that competent teaching alone is insufficient if not complemented by adequate learning tools and a consistent use of instructional materials. Students in these programs reported greater learning satisfaction when their classes included working instruments, art supplies, multimedia tools, and sports equipment. Conversely, programs with outdated or insufficient materials saw lower student enthusiasm and weaker mastery of skills. These results indicate that resource allocation is not just a logistical concern but a pedagogical one. Learners are more motivated and perform better when given access to materials that make lessons tangible, interactive, and real.

The combined insights from these studies emphasize a broader truth: that student outcomes in MAPEH are shaped by a constellation of interrelated factors. Effective teaching is certainly a key ingredient, but it is most powerful when paired with learner motivation, parental support, and resource-enriched environments. This understanding demands a shift in how school leaders, policymakers, and educators approach MAPEH instruction. It is no longer enough to assign a competent generalist teacher to the subject and expect high achievement. Instead, schools must ensure that MAPEH educators are

properly trained, have access to modern instructional tools, and are encouraged to use learner-centered and culturally relevant pedagogies.

Many educators assigned to teach MAPEH have backgrounds in only one or two of its components – perhaps music or health – and may feel less confident teaching the others. Offering in-service training sessions, peer mentoring, and workshops that expose teachers to interdisciplinary teaching strategies can help build confidence and competence. Furthermore, training programs should emphasize differentiated instruction and inclusive practices, given the diversity in students’ physical abilities, artistic preferences, and learning styles.

Parental engagement, although less discussed in technical educational planning, also deserves more attention. Schools can organize MAPEH-themed family days, health awareness campaigns, or community arts exhibitions that actively involve parents and guardians. These events not only create opportunities for students to showcase their talents but also allow families to understand the role of MAPEH in their children’s development. When parents recognize the value of physical education or artistic expression, they are more likely to support related activities at home.

Resource development and allocation are equally critical. Investments in physical materials such as musical instruments, art kits, and sports gear – paired with digital tools like interactive apps or video demonstrations – can enhance the learning experience dramatically. Even small improvements, such as ensuring there are enough balls for a PE class or providing digital keyboards for music lessons, can shift the quality of instruction from minimal to meaningful. Grants, donations, and partnerships with local government units or NGOs may be explored to bridge resource gaps, particularly in underserved schools.

In summary, improving MAPEH education is not simply about refining curriculum or measuring teaching outcomes. It requires a systems-thinking approach that

acknowledges the complex interaction between teacher competence, learner motivation, family involvement, and instructional resources. Schools must cultivate environments where creativity is celebrated, health is prioritized, and physical activity is seen as essential rather than optional. By investing in these aspects, MAPEH instruction can become a dynamic platform for holistic learning that nurtures not only skill and knowledge but also identity, wellness, and lifelong engagement with the arts and physical well-being.

When these components are harmoniously combined, MAPEH becomes more than a subject. It becomes a foundation for a well-rounded education, empowering students to develop not just cognitively but emotionally, physically, and socially. Through collective commitment and thoughtful integration of teaching, materials, and support systems, schools can ensure that MAPEH truly fulfills its promise of shaping resilient, expressive, and health-conscious individuals.

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