

The K – 12 MAPEH Program: Working Conditions, Challenges, and Professional Development Opportunities

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Abstract: The K-12 MAPEH (Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health) program in the Philippines requires teachers to handle four distinct subject areas, creating unique professional challenges related to working conditions, instructional delivery, and professional development. This study examined the working conditions, instructional challenges, and professional development opportunities of Junior High School MAPEH teachers in the Division of Roxas City, Capiz, and determined the relationships among these variables. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed with 50 Junior High School MAPEH teachers selected through simple random sampling from public secondary schools in Roxas City during School Year 2025-2026. A researcher-made validated questionnaire (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.85$) measured working conditions, challenges, and professional development opportunities using a five-point Likert scale. Data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, weighted means, and Pearson correlation. Working conditions ranged from moderate to moderately high, with administrative duties impact ($M=3.60$) and multi-specialization requirements ($M=3.55$) rated highest, while adequacy of facilities ($M=2.61$) rated lowest. Physical Education presented the highest instructional challenges ($M=3.59$), followed by Arts ($M=3.40$), Music ($M=3.28$), and Health ($M=3.24$). Professional development opportunities ($M=2.72$) and institutional support ($M=2.96$) were moderately available yet showed moderately high positive impact on teacher readiness ($M=3.27$). Significant positive correlations were found among working conditions, challenges, and professional development opportunities ($r=0.684, 0.571, 0.623; p<0.001$). MAPEH teachers face considerable workload demands, multi-specialization pressures, and facility limitations that significantly affect instructional effectiveness. Strengthening institutional support, resource allocation, and sustained professional development programs is essential for improving MAPEH instruction under the K-12 curriculum.

Keywords: MAPEH teachers, working conditions, instructional challenges, professional development, K-12 program, Roxas City

I. INTRODUCTION

Education systems globally are undergoing reform to meet 21st-century needs, particularly regarding critical thinking, creativity, physical health, and social-emotional skills development. Programs in music, arts, physical education, and health are recognized by international educational organizations like UNESCO as integral to holistic education, contributing to physical literacy, emotional resilience, creativity, and social participation of learners (UNESCO, 2017; Bailey et al., 2019). These learning outcomes align directly with Sustainable Development Goal 4: Quality Education.

In the Philippines, the K-12 Program's effectiveness depends significantly on the quality, preparedness, and working environment of the teacher workforce. MAPEH teachers face unique professional challenges as they are expected to be generalists in four different subject areas, each requiring distinct content knowledge, pedagogies, and assessment practices. The work environment—including facilities, equipment, and teaching resources—is essential for effective MAPEH instruction.

In Roxas City, Capiz, an urbanizing area of Western Visayas, MAPEH teachers in both public and private schools report issues ranging from lack of resources and professional training to large class sizes. Inadequate facilities such as gymnasiums, music rooms, or art studios are prevalent problems affecting MAPEH instruction delivery. These problems align with international research indicating that resource availability and teacher support profoundly impact teacher effectiveness and instructional quality (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; OECD, 2020).

Local studies in the Philippines have documented similar concerns. Mendoza et al. (2019) found that MAPEH teachers experience isolation and lack ongoing professional development, impacting teaching efficacy and motivation. Garcia and Santos (2021) noted that poor facilities and overcrowding in city schools hinder quality MAPEH education. Cruz (2022)



specifically identified that lack of resources, large class sizes, and multi-specialist demands on MAPEH teachers in Roxas City lead to stress and burnout, affecting teaching quality and student learning.

However, a pressing need exists for more localized empirical evidence on the working conditions, challenges, and professional environment of MAPEH teachers in Roxas City. Most research is conducted at national and regional levels and does not account for the socio-economic and infrastructural realities of rapidly urbanizing regions. This study aimed to fill this gap by exploring the work environment and issues faced by MAPEH teachers in Roxas City using a descriptive quantitative methodology.

The study was anchored on three theoretical frameworks: Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Systems Theory, explaining how school environments and educational reforms influence teachers' professional experiences; the Theory of Lifelong Learning and Professional Development, emphasizing continuous learning and institutional support; and the Ecological Systems Theory of Teacher Stress and Burnout, explaining how personal, workplace, and systemic factors interact to influence teacher stress and well-being.

Objective of the Study

Specifically, this study sought to answer: (1) What is the level of working condition of MAPEH teachers in terms of availability of instructional materials, facilities, class size, workload, multi-specialization requirements, and administrative duties? (2) What is the extent of challenges encountered by MAPEH teachers in delivering instruction in Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health? (3) What is the level of professional development opportunities and institutional support provided to MAPEH teachers? (4) Is there a significant relationship among working condition, challenges, and professional development opportunities?

II. METHODOLOGY

Research Design: This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to describe existing conditions of MAPEH teachers and determine relationships among variables without manipulation.

Locale and Time: The study was conducted among Junior High School MAPEH teachers in the Division of Roxas City, Province of Capiz, during September 2025 (School Year 2025-2026).

Respondents: Fifty Junior High School MAPEH teachers from selected public secondary schools in Roxas City Division participated. The total population was approximately 60-65 teachers, with Slovin's formula (5% margin of error) determining the sample size.

Sampling Technique: Simple random sampling was employed, ensuring every eligible teacher had an equal chance of selection.

Research Instrument: A researcher-made structured questionnaire was developed based on identified variables and supported by relevant literature. The instrument underwent expert validation by three specialists (MAPEH education, educational methodology, and statistics). Pilot testing yielded a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.85, indicating high reliability. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree/Very Low to 5=Strongly Agree/Very High).

Data Gathering Procedure: Formal approval was secured from the Schools Division Superintendent of Roxas City Division and respective school heads. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents. Questionnaires were personally administered by the researcher, with clear instructions provided. The Data Privacy Act of 2012 was strictly observed.

Data Analysis: Data were analyzed using SPSS. Frequency count and percentage described respondent profiles. Weighted mean determined levels of working conditions, challenges, and professional development opportunities. Pearson correlation coefficient examined relationships among variables.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of Working Conditions

Table 1 presents the working conditions of Junior High School MAPEH teachers.

Table 1. Level of Working Conditions

Variable	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Administrative Duties Impact	3.60	Moderately High
Multi-Specialization Requirements	3.55	Moderately High
Well-Being and Teaching Effectiveness	3.41	High
Class Size	2.89	Moderate
Availability of Instructional Materials	2.80	Moderate
Adequacy of Facilities	2.61	Moderate

Administrative duties impact obtained the highest mean (3.60), indicating that non-instructional tasks such as report preparation, documentation, and meetings substantially affect teacher workload. Multi-specialization requirements ranked second (3.55), reflecting pressure in handling four distinct disciplines. Adequacy of facilities received the lowest mean (2.61), indicating insufficient gymnasiums, music rooms, and art studios.

Extent of Instructional Challenges

Table 2 shows challenges encountered across MAPEH components.

Table 2. Extent of Challenges in Instructional Delivery

Variable	Mean	Interpretation
Challenges in Physical Education (PE)	3.59	High
Challenges in Arts	3.40	Moderately High
Challenges in Music	3.28	Moderately High
Challenges in Health	3.24	Moderate

Physical Education presented the highest challenge level (3.59), primarily due to limitations in facilities, equipment, safety requirements, and class size management. Arts and Music showed moderately high challenges related to inadequate instructional materials, limited creative spaces, and insufficient technological integration.

Professional Development Opportunities and Institutional Support

Table 3 presents the level of professional development and institutional support.

Table 3. Professional Development Opportunities and Institutional Support

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Professional Development Opportunities	2.72	0.474	Moderate
Institutional Support	2.96	0.422	Moderate
Impact on Teacher Readiness and Performance	3.27	0.365	Moderately High

Professional development opportunities were moderately available (2.72), indicating that training programs exist but are not consistently specialized or sustained. Institutional support (2.96) was slightly higher. Despite moderate availability, the impact on teacher readiness and performance was moderately high (3.27), suggesting that even limited support positively influences teaching effectiveness.

Relationship Among Variables

Table 4 presents the correlational analysis results.

Table 4. Significant Relationships Among Variables

Variables	Computed r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Working Conditions and Challenges Encountered	0.684	0.000	Significant
Working Conditions and Professional Development Opportunities	0.571	0.000	Significant
Challenges Encountered and Professional Development Opportunities	0.623	0.000	Significant

All three correlations were statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), indicating moderate to strong positive relationships. The hypothesis stating no significant relationship among variables was rejected.

The findings reveal that Junior High School MAPEH teachers in Roxas City operate under moderate to moderately high working conditions characterized by considerable workload demands, multi-specialization responsibilities, and administrative duties. Administrative duties impact ($M=3.60$) emerged as the highest-rated working condition indicator, consistent with SEAMEO INNOTECH (2019) findings that Filipino teachers devote considerable time to paperwork and reporting requirements. This aligns with García and Weiss (2019), who emphasized that excessive administrative workload contributes to increased teacher stress and reduced instructional efficiency.

Multi-specialization requirements ($M=3.55$) reflect the unique demands of MAPEH instruction where teachers handle four distinct disciplines. Ingersoll et al. (2018) found that teachers assigned outside their specialization area experience greater stress and reduced teaching confidence. DepEd (2023) acknowledged that subject clustering within the K-12 curriculum increases teacher workload, especially in performance-based disciplines. These findings underscore the need for clearer subject specialization policies and strategic teaching load distribution.

The lowest-rated working condition was adequacy of facilities ($M=2.61$), indicating insufficient gymnasiums, music rooms, art studios, and activity spaces. Since MAPEH relies heavily on experiential and performance-based learning, inadequate facilities directly hinder effective instructional delivery. García and Weiss (2019) emphasized that poor school infrastructure reduces teaching efficiency in activity-based subjects. Arroyo and Carreon (2019) similarly found that insufficient facilities hinder successful MAPEH program implementation in Philippine public schools.

Physical Education emerged as the most challenging component ($M=3.59$), consistent with the facilities inadequacy finding. PE requires specialized equipment, adequate space, safety measures, and manageable class sizes—conditions often absent in the study locale. Klassen and Kim (2019) found that workload stress has detrimental effects on instructional engagement, particularly in physically demanding subjects. The high challenge level in PE indicates urgent need for improved sports facilities, safety equipment, and appropriate student-teacher ratios.

Arts ($M=3.40$) and Music ($M=3.28$) showed moderately high challenges, primarily related to inadequate instructional materials and limited creative spaces. Dulay (2022) reported that limited instructional materials in MAPEH significantly impact skill-based learning experiences. Barrot et al. (2021) observed that lack of technology integration and equipment creates obstacles to creative subject delivery. Health instruction showed moderate challenges ($M=3.24$), though the higher standard deviation (0.491) suggests varying levels of teacher comfort with sensitive topics.

Professional development opportunities ($M=2.72$) and institutional support ($M=2.96$) were moderately available, yet their impact on teacher readiness and performance was moderately high ($M=3.27$). This finding aligns with Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), who emphasized that effective professional development should be content-focused, active, and collaborative. The moderate ratings suggest that while support systems exist, they require enhancement in terms of specialization, sustainability, and accessibility. OECD TALIS (2018) indicated that supported teachers demonstrate higher job satisfaction and better classroom practices.

The significant correlations among working conditions, challenges, and professional development opportunities ($r=0.684, 0.571, 0.623$) demonstrate that these variables are interconnected. Teachers with inadequate instructional materials, facilities, and excessive workload experience greater instructional difficulties. Conversely, teachers receiving better institutional support and training opportunities demonstrate higher readiness and effectiveness. These findings support Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) conclusion that supportive working environments and sustained professional development significantly improve instructional quality.

The rejection of the null hypothesis confirms that working conditions, challenges, and professional development opportunities are significantly related. This means improving one area likely benefits the others. For instance, enhancing facilities may reduce instructional challenges, while providing specialized training may help teachers manage multi-specialization demands more effectively.

This study relied on self-reported data, which may be subject to personal bias. The cross-sectional design captures perceptions at a single time point. The sample was limited to public junior high schools in Roxas City, so findings may not generalize to private schools or other geographic areas. Student academic outcomes were not directly measured.

For practice, schools should strengthen workload management by reducing excessive administrative responsibilities and ensuring balanced teaching assignments. For policy, the Department of Education should strengthen subject specialization policies, equitable resource allocation, and sustained professional development programs specifically designed for MAPEH teachers. For future research, similar studies should explore intervention programs, include student outcome measures, and examine other educational contexts.

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