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Correlates of Teachers' Core Behavioral Competencies, Performance, and Students' Learning Achievement in MAPEH

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Abstract

This study examined the relationships among teachers' core behavioral competencies, professional performance, and students' learning achievement in Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH) in the Department of Education Districts of Ilog I and II, Negros Occidental, Philippines. Using a descriptive-correlational research design, the study involved 38 MAPEH teachers and 190 students from ten public secondary schools, selected through total enumeration and proportional sampling, respectively. Data were gathered using a standardized questionnaire based on DepEd Order No. 2, s. 2015, teachers' Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) ratings, students' academic records, and supplementary key informant interviews. Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis were employed. Findings revealed very high competencies in self-management (M = 3.826) and professionalism and ethics (M = 3.736), while result focus, teamwork, service orientation, and innovation were rated high. Teachers demonstrated very satisfactory professional performance (M = 3.557), whereas students achieved satisfactory academic performance in MAPEH (M = 84.142). Significant positive relationships were reported between result focus and teachers' performance (r = .869, p = .028), innovation and students' learning achievement (r = .797, p = .043), and teachers' performance and students' learning achievement (r = .797, p = .043). The findings highlighted the relevance of result-oriented practices, instructional innovation, and professional competence in supporting educational outcomes. Continuous professional development and a one-year competency enhancement plan were recommended to strengthen teaching effectiveness and student achievement. The study aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) by emphasizing teacher development and improved learning outcomes. Its contribution to educational and institutional sustainability lies in supporting continuous professional improvement, instructional innovation, and sustained educational quality in public secondary schools.

Keywords: Academic Achievement; Core Behavioral Competencies; Instructional Innovation; MAPEH; Professional Performance; Result Focus; Teacher Competencies

1. Introduction

Teachers' core behavioral competencies and professional performance are important considerations in improving students' learning achievement, particularly in Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH). Competencies involving self-management, professionalism and ethics, result focus, teamwork, service orientation, and innovation contribute to effective teaching practices and educational outcomes. In the DepEd Districts of Ilog I and II, Negros Occidental, concerns regarding students' MAPEH achievement highlight the need to examine the relationships among teachers' behavioral competencies, professional performance, and students' academic outcomes.

Teachers contribute significantly to school effectiveness and students' academic achievement. Beyond instructional knowledge, educators are expected to demonstrate appropriate leadership and behavioral competencies that support their professional responsibilities. These competencies influence how teachers manage their responsibilities, collaborate with colleagues, respond to learners' needs, and achieve educational objectives. Teachers' professional knowledge, instructional skills, and behavioral competencies are therefore important considerations in evaluating their effectiveness as facilitators of learning, particularly in MAPEH, which encompasses multiple learning disciplines. Recent synthesis also identifies teacher self-efficacy and sustained professional learning as relevant to instructional adaptation and professional practice (Gordon et al., 2023; Ventista & Brown, 2023). Recent research also situates teacher effectiveness within professional learning, collective efficacy, and instructional quality (Christ et al., 2022; Salas-Rodríguez & Lara, 2023; Ma et al., 2025).

Existing literature emphasizes the importance of teacher competence in educational performance. Together, these perspectives establish the relevance of examining teachers' behavioral competencies alongside their professional performance and students' learning outcomes. The study focuses on six competency dimensions: self-management, professionalism and ethics, result focus, teamwork, service orientation, and innovation. These dimensions provide a basis for examining how teachers' professional characteristics relate to their performance ratings and students' academic achievement in MAPEH.

Students' MAPEH achievement in the DepEd Districts of Ilog I and II, Negros Occidental, presents an educational concern. During School Year 2021–2022, the reported Mean Percentage Score (MPS) was 51.20%, with District Ilog I recording 50.75% and District Ilog II recording 51.65%. These results were below the expected 75% performance target. The reported achievement levels indicate a need to examine factors associated with students' academic performance. In particular, assessing teachers' behavioral competencies and professional performance may provide relevant information for strengthening instructional practices and identifying areas for professional development within the participating schools. Research on professional learning indicates that training, coaching, and collaborative development can support student learning, although evidence differs across settings and interventions (Ventista & Brown, 2023).

The study is conceptually organized around three interrelated variables: teachers' core behavioral competencies, teachers' professional performance, and students' learning achievement in MAPEH. Behavioral competencies encompass self-management, professionalism and ethics, result focus, teamwork, service orientation, and innovation. Teachers' professional performance is represented by their Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) ratings, while students' learning achievement is reflected in their academic performance in MAPEH. The study examines the relationships among these variables to determine which competency dimensions are significantly associated with teachers' performance and students' learning outcomes.

Although teacher competence is recognized as an important factor in educational achievement, the reported MAPEH performance levels in the DepEd Districts of Ilog I and II establish the need for a localized examination of teachers' behavioral competencies and their relationships with professional performance and student achievement. The study addresses this need by assessing the six dimensions of teachers' core behavioral competencies, evaluating their professional performance, and examining students' learning achievement in MAPEH. Specifically, it determines the relationships among these variables to provide an empirical basis for developing an enhancement plan aimed at strengthening teacher competencies, instructional effectiveness, and student learning outcomes.

The study aligns primarily with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education), particularly its emphasis on improving educational quality and strengthening teachers' professional competencies. By examining teachers' behavioral competencies, performance, and students' learning achievement, the research provides information that may support professional development and improved teaching practices. Its focus on identifying competency areas requiring improvement is relevant to efforts to enhance educational effectiveness and promote equitable learning opportunities. The proposed enhancement plan may also support continuing teacher development and improvements in MAPEH instruction within the participating schools. International guidance similarly emphasizes sustained support for teachers as part of efforts to advance quality education (UNESCO & International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, 2024). Recent international reports emphasize teacher support, educational equity, and persistent learning challenges as priorities for quality education (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2023b; UNESCO, 2023; World Bank et al., 2022).

The study contributes to educational and institutional sustainability by emphasizing the importance of maintaining competent, effective, and professionally responsible teachers. Strengthening behavioral competencies, particularly result focus, teamwork, service orientation, and innovation, may support continuous instructional improvement and responsiveness to students' learning needs. From an institutional perspective, the findings may guide school administrators in identifying professional development priorities and designing competency-based enhancement initiatives. By linking teacher development with professional performance and student achievement,

the study offers a basis for sustained educational improvement in MAPEH across the participating public secondary schools. Collaborative teaching models and sustained professional development offer additional perspectives for school improvement (Vembye et al., 2024; Visscher et al., 2025).

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design to assess teachers' core behavioral competencies, their professional performance, and students' learning achievement in MAPEH. Descriptive analysis determined the levels of the identified variables, while correlational analysis examined their significant relationships. Qualitative information from KIIs supplemented the quantitative findings.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in ten public secondary schools within the Department of Education (DepEd) Districts of Ilog I and II, Negros Occidental, Philippines. Six schools were located in District Ilog I, while four were situated in District Ilog II. These schools provided the setting for examining teachers' competencies and performance in relation to students' academic achievement in MAPEH.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents comprised 38 MAPEH teachers and 190 students from the ten participating public secondary schools. Teachers provided information regarding their core behavioral competencies, while their professional performance was assessed through official performance records. Students' academic records were used to determine their learning achievement in MAPEH.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

Total enumeration was employed to include all 38 MAPEH teachers from the participating schools. For the student respondents, proportional sampling was used to select 190 learners from the two districts. This approach ensured the inclusion of teachers and student respondents from the identified schools.

2.5 Research Instrument

Data were collected using a standardized questionnaire based on DepEd Order No. 2, s. 2015 (Department of Education, 2015), which assessed six dimensions of teachers' core behavioral competencies: self-management, professionalism and ethics, result focus, teamwork, service orientation, and innovation. Responses were measured using a four-point Likert scale. The instrument was treated as standardized, and its reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. Teachers' Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) ratings and students' academic records served as secondary data sources, while KIIs provided supplementary qualitative information.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher secured the necessary ethical approval and permissions before conducting the study. Questionnaires were personally administered to participating teachers, and KIIs were conducted to gather supplementary information about their professional competencies and performance. Teachers' IPCRF ratings and students' MAPEH academic achievement records were obtained from the participating schools. The collected information was organized and prepared for statistical analysis.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Descriptive statistics, particularly mean scores, were used to determine the extent of teachers' core behavioral competencies, their professional performance levels, and students' academic achievement in MAPEH. The results were interpreted using predefined descriptive classifications. Pearson correlation coefficients were employed to examine the relationships between teachers' core behavioral competencies and professional performance, teachers' competencies and students' learning achievement, and teachers' performance and students' achievement. Qualitative information from KIIs supplemented the interpretation of the quantitative findings.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

The researcher obtained ethical approval and secured the necessary permissions before administering the research instruments and collecting relevant school records. The study involved teacher questionnaires, KIIs, and the examination of existing teacher performance and student academic records.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Teachers' Core Behavioral Competencies, Professional Performance, and Students' Achievement

3.1.1 Extent of Teachers' Core Behavioral Competencies

The results revealed that teachers demonstrated very high competency levels in self-management (M = 3.826) and professionalism and ethics (M = 3.736). Meanwhile, teamwork (M = 3.294), result focus (M = 3.173), service orientation (M = 2.932), and innovation (M = 2.794) were rated high. These findings indicate that teachers exhibited strong behavioral competencies, particularly in managing professional responsibilities, maintaining ethical standards, collaborating with colleagues, and accomplishing institutional objectives. KII participants further emphasized that professionalism, self-direction, teamwork, and commitment to school goals were essential qualities of effective educators. The findings suggest that teachers possess the behavioral competencies necessary to fulfill their professional responsibilities, although innovation and service orientation remain areas for further development. Teachers with strong self-management competencies can regulate their actions, demonstrate accountability, and maintain productive professional relationships. Raeburn (2022) emphasized that self-management involves regulating behaviors, thoughts, and emotions to accomplish personal and professional responsibilities effectively. Such competencies also strengthen emotional intelligence, communication, and teamwork, which are important in sustaining effective school operations. A systematic review of teacher self-efficacy during educational reform highlights the importance of professional learning and supportive conditions for teachers' practice (Gordon et al., 2023).

3.1.2 Level of Teachers' Professional Performance

Teachers obtained an overall mean IPCRF rating of 3.557, interpreted as Very Satisfactory. This indicates that teachers generally fulfilled their professional responsibilities and achieved the performance expectations established by the Department of Education. KII participants described teachers as resilient, dedicated, and committed to their instructional duties despite increasing workloads and continuous changes in the educational system. The findings reflect teachers' commitment to maintaining satisfactory instructional practices and achieving institutional objectives. These findings highlight the importance of maintaining professional competence and commitment to quality instruction. Evidence on teacher learning and professional development further supports continuing attention to instructional quality (Education Endowment Foundation [EEF], 2021b; Gordon et al., 2023).

3.1.3 Students' Academic Achievement in MAPEH

Students obtained a mean academic performance score of 84.142, interpreted as Satisfactory based on the Department of Education grading standards. This indicates that students demonstrated an acceptable level of learning achievement in MAPEH but had not reached the higher performance classifications. The results suggest that students acquired the expected foundational knowledge and skills while showing opportunities for further academic improvement. The findings emphasize the importance of strengthening instructional practices to improve students' learning outcomes. Thus, the satisfactory performance of MAPEH students highlights the need for continuous instructional improvement, particularly through teaching strategies that respond to learners' abilities, interests, and educational needs. Recent syntheses emphasize the relationships among instructional quality, learning processes, and student outcomes (Christ et al., 2022; Kim & Cruz, 2024).

3.2 Relationships Among Teachers' Core Behavioral Competencies, Professional Performance, and Students' Learning Achievement

3.2.1 Relationship Between Teachers' Core Behavioral Competencies and Professional Performance

The results revealed a significant positive relationship between teachers' result focus competency and professional performance ($r = .869$, $p = .028$). This indicates that teachers who demonstrated stronger commitment to accomplishing objectives and achieving measurable outcomes tended to obtain higher professional performance ratings. Conversely, self-management ($r = .047$, $p = .779$), professionalism and ethics ($r = .123$, $p = .463$), teamwork ($r = .076$, $p = .649$), service orientation ($r = -.196$, $p = .239$), and innovation ($r = -.035$, $p = .834$) showed no statistically significant relationships with teachers' performance. KII participants emphasized that performance evaluations were largely influenced by the timely accomplishment of objectives and the submission of appropriate means of verification. The findings suggest that result focus is particularly relevant to teachers' professional performance because the evaluation system emphasizes measurable accomplishments and documented outputs. Teachers who consistently prioritize institutional objectives and demonstrate accountability in completing assigned responsibilities may achieve higher performance ratings. Troian, Gori, Lacerda, and Gauss (2022) reiterated that results-focused management promotes organizational transparency, team effectiveness, and engagement in achieving institutional goals. Although other behavioral competencies were not significantly associated with performance, they remain important components of professional practice.

3.2.2 Relationship Between Teachers' Core Behavioral Competencies and Students' Learning Achievement

The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between teachers' innovation competency and students' learning achievement in MAPEH ($r = .797$, $p = .043$). This indicates that higher innovation competency was associated with better student academic performance. In contrast, self-management ($r = .237$, $p = .152$), professionalism and ethics ($r = -.206$, $p = .214$), result focus ($r = .072$, $p = .667$), teamwork ($r = -.058$, $p = .730$), and service orientation ($r = -.109$, $p = .515$) showed no statistically significant relationships with students' learning achievement. KII participants emphasized that innovative teaching strategies, creative learning activities, and responsive instructional approaches were necessary to address students' changing learning needs and attention spans. The findings highlight the relevance of innovation in improving teaching and learning experiences. Teachers who develop creative instructional activities and adapt their teaching approaches to students' needs may provide more engaging learning opportunities. In the educational context, innovative instructional practices may help teachers respond to diverse learning needs and support improved academic achievement in MAPEH. A review of physical education teaching models highlights the potential of well-designed pedagogical approaches to support learning outcomes, while identifying a continuing need for attention to teacher competence (Zhang et al., 2024). Guidance on digital pedagogy also emphasizes continuing professional learning rather than technology use alone (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2025). Research on technology integration and physical education pedagogy provides a broader rationale for examining innovative approaches without establishing causation in the present study (OECD, 2023a; Zhang et al., 2024).

3.2.3 Relationship Between Teachers' Professional Performance and Students' Learning Achievement

The results revealed a significant positive relationship between teachers' professional performance and students' learning achievement in MAPEH ($r = .797$, $p = .043$). This indicates that higher teacher performance ratings were associated with better student academic outcomes. KII participants similarly emphasized that teachers' dedication, instructional effectiveness, and commitment to professional responsibilities were reflected in students' learning progress and academic achievement. The findings suggest that teachers' professional performance is an important consideration in understanding students' learning achievement. These findings reinforce the importance of maintaining effective instructional practices, professional accountability, and continuous teacher development to support improved learning outcomes in MAPEH.

3.3 Implications for Teacher Competency Enhancement and MAPEH Learning Improvement

The findings revealed that teachers demonstrated high to very high behavioral competencies and very satisfactory professional performance, while students' learning achievement remained satisfactory. Among the six competency dimensions, result focus was significantly associated with teachers' professional performance, whereas innovation was significantly associated with students' learning achievement. Teachers' overall performance was also positively associated with students' academic outcomes. These results identify result focus and innovation as relevant areas for professional development and instructional improvement. The findings provide a basis for developing a targeted enhancement plan that strengthens teachers' result-oriented practices, instructional innovation, and professional effectiveness. Continuous professional development may help teachers maintain their existing competencies while addressing areas requiring improvement, particularly innovation and service orientation. Strengthening these competencies may support more responsive MAPEH instruction, improved teacher performance, and better student learning opportunities. The proposed enhancement plan therefore emphasizes sustained professional growth and instructional improvement within the participating schools. The literature on professional development supports examining sustained learning opportunities and their links to classroom practice and student outcomes (Ventista & Brown, 2023). Evidence-based professional learning, feedback, and digitally supported instruction are relevant considerations for implementing this enhancement plan (EEF, 2021a; OECD, 2025; Ventista & Brown, 2023).

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study concluded that teachers' core behavioral competencies and professional performance are significantly associated with students' learning achievement in MAPEH. Teachers demonstrated high to very high levels of behavioral competencies and very satisfactory professional performance, while students achieved satisfactory academic results. Result focus was significantly associated with teachers' performance, whereas innovation was significantly associated with students' learning achievement. Furthermore, teachers' professional performance showed a significant positive relationship with students' academic achievement. These findings emphasize the importance of result-oriented practices, instructional innovation, self-management, and professional competence in supporting teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes.

Based on the findings, continuous professional development and competency enhancement are recommended to sustain teachers' performance and improve students' learning achievement in MAPEH. Particular emphasis should be placed on strengthening result-focused practices and instructional innovation, as these competencies

demonstrated significant relationships with teacher performance and student achievement. The proposed one-year enhancement plan should support teachers in maintaining professional competencies, improving instructional strategies, and addressing areas requiring further development to promote effective teaching and improved academic outcomes.

The study was limited to 38 MAPEH teachers and 190 students from ten public secondary schools in the DepEd Districts of Ilog I and II, Negros Occidental. Its descriptive-correlational design examined relationships among teachers' core behavioral competencies, professional performance, and students' learning achievement but did not establish causal relationships. The assessment relied on questionnaire responses, teachers' IPCRF ratings, students' academic records, and supplementary key informant interviews. Consequently, the findings are specific to the participating schools and respondents, and their applicability to other educational settings may be limited.

5. Compliance with ethical standards

The author declares no conflict of interest, and the study received no external funding. The researcher acknowledges the participation of teachers and students and the cooperation of the public secondary schools in the DepEd Districts of Ilog I and II, Negros Occidental. Data were collected through non-invasive methods, including questionnaires, key informant interviews, and school records, following the necessary permissions and ethical procedures.

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