



ACTIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES AND THEIR EFFECT ON THE PERFORMANCE OF GRADE 7 LEARNERS IN MUSIC, ARTS, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, AND HEALTH (MAPEH)

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the effect of active learning strategies on the academic performance of Grade 7 learners in Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH) in the public secondary schools of Schools Division Office of Nueva Ecija during the School Year 2025-2026. Specifically, it described the active learning strategies employed by Grade 7 MAPEH teachers in terms of collaborative learning, inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, experiential learning, and reflective learning; determined the level of academic performance of Grade 7 learners; examined the significant relationship between active learning strategies and academic performance; identified the dimensions of active learning strategies that significantly predicted academic performance; and proposed an enhancement program based on the findings. The study employed the descriptive-correlational research design. The respondents were Grade 7 teachers and learners enrolled in the public secondary schools of Schools Division Office of Nueva Ecija. A researcher-made questionnaire was utilized to determine the extent of the active learning strategies employed by Grade 7 MAPEH teachers, while the learners' official final grades in MAPEH served as the measure of academic performance. The instrument underwent content validation and reliability testing prior to its administration. The data gathered were analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, mean, standard deviation, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient, and Multiple Linear Regression Analysis. The findings revealed that Grade 7 MAPEH teachers always employed active learning strategies in classroom instruction. Among the identified dimensions, project-based learning was the most frequently implemented, followed by collaborative learning and experiential learning, while inquiry-based learning and reflective learning were often practiced. The learners demonstrated a very satisfactory level of academic performance in MAPEH. The study further revealed a significant

positive relationship between active learning strategies and learners' academic performance. Moreover, project-based learning and experiential learning significantly predicted the academic performance of Grade 7 learners, with project-based learning emerging as the strongest predictor. Based on the findings, an enhancement program entitled Project ACTIVE MAPEH: Advancing Collaborative Teaching and Innovative, Transformative, and Interactive Ventures for Excellence in MAPEH was proposed to strengthen the implementation of active learning strategies and further improve learners' academic performance. The study concluded that the consistent implementation of learner-centered active learning strategies contributes significantly to improving the academic performance of Grade 7 learners in MAPEH. Strengthening project-based and experiential learning, together with sustained professional development and instructional support for teachers, is expected to further enhance learner engagement, competency development, and academic achievement.

Keywords: *active learning strategies, academic performance, MAPEH*

INTRODUCTION

Education systems worldwide have increasingly shifted from teacher-centered instruction to learner-centered pedagogies that actively involve students in the learning process. International organizations emphasize that quality education should cultivate critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, and problem-solving skills to prepare learners for the demands of the twenty-first century (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2019; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2021). One instructional approach that effectively develops these competencies is active learning, which encourages learners to participate in discussions, collaborative activities, inquiry, problem-solving, simulations, and other meaningful classroom experiences. A meta-analysis conducted by Freeman et al. (2014) found that active learning significantly improves students' academic achievement while reducing failure rates compared with traditional lecture-based instruction.

Among the different learning areas, Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH), instructional approaches that actively engage learners are particularly important because the subject develops cognitive, psychomotor, and affective competencies simultaneously. Through active learning, learners are provided opportunities to perform musical pieces, create artistic outputs, participate in physical activities, demonstrate healthy practices, and reflect on their experiences. Such learning experiences enhance motivation, increase classroom participation, and promote deeper understanding of concepts and skills. Bonwell and Eison (1991) emphasized that active learning allows students to engage in higher-order thinking while participating meaningfully in classroom activities. Likewise, Prince (2004) concluded that active learning strategies consistently produce positive effects on student learning, engagement, and retention across various disciplines.

In the Philippines, the Department of Education continues to strengthen learner-centered instruction through curriculum reforms designed to improve learning quality and address learning gaps. The MATATAG Curriculum highlights the importance of meaningful, relevant, and competency-based learning experiences that actively engage learners in knowledge construction and skills development (Department of Education [DepEd], 2024). Moreover, the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) emphasize that teachers should employ a range of effective teaching strategies that respond to learners' needs, promote active participation, and create supportive learning environments conducive to improved academic performance (DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017).

Recent educational research has consistently demonstrated that active learning strategies contribute not only to academic achievement but also to the development of learner autonomy, self-regulation, and lifelong learning skills. Students who actively participate in constructing knowledge become more engaged in the learning process, develop stronger critical-thinking abilities, and demonstrate greater confidence in applying concepts to real-life situations. According to Biggs and Tang (2011), meaningful learning occurs when instructional activities are aligned with clearly defined learning outcomes, allowing learners to actively construct understanding rather than passively receive information. Similarly, Bransford, et. al(2000) emphasized that learning becomes more effective when learners actively organize, interpret, and apply new knowledge through authentic learning experiences.

The effectiveness of active learning is further supported by constructivist learning theory, which posits that learners construct knowledge through active interaction with their environment and prior experiences. According to Piaget (1972), cognitive development occurs as learners actively explore and assimilate new information into existing mental structures. Likewise, Vygotsky (1978) emphasized that learning is enhanced through social interaction, collaboration, and guided participation within the learner's Zone of Proximal Development. These theoretical perspectives provide a strong foundation for the use of collaborative learning, inquiry-based activities, problem-solving tasks, demonstrations, and performance-based assessments commonly employed in MAPEH instruction.

Despite these educational reforms, the implementation of active learning strategies in Philippine public secondary schools continues to face several challenges. Teachers often experience constraints related to large class sizes, limited instructional resources, insufficient learning facilities, inadequate teaching materials, and limited instructional time, all of which affect the consistent implementation of learner-centered pedagogies. These challenges are particularly evident in MAPEH because teachers must facilitate both theoretical understanding and performance-based learning while ensuring that learners actively participate throughout the instructional process. Consequently, some classroom practices remain predominantly teacher-centered, limiting opportunities for learners to develop higher-order thinking skills and meaningful learning experiences (Corpuz & Salandanan, 2021; DepEd, 2024).

Within the Schools Division Office of Nueva Ecija, public secondary schools continuously implement programs and professional development initiatives that encourage teachers to adopt innovative and learner-centered instructional practices. Through instructional supervision, Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, and curriculum implementation activities, teachers are encouraged to integrate active learning strategies that improve learner engagement and academic performance. However, variations in teacher competencies, availability of instructional materials, school facilities, and learner characteristics may influence the extent to which these strategies are effectively implemented in MAPEH classrooms. These differences highlight the need to examine how active learning strategies contribute to learners' academic performance within the local educational context (DepEd, 2024).

Specifically, in the public secondary schools of the Cabiao District, Schools Division Office of Nueva Ecija, MAPEH teachers employ various instructional strategies to encourage learner participation and improve classroom instruction. However, there is limited empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of active learning strategies in enhancing the academic performance of Grade 7 learners in MAPEH. Most existing studies have been conducted in other subject areas or educational settings, leaving a gap in localized research on active learning within the district. Conducting this study will therefore provide context-specific evidence that may assist teachers, school heads, and curriculum implementers in identifying instructional practices that effectively improve learner performance and strengthen the implementation of learner-centered instruction in MAPEH.

Given these circumstances, this study sought to determine the extent to which active learning strategies affected the academic performance of Grade 7 learners in Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH) in the public secondary schools of the Cabiao District, Schools Division Office of Nueva Ecija. The findings were expected to contribute to the growing body of literature on active learning, provide empirical evidence for improving instructional practices, support school-based professional development initiatives, and serve as a basis for future educational interventions that promote learner engagement, academic achievement, and holistic development (Freeman et al., 2014; OECD, 2019; UNESCO, 2021).

Research Questions

This study aimed to determine the effect of active learning strategies on the academic performance of Grade 7 learners in Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH) in the public secondary schools of Schools Division Office of Nueva Ecija during the School Year 2025–2026.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How may the active learning strategies employed by Grade 7 MAPEH teachers be described in terms of:
 - 1.1 collaborative learning;

- 1.2 inquiry-based learning;
 - 1.3 project-based learning;
 - 1.4 experiential learning; and
 - 1.5 reflective learning?
2. What is the level of academic performance of Grade 7 learners in MAPEH during the school year 2024-2025?
 3. Is there a significant relationship between the active learning strategies and the academic performance of Grade 7 learners in MAPEH?
 4. Which dimension of active learning strategies significantly predicts the academic performance of Grade 7 learners in MAPEH?
 5. Based on the findings of the study, what enhancement program may be proposed to strengthen the implementation of active learning strategies and improve the academic performance of Grade 7 learners in MAPEH?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed the descriptive-correlational research design to determine the effect of active learning strategies on the academic performance of Grade 7 learners in Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH) in the public secondary schools of Schools Division Office of Nueva Ecija during the School Year 2025-2026.

The descriptive component of the design was used to describe the active learning strategies employed by Grade 7 MAPEH teachers in terms of collaborative learning, inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, experiential learning, and reflective learning. It was also used to determine the level of academic performance of Grade 7 learners in MAPEH. This design enabled the researcher to systematically gather, organize, summarize, and interpret data as they naturally existed without manipulating any of the study variables.

The correlational component was utilized to determine whether a significant relationship existed between the active learning strategies employed by Grade 7 MAPEH teachers and the academic performance of Grade 7 learners in MAPEH. Correlational research is appropriate for examining the degree and direction of association between two or more variables without establishing direct causation. It enabled the researcher to determine whether variations in the implementation of active learning strategies were associated with variations in learners' academic performance.

Furthermore, multiple linear regression analysis was employed to determine which dimension of active learning strategies significantly predicted the academic performance of Grade 7 learners. The predictor variables included collaborative learning, inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, experiential learning, and reflective learning, while the criterion variable was the learners' academic performance in MAPEH. This analysis

identified the relative contribution of each dimension of active learning strategies in predicting learners' academic performance.

The descriptive-correlational research design was considered appropriate for this study because it provided a systematic means of describing the extent of implementation of active learning strategies, examining their relationship with learners' academic performance, and identifying the specific dimensions that significantly predicted academic achievement. The design also allowed the researcher to obtain empirical evidence that could serve as a basis for improving instructional practices and enhancing learner outcomes in Grade 7 MAPEH.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

The primary instrument used in this study was a researcher-made questionnaire designed to determine the extent of the active learning strategies employed by Grade 7 MAPEH teachers as perceived by the Grade 7 learners. The questionnaire was developed based on an extensive review of related literature, relevant theories on active learning, the objectives of the study, and the learning standards of the MAPEH curriculum. It was aligned with the Statement of the Problem to ensure that each indicator appropriately measured the variables under investigation.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts. Part I gathered data on the active learning strategies employed by Grade 7 MAPEH teachers. It comprised five dimensions, namely: collaborative learning, inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, experiential learning, and reflective learning. Each dimension contained ten (10) indicators, for a total of fifty (50) items. The respondents indicated the extent to which each strategy was employed using a five-point scale. Part II pertained to the academic performance of the Grade 7 learners in MAPEH. No questionnaire items were included for this variable since the learners' academic performance was measured using their official final grades in MAPEH obtained from the school records for the School Year 2025–2026.

Prior to its administration, the questionnaire underwent content validation by a panel of experts composed of specialists in educational management, research, measurement and evaluation, and MAPEH education. Their comments and recommendations were incorporated to improve the clarity, relevance, organization, and content of the instrument.

After the revision, the instrument was subjected to pilot testing among Grade 7 learners from a public secondary school outside the study locale but with characteristics similar to those of the actual respondents. The pilot test was conducted to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. The internal consistency of the instrument was measured using Cronbach's Alpha, and only items that demonstrated acceptable reliability were retained in the final version of the questionnaire.

Upon securing approval from the Schools Division Superintendent through the Schools Division Office of Nueva Ecija, the researcher sought permission from the respective school heads of the participating public secondary schools to conduct the study. After

obtaining the necessary approvals, the researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the Grade 7 learner-respondents with the assistance of the MAPEH teachers at a schedule convenient to the schools. Before the administration of the instrument, the respondents were informed of the purpose of the study, assured that their participation was voluntary, and informed that the information they provided would be treated with strict confidentiality.

After retrieving the completed questionnaires, the researcher checked them for completeness and consistency of responses. The responses were encoded, tabulated, and prepared for statistical analysis. The official final grades of the respondents in MAPEH were likewise obtained from the school records upon approval of the school authorities and were matched with the questionnaire responses using assigned codes to ensure anonymity and compliance with the provisions of Republic Act No. 10173, otherwise known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

Tools for Data Analysis

After the retrieval of the completed questionnaires and the collection of the respondents' official MAPEH final grades, the data were checked for completeness, encoded, tabulated, and analyzed using appropriate statistical tools. The statistical analyses were performed with the aid of the Jamovi Statistical Software, and all hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

The following statistical tools were used to analyze the data:

Frequency and Percentage. These were used to summarize and describe the profile of the respondents, when applicable. They provided a clear picture of the distribution of respondents according to the identified profile variables.

Weighted Mean. This was used to determine the extent of the active learning strategies employed by Grade 7 MAPEH teachers in terms of collaborative learning, inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, experiential learning, and reflective learning.

The following scale was used in interpreting the weighted mean:

Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating	Interpretation
4.21–5.00	Always	Very High Implementation
3.41–4.20	Often	High Implementation
2.61–3.40	Sometimes	Moderate Implementation
1.81–2.60	Rarely	Low Implementation
1.00–1.80	Never	Very Low Implementation

Mean. These were used to determine the level of academic performance of Grade 7 learners in MAPEH based on their official final grades. The mean described the average academic performance, while the standard deviation measured the variability of the learners' grades.

The following scale was used in interpreting the learners' academic performance based on the Department of Education grading system:

Grade	Descriptive Rating
90–100	Outstanding
85–89	Very Satisfactory
80–84	Satisfactory
75–79	Fairly Satisfactory
Below 75	Did Not Meet Expectations

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r). This was used to determine whether a significant relationship existed between the active learning strategies employed by Grade 7 MAPEH teachers and the academic performance of Grade 7 learners in MAPEH. Pearson's r measured both the strength and direction of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

The coefficient was interpreted as follows:

Correlation Coefficient (r)	Interpretation
± 0.90 to ± 1.00	Very High Correlation
± 0.70 to ± 0.89	High Correlation
± 0.40 to ± 0.69	Moderate Correlation
± 0.20 to ± 0.39	Low Correlation
± 0.00 to ± 0.19	Negligible Correlation

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis. This statistical tool was employed to determine which dimension of active learning strategies significantly predicted the academic performance of Grade 7 learners in MAPEH. The predictor variables included collaborative learning, inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, experiential learning, and reflective learning, while the criterion variable was the learners' academic performance. The standardized beta coefficients, t -values, p -values, coefficient of determination (R^2), and F-test were used to determine the predictive influence of each dimension and the overall fitness of the regression model.

RESULTS

Table 1.1
Active Learning Strategies Employed by Grade 7 MAPEH Teachers
in Terms of Collaborative Learning

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Encourages learners to work cooperatively in groups.	4.46	Always
2. Assigns collaborative learning tasks.	4.38	Always

3. Promotes teamwork during classroom activities.	4.42	Always
4. Encourages learners to share ideas and opinions.	4.31	Always
5. Provides opportunities for peer learning.	4.24	Always
6. Ensures active participation of all group members.	4.17	Often
7. Facilitates collaborative problem-solving activities.	4.12	Often
8. Encourages mutual respect among group members.	4.15	Often
9. Uses group presentations as learning activities.	4.08	Often
10. Provides feedback after collaborative activities.	3.98	Often
Average Weighted Mean	4.23	Always

Legend

Scale	Descriptive Equivalent	Interpretation
4.21-5.00	Always	The strategy is consistent observed.
3.41-4.20	Often	The strategy is frequently observed.
2.61-3.40	Sometimes	The strategy is occasionally observed.
1.81-2.60	Rarely	The strategy is seldom observed.
1.00-1.80	Never	The strategy is not observed.

Table 1.2
Active Learning Strategies Employed by Grade 7 MAPEH Teachers
in Terms of Inquiry-Based Learning

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Encourages learners to ask questions.	4.29	Always
2. Promotes investigation of classroom problems.	4.21	Always
3. Allows learners to discover concepts independently.	4.18	Often
4. Encourages critical thinking.	4.15	Often
5. Uses open-ended questions during lessons.	4.12	Often
6. Guides learners in analyzing information.	4.10	Often
7. Encourages learners to gather information from different sources.	4.08	Often
8. Allows learners to formulate conclusions.	4.05	Often
9. Encourages learners to justify their answers.	4.01	Often
10. Facilitates inquiry-based classroom discussions.	3.96	Often
Average Weighted Mean	4.12	Often

Legend

Scale	Descriptive Equivalent	Interpretation
4.21-5.00	Always	The strategy is consistent observed.
3.41-4.20	Often	The strategy is frequently observed.
2.61-3.40	Sometimes	The strategy is occasionally observed.
1.81-2.60	Rarely	The strategy is seldom observed.
1.00-1.80	Never	The strategy is not observed.

Table 1.3
Active Learning Strategies Employed by Grade 7 MAPEH Teachers
in Terms of Project-Based Learning

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Assigns meaningful projects related to lessons.	4.51	Always
2. Encourages creativity in project outputs.	4.47	Always
3. Provides clear project guidelines.	4.43	Always
4. Integrates real-life applications into projects.	4.39	Always
5. Monitors learners' progress.	4.35	Always
6. Encourages teamwork in projects.	4.29	Always
7. Uses projects to assess learning.	4.24	Always
8. Allows learners to present project outputs.	4.18	Often
9. Provides feedback on completed projects.	4.12	Often
10. Encourages project reflection.	4.05	Often
Average Weighted Mean	4.30	Always

Legend

Scale	Descriptive Equivalent	Interpretation
4.21-5.00	Always	The strategy is consistent observed.
3.41-4.20	Often	The strategy is frequently observed.
2.61-3.40	Sometimes	The strategy is occasionally observed.
1.81-2.60	Rarely	The strategy is seldom observed.
1.00-1.80	Never	The strategy is not observed.

Table 1.4
Active Learning Strategies Employed by Grade 7 MAPEH Teachers
in Terms of Experiential Learning

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Provides hands-on learning experiences.	4.39	Always
2. Conducts practical demonstrations.	4.42	Always
3. Engages learners in actual performances.	4.36	Always
4. Uses real-life learning activities.	4.30	Always
5. Encourages active participation.	4.26	Always
6. Integrates physical activities into lessons.	4.20	Often
7. Connects lessons to daily life.	4.17	Often
8. Encourages learning by doing.	4.13	Often
9. Provides opportunities for practice.	4.09	Often
10. Conducts reflection after practical activities.	4.01	Often
Average Weighted Mean	4.23	Always

Legend

Scale	Descriptive Equivalent	Interpretation
4.21-5.00	Always	The strategy is consistent observed.
3.41-4.20	Often	The strategy is frequently observed.
2.61-3.40	Sometimes	The strategy is occasionally observed.

1.81-2.60	Rarely	The strategy is seldom observed.
1.00-1.80	Never	The strategy is not observed.

Table 1.5
Active Learning Strategies Employed by Grade 7 MAPEH Teachers
in Terms of Reflective Learning

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Encourages learners to evaluate their own learning.	4.15	Often
2. Provides opportunities for self-reflection.	4.11	Often
3. Gives constructive feedback.	4.08	Often
4. Encourages learners to identify strengths and weaknesses.	4.02	Often
5. Facilitates reflective discussions.	3.99	Often
6. Uses reflection journals or learning logs.	3.93	Often
7. Encourages goal setting.	3.88	Often
8. Allows learners to express learning experiences.	3.84	Often
9. Uses reflective questioning after activities.	3.79	Often
10. Encourages learners to develop improvement plans.	3.74	Often
Average Weighted Mean	3.95	Often

Legend

Scale	Descriptive Equivalent	Interpretation
4.21-5.00	Always	The strategy is consistent observed.
3.41-4.20	Often	The strategy is frequently observed.
2.61-3.40	Sometimes	The strategy is occasionally observed.
1.81-2.60	Rarely	The strategy is seldom observed.
1.00-1.80	Never	The strategy is not observed.

Table 2
Level of Academic Performance of Grade 7 Learners in MAPEH Based
on Their Final Grades for the School Year 2024–2025
(N = 200)

Final Grade	Descriptive Rating	Frequency	Percentage
90–100	Outstanding	48	24.00
85–89	Very Satisfactory	86	43.00
80–84	Satisfactory	52	26.00
75–79	Fairly Satisfactory	14	7.00
Total		200	100.00

Mean Final Grade = 86.78
Standard Deviation = 4.36
Descriptive Rating = Very Satisfactory

Table 3
Significant Relationship Between Active Learning Strategies
and the Academic Performance of Grade 7 Learners in MAPEH

Active Learning Strategies	Pearson's r	p-value	Interpretation	Decision
Collaborative Learning	0.541	<0.001	Moderate Positive Significant Relationship	Reject Ho
Inquiry-Based Learning	0.487	<0.001	Moderate Positive Significant Relationship	Reject Ho
Project-Based Learning	0.623	<0.001	High Positive Significant Relationship	Reject Ho
Experiential Learning	0.579	<0.001	Moderate Positive Significant Relationship	Reject Ho
Reflective Learning	0.456	<0.001	Moderate Positive Significant Relationship	Reject Ho
Overall Active Learning Strategies	0.612	<0.001	High Positive Significant Relationship	Reject Ho

Table 4
Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Showing the Dimensions of Active Learning
Strategies that Significantly Predict the Academic
Performance of Grade 7 Learners in MAPEH

Predictor Variables	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value	Decision
Constant	62.417	2.584	—	24.16	<0.001	—
Collaborative Learning	0.824	0.461	0.134	1.79	0.075	Not Significant
Inquiry-Based Learning	0.657	0.428	0.109	1.54	0.126	Not Significant
Project-Based Learning	2.148	0.487	0.387	4.41	<0.001	Significant
Experiential Learning	1.563	0.503	0.271	3.11	0.002	Significant
Reflective Learning	0.591	0.438	0.097	1.35	0.178	Not Significant

Model Summary

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F-value	p-value	Interpretation
0.681	0.464	0.451	33.69	<0.001	Significant Regression Model

DISCUSSION

Table 1.1. Active Learning Strategies Employed by Grade 7 MAPEH Teachers in Terms of Collaborative Learning

The findings indicate that Grade 7 MAPEH teachers always employed collaborative learning strategies, as reflected by the average weighted mean of 4.23. The highest-rated indicators were encourages learners to work cooperatively in groups (WM = 4.46), promotes teamwork during classroom activities (WM = 4.42), and assigns collaborative learning tasks (WM = 4.38). These results suggest that teachers consistently foster cooperative learning environments where learners actively work together, share responsibilities, and develop teamwork skills through collaborative classroom activities.

However, provides feedback after collaborative activities (WM = 3.98), uses group presentations as learning activities (WM = 4.08), and facilitates collaborative problem-solving activities (WM = 4.12) were rated only Often. This implies that while collaborative learning is consistently practiced, opportunities remain to strengthen feedback mechanisms and collaborative problem-solving experiences to further enhance learners' participation and learning outcomes.

Table 1.2. Active Learning Strategies Employed by Grade 7 MAPEH Teachers in Terms of Inquiry-Based Learning

The results reveal that inquiry-based learning strategies were often employed by Grade 7 MAPEH teachers, as shown by the average weighted mean of 4.12. The highest-rated indicators were encourages learners to ask questions (WM = 4.29) and promotes investigation of classroom problems (WM = 4.21), both interpreted as Always. These findings indicate that teachers regularly encourage learners to become inquisitive and actively explore learning through questioning and problem investigation.

On the other hand, facilitates inquiry-based classroom discussions (WM = 3.96), encourages learners to justify their answers (WM = 4.01), and allows learners to formulate conclusions (WM = 4.05) received ratings of Often. This suggests that although inquiry-based learning is frequently practiced, teachers may further strengthen learners' higher-order thinking skills by providing more opportunities for classroom discussions, evidence-based reasoning, and independent conclusion-making.

Table 1.3. Active Learning Strategies Employed by Grade 7 MAPEH Teachers in Terms of Project-Based Learning

The findings show that project-based learning strategies were always employed by Grade 7 MAPEH teachers, obtaining the highest average weighted mean among the five dimensions (WM = 4.30). The highest-rated indicators included assigns meaningful projects related to lessons (WM = 4.51), encourages creativity in project outputs (WM = 4.47), and provides clear project guidelines (WM = 4.43). These results indicate that teachers consistently use meaningful and well-structured projects that promote creativity, authentic learning, and the practical application of classroom concepts.

Meanwhile, encourages project reflection (WM = 4.05), provides feedback on completed projects (WM = 4.12), and allows learners to present project outputs (WM = 4.18) were rated Often. This implies that while project-based learning is consistently implemented, greater emphasis on reflection, presentation, and constructive feedback could further enrich learners' understanding and maximize the educational value of project-based activities.

Table 1.4. Active Learning Strategies Employed by Grade 7 MAPEH Teachers in Terms of Experiential Learning

The data indicate that experiential learning strategies were always employed by Grade 7 MAPEH teachers, with an average weighted mean of 4.23. The highest-rated indicators were conducts practical demonstrations (WM = 4.42), provides hands-on learning experiences (WM = 4.39), and engages learners in actual performances (WM = 4.36). These findings suggest that teachers consistently provide authentic and hands-on learning experiences that enable learners to apply knowledge and skills in meaningful situations.

However, conducts reflection after practical activities (WM = 4.01), provides opportunities for practice (WM = 4.09), and encourages learning by doing (WM = 4.13) were rated Often. These results imply that although experiential learning is consistently practiced, teachers may further strengthen learners' understanding by providing additional opportunities for practice and structured reflection after practical activities.

Table 1.5. Active Learning Strategies Employed by Grade 7 MAPEH Teachers in Terms of Reflective Learning

The findings reveal that reflective learning strategies were often employed by Grade 7 MAPEH teachers, as indicated by the average weighted mean of 3.95. The highest-rated indicators were encourages learners to evaluate their own learning (WM = 4.15), provides opportunities for self-reflection (WM = 4.11), and gives constructive feedback (WM = 4.08). These findings suggest that teachers regularly encourage learners to assess their own learning experiences and use feedback to support continuous improvement.

Nevertheless, encourages learners to develop improvement plans (WM = 3.74), uses reflective questioning after activities (WM = 3.79), and allows learners to express learning experiences (WM = 3.84) received the lowest ratings, although still interpreted as Often. This indicates that while reflective learning is frequently integrated into instruction, teachers may further enhance learners' reflective skills by encouraging deeper self-assessment, goal setting, and reflection on their learning experiences.

Table 2. Level of Academic Performance of Grade 7 Learners in MAPEH Based on Their Final Grades for the School Year 2024–2025

The findings reveal that the Grade 7 learners achieved a Very Satisfactory level of academic performance, with a mean final grade of 86.78 and a standard deviation of 4.36. Among the 200 respondents, the largest proportion (43.00%) obtained Very Satisfactory grades (85–89), followed by 26.00% who attained Satisfactory grades (80–84), while 24.00% achieved Outstanding performance (90–100). These results indicate that the majority of learners performed above the satisfactory level, reflecting a generally favorable academic achievement in MAPEH.

Only 7.00% of the learners obtained Fairly Satisfactory grades (75–79), representing the smallest percentage of the respondents. This suggests that relatively few learners performed at the minimum passing level, while most were able to attain higher academic achievement. Overall, the findings imply that Grade 7 learners demonstrated commendable academic performance, which may be attributed to effective instructional practices and active engagement in classroom learning.

Table 3. Significant Relationship Between Active Learning Strategies and the Academic Performance of Grade 7 Learners in MAPEH

The results indicate that all dimensions of active learning strategies were positively and significantly related to the academic performance of Grade 7 learners, as evidenced by p-values of less than 0.001, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Among the dimensions, Project-Based Learning showed the strongest relationship with academic performance ($r = 0.623$), followed by Experiential Learning ($r = 0.579$), Collaborative Learning ($r = 0.541$), Inquiry-Based Learning ($r = 0.487$), and Reflective Learning ($r = 0.456$). These findings indicate that increased implementation of active learning strategies is associated with better academic performance among learners.

Furthermore, the overall active learning strategies yielded a high positive significant relationship with academic performance ($r = 0.612$, $p < 0.001$). This implies that when teachers consistently employ active learning strategies, learners tend to achieve higher academic outcomes in MAPEH. The findings underscore the importance of learner-centered instructional approaches in enhancing students' academic achievement.

Table 4. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Showing the Dimensions of Active Learning Strategies that Significantly Predict the Academic Performance of Grade 7 Learners in MAPEH

The regression analysis revealed that the overall model was statistically significant ($R = 0.681$, $R^2 = 0.464$, $F = 33.69$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that the dimensions of active learning strategies collectively explained 46.4% of the variation in learners' academic performance. This suggests that active learning strategies substantially contribute to predicting students' academic achievement in MAPEH, while the remaining variation may be influenced by other factors not included in the study.

Among the predictor variables, Project-Based Learning ($\beta = 0.387$, $p < 0.001$) and Experiential Learning ($\beta = 0.271$, $p = 0.002$) were found to be significant predictors of academic performance. In contrast, Collaborative Learning ($p = 0.075$), Inquiry-Based Learning ($p = 0.126$), and Reflective Learning ($p = 0.178$) were not significant predictors when analyzed simultaneously with the other variables. These findings suggest that project-based and experiential learning strategies have the greatest influence on improving learners' academic performance and should be emphasized in MAPEH instruction.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Grade 7 MAPEH teachers consistently implemented active learning strategies in classroom instruction. Among the identified dimensions, project-based learning was the most frequently employed strategy, followed by collaborative learning and experiential learning. Although inquiry-based and reflective learning were also practiced regularly, these strategies were implemented to a relatively lesser extent. Overall, the findings indicate that learner-centered instructional practices have been effectively integrated into MAPEH instruction.
2. The Grade 7 learners demonstrated a Very Satisfactory level of academic performance in MAPEH. The majority of the learners attained grades that reflected satisfactory mastery of the learning competencies, indicating that they were able to meet or exceed the expected learning standards in Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health.
3. There was a significant positive relationship between the active learning strategies employed by Grade 7 MAPEH teachers and the academic performance of Grade 7 learners in MAPEH. This indicates that greater implementation of learner-centered instructional strategies was associated with higher levels of learner achievement. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between active learning strategies and academic performance was rejected.
4. Project-Based Learning and Experiential Learning significantly predicted the academic performance of Grade 7 learners in MAPEH, with Project-Based Learning emerging as

the strongest predictor. This indicates that authentic projects and hands-on learning experiences contributed most substantially to learners' academic achievement. Conversely, Collaborative Learning, Inquiry-Based Learning, and Reflective Learning, although significantly related to academic performance, did not independently predict learners' achievement when the effects of the other active learning strategies were considered. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that none of the dimensions of active learning strategies significantly predicts academic performance was partially rejected.

5. The proposed enhancement program, Project ACTIVE MAPEH: Advancing Collaborative Teaching and Innovative, Transformative, and Interactive Ventures for Excellence in MAPEH, was found to be an appropriate and responsive intervention based on the results of the study. The program addresses the identified instructional strengths and areas requiring improvement by strengthening teachers' implementation of active learning strategies, particularly inquiry-based and reflective learning, while sustaining effective project-based, collaborative, and experiential instructional practices. Its implementation is expected to further improve learner engagement and academic performance in MAPEH.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Grade 7 MAPEH teachers should continue implementing learner-centered instructional approaches, particularly project-based, collaborative, and experiential learning, which were found to be consistently practiced. Greater emphasis should also be given to strengthening inquiry-based and reflective learning by incorporating more investigative activities, higher-order questioning techniques, reflective journals, self-assessment, peer assessment, and structured post-activity reflection to further enrich learners' classroom experiences.
2. Teachers should sustain instructional practices that contribute to the learners' Very Satisfactory academic performance while implementing enrichment activities for high-performing learners and intervention programs for those who require additional academic support. Continuous monitoring of learners' progress, differentiated instruction, and timely feedback should likewise be strengthened to further increase the number of learners attaining Outstanding performance in MAPEH.
3. Since active learning strategies were found to have a significant positive relationship with learners' academic performance, school heads and MAPEH teachers should intensify the implementation of learner-centered instructional approaches across all MAPEH components. Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, instructional coaching, classroom observations, and professional development programs should focus on enhancing teachers' competencies in designing and facilitating active learning experiences that promote greater learner engagement and improved academic achievement.

4. Considering that Project-Based Learning and Experiential Learning significantly predicted learners' academic performance, teachers should prioritize the integration of authentic projects, performance-based tasks, hands-on activities, demonstrations, simulations, and real-life learning experiences into their instructional plans. School administrators should likewise provide adequate instructional resources, facilities, and technical support to facilitate the effective implementation of these strategies. At the same time, teachers should continue enhancing collaborative, inquiry-based, and reflective learning practices to complement the significant predictors and provide a balanced learner-centered instructional environment.

5. The proposed enhancement program, Project ACTIVE MAPEH: Advancing Collaborative Teaching and Innovative, Transformative, and Interactive Ventures for Excellence in MAPEH, should be adopted and implemented in the public secondary schools of the Cabiao District. School heads should allocate the necessary resources and provide administrative support for its implementation through capacity-building activities, Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, instructional coaching, demonstration teaching, peer mentoring, and regular monitoring and evaluation. The effectiveness of the program should be periodically assessed to ensure its sustainability and its contribution to improving the implementation of active learning strategies and the academic performance of Grade 7 learners in MAPEH.

6. Future researchers may conduct similar studies in other school districts, divisions, or educational settings to validate the findings of this study. They may also investigate other variables that may influence learners' academic performance, such as learner motivation, self-efficacy, classroom climate, digital learning tools, parental involvement, instructional leadership, and teachers' pedagogical competence. Moreover, experimental, quasi-experimental, or mixed-method research designs may be employed to establish stronger evidence regarding the effectiveness of active learning strategies in improving learners' academic performance in MAPEH and other learning areas.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

This study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice to ensure the protection of the rights, dignity, privacy, and welfare of all participants. Prior to data collection, the researcher secured approval from the research adviser and obtained permission from the Schools Division Office of Nueva Ecija and the school heads of the participating public secondary schools. Coordination with the Grade 7 MAPEH teachers was also undertaken to facilitate the administration of the research instrument. The respondents were informed of the purpose, procedures, and significance of the study before participating. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, while written parental or guardian consent and learner assent were secured for Grade 7 learners who were minors. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or any effect on their academic standing.

Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly observed. No personally identifiable information was collected, and identification codes were used for data organization. All research data, including the official MAPEH final grades, were handled in compliance with Republic Act No. 10173 (Data Privacy Act of 2012) and were used solely for academic purposes. Findings were presented only in aggregate form to protect the identity of the respondents and participating schools. The researcher ensured that the study involved no physical, psychological, or emotional harm. The questionnaire contained only items relevant to the research objectives, and all qualified respondents were given an equal opportunity to participate without discrimination. Throughout the study, honesty, integrity, and academic responsibility were maintained by collecting, analyzing, and reporting data objectively and by properly acknowledging all sources in accordance with the APA 7th Edition citation and referencing guidelines.

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