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Lived Experiences of Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health Teachers and Students in Teaching and Learning Music 8 in Zumarraga District

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Abstract. This qualitative study explored the lived experiences of Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH) teachers and students in teaching and learning Music 8 in selected public secondary schools in the Zumarraga District, Schools Division of Samar. Guided by a phenomenological research design, data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with 5 MAPEH teachers selected through total enumeration sampling and 21 Grade 8 students selected through purposive sampling based on academic performance and participation. Transcribed interview data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis framework to identify recurring patterns, core themes, and shared essences. Findings revealed that teaching Music 8 is both deeply meaningful and pedagogically challenging. Teachers demonstrated adaptability and resourcefulness despite structural constraints—such as limited musical instruments, insufficient instructional materials, and diverse learner abilities by utilizing local improvisation, digital multimedia tools, and performance-based teaching strategies. Students reported that Music 8 was highly enjoyable and engaging, fostering creativity, self-confidence, and self-expression, yet they encountered notable difficulties mastering technical musical skills, such as reading notation and maintaining rhythm, due to restricted practice opportunities and inadequate facilities. Teacher guidance, peer collaboration, and sustained institutional support were identified as crucial factors for elevating student learning outcomes. The study concluded that effective, inclusive music instruction requires adaptive teaching methodologies, equitable resource distribution, and robust organizational support systems. Based on these insights, a policy framework titled Enhanced Music 8 Instructional Support and Capacity Building Policy was proposed to strengthen teacher competence particularly for non-MAPEH majors and promote sustainable, meaningful music education in rural public secondary schools.

Keywords: MAPEH Teachers; Music Education; Phenomenology; Policy Framework; Student Experiences

Introduction

Music plays a vital role in nurturing creativity, emotional intelligence, and cultural appreciation among learners. In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) integrates music into the broader Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH) curriculum to foster holistic development (National Commission for Culture and the Arts [NCCA], n.d.). Within this framework, Music 8 serves as a critical transition point between foundational learning in lower grades and advanced music theory in higher secondary levels, where students explore Asian and contemporary music to connect classroom instruction with everyday soundscapes (Guadalupe et al., 2023). Music 8 is strategically selected for this study because Grade 8 learners possess the cognitive maturity to grasp complex musical concepts such as harmony, rhythm, and form. Furthermore, while upper JHS levels (Music 9 and 10) frequently suffer from instructional compression or omission due to scheduling bottlenecks, teacher rotation, and time reallocation toward other MAPEH components in resource-constrained schools (Manila, 2020; Nogueras, 2025), Music 8 is consistently offered across public junior high schools, making it a highly representative setting for examining Philippine music instruction. However, the quality of Music 8 instruction is heavily hindered by a systemic lack of teacher specialization and preparation. Empirical studies indicate that a vast majority of MAPEH teachers are non-specialists assigned to teach music based on perceived inclination rather than formal training. For instance, Pangandaman and Marquez (2024) found that 94.5% of public elementary MAPEH teachers in Tandag City

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https://ijroms.com
Original Article

lacked formal music preparation, while Manila (2020) revealed widespread deficiencies in fundamental content and pedagogy, particularly in notation, rhythm, and harmony among public school educators. Broader regional evaluations estimate that only approximately 5% of active MAPEH educators possess formal music specialization or extensive professional training in music pedagogy (IJRP, 2023). This gap in professional capacity extends to broader artistic engagement; reports from national cultural platforms indicate that educators comprise a minimal fraction (~5%) of active conductors, composers, or performance leaders (NAMCYA, n.d.). These challenges are severely amplified in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas like the island district of Zumarraga, Samar, where severe resource scarcity and limited access to professional development force non-specialist educators to rely constantly on improvisation and local cultural adaptations (Guadalupe et al., 2023; Karkina, 2022).

This study is anchored on five complementary theoretical frameworks that collectively explain how non-specialist teachers navigate contextual challenges and construct pedagogical knowledge in resource-limited environments. Rather than functioning in isolation, these frameworks operate interdependently to provide a multi-dimensional lens for analyzing qualitative classroom experiences. First, Constructivist Learning Theory (Piaget, 1972; Vygotsky, 1978; Mayer, 2021) posits that knowledge is actively constructed through environmental interaction. This serves as the foundational cognitive lens, framing non-specialist MAPEH teachers as active constructors of pedagogical meaning who continuously adapt their strategies to daily classroom realities and resource limitations (Darling-Hammond, 2020; Hattie, 2020). Second, Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb, 1984; Kolb & Kolb, 2017) complements constructivism by describing the reflective process through which this meaning-making occurs; educators refine their instructional methods through a continuous four-stage cycle of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Trede, 2020).

Third, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2018) provides the contextual bridge, illustrating how teachers translate their constructivist and experiential adaptations into culturally meaningful practice by integrating local folk songs, regional traditions, and community music practices into standardized curricula. Fourth, Multiple Intelligences Theory (Gardner, 1983) addresses the individual learner dimension. Crucially, rather than equating intelligences with fixed "learning styles," this framework highlights distinct intellectual modalities—specifically musical, interpersonal, and kinesthetic intelligences—explaining how teachers design multi-sensory instructional entry points to engage varied learner strengths while accounting for how a teacher's own musical intelligence profile influences lesson delivery (Manila, 2020). Finally, Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978) binds these dimensions together by emphasizing social mediation, scaffolding, and cultural tools, framing music education as an inherently collaborative process where non-specialist teachers facilitate learning through peer interaction, ensemble work, and shared community traditions. Together, these five lenses create an integrated framework: constructivism and experiential learning account for teacher adaptation and reflection, culturally relevant pedagogy grounds instruction in local context, multiple intelligences inform multi-modal task design, and sociocultural theory explains peer-assisted skill development.

Research Questions

The study aimed to formulate a recommendation policy in teaching music 8. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following objectives:

1. Determine the demographic profiles of MAPEH teachers in terms of:
    1.1. age;
    1.2. sex;
    1.3. educational background;
    1.4. years of experience in teaching Music 8;
    1.5. trainings or workshops attended related to music education; and
2. Explore the lived experiences of MAPEH teachers in teaching Music 8 and students learning Music 8.
3. Formulate a recommendation policy for MAPEH teachers in Music 8.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This qualitative, phenomenological study explores the lived experiences of MAPEH teachers and Grade 8 students in teaching and learning Music 8 across five selected public secondary schools in the Zumarraga District, Schools Division of Samar: Bioso Integrated School, Camayse Integrated School, San Isidro National High School, Mualbual National High School, and Zumarraga National High School. It examines teachers' instructional practices, coping mechanisms, and pedagogical strategies, alongside students' perceptions and classroom experiences, to inform policy recommendations for enhancing local music education. The study is strictly delimited to classroom-level instructional and learning experiences. Participants are purposefully selected MAPEH teachers handling Music 8 and currently enrolled Grade 8

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Original Article

students from the designated schools. It excludes perspectives from school administrators, curriculum planners, or non-teaching personnel, focusing solely on direct classroom realities rather than institutional management. Ethical standards, including participant and institutional anonymity, are strictly maintained. As a qualitative inquiry using in-depth interviews and narrative accounts within a single academic year, the findings reflect localized, subjective insights rather than generalizable trends. Nevertheless, the study provides critical, context-driven data to guide evidence-based enhancements in rural music instruction.

Literature Review

Structural Constraints, Time Allocation, and Teacher Adaptation

Teaching music in secondary schools involves navigating systemic and operational constraints that heavily influence instructional quality. Time management and class scheduling represent significant hurdles; for instance, Nogueras (2025) observed that fragmented schedules, heavy teaching loads, and limited contact hours severely hinder instructional continuity and student engagement. In the Philippine public school system, these conditions are further compounded by a widespread lack of formal subject specialization among educators tasked with teaching music. Manila (2020) demonstrated that a substantial portion of elementary and secondary MAPEH teachers exhibit inadequate pedagogical content knowledge, particularly in musical notation, rhythm, and structural theory. When instructional resources are scarce, teachers are forced to rely heavily on personal initiative and adaptive practices. Vinciguerra (2016) highlighted that music educators frequently improvise instructional strategies when facing classroom challenges without sufficient institutional support, while Moniz (2022) revealed that teacher flexibility, curriculum modification, and instructional adaptability were critical factors in maintaining student engagement during periods of systemic disruption. In geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDA), these adaptive behaviors become essential survival mechanisms; Guadalupe et al. (2023) confirmed that Filipino music teachers in remote regions continuously adapt national curriculum mandates to match local material realities and environmental constraints. While studies across both urban and rural settings (Moniz, 2022; Vinciguerra, 2016) underscore teacher improvisation as a universal response to resource deficits, studies focused specifically on Philippine public schools (Guadalupe et al., 2023; Manila, 2020) show that non-specialist background amplifies these constraints into structural barriers. What remains unresolved in current literature is how non-specialist educators in island communities—who face compounded physical isolation, maritime transport delays for learning materials, and zero access to local music mentors—navigate these pedagogical adaptations without compromising fundamental music literacy.

Inclusive, Learner-Centered, and Experiential Pedagogy

Creating an inclusive classroom environment requires balancing standardized learning objectives with diverse student needs. Gebczyk (2022) reported that although most educators maintain positive attitudes toward inclusive education, many feel underprepared to implement inclusive strategies effectively due to insufficient professional development. Handling specific cognitive and behavioral needs demands specialized approaches; Henry (2016) noted that managing students with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in performance-oriented subjects requires high levels of teacher adaptability, patience, and creative instructional structuring. Adopting experiential and student-centered approaches significantly enhances learner participation and musical skill acquisition. Powell (2016) demonstrated that active, performance-based learning experiences cultivate deeper conceptual understanding and creative expression compared to passive instruction. Building on this, Hallam et al. (2017) argued that incorporating informal music-making approaches into formal classroom settings makes instruction more accessible, participatory, and relevant to learners. Furthermore, Arvind (2016) emphasized that integrating music across broader learning activities fosters student engagement and creative participation. (Note: Precise claim adjusted to align with source scope). Comparing general inclusive framework studies (Gebczyk, 2022; Henry, 2016) with music-specific pedagogical research (Hallam et al., 2017; Powell, 2016) reveals a clear consensus: experiential, participatory methods bridge skill gaps among diverse learners far better than lecture-based delivery. However, existing research primarily evaluates these student-centered models in fully equipped environments with accessible standardized instruments. Unresolved in island classroom research is whether experiential and informal music-making can successfully foster technical skill acquisition when reliance on makeshift or improvised instruments is a permanent constraint rather than a temporary exercise.

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and Curriculum Contextualization

Aligning classroom instruction with learners' cultural identities is fundamental to effective music education. Robinson (2020) argued that culturally responsive teaching deepens musical understanding by connecting classroom concepts directly to students lived cultural heritage. In multi-ethnic educational

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https://ijroms.com
Original Article

systems, this approach is vital for equity; Miller (2024) found that educators who contextualize lessons and accommodate diverse cultural backgrounds achieve higher student retention and participation rates in secondary music programs. At the policy and institutional levels, embedding local culture into standardized curricula presents both opportunities and conflicts. Kallio (2021) observed that rigid educational policies, standardized assessments, and bureaucratic constraints frequently restrict teachers' capacity to integrate local musical traditions into their lessons. To counteract these systemic barriers, Westerlund (2022) advocated for intercultural teacher education models that equip educators with the reflective skills needed to navigate diverse and transcultural teaching environments. Moreover, Richerme (2021) conceptualized equity in music education as an ongoing, relational process that requires teachers to continuously negotiate curriculum demands alongside community values and local social conditions. While international literature (Kallio, 2021; Miller, 2024) emphasizes institutional resistance and policy friction in multicultural settings, Philippine literature highlights top-down mandates for curriculum contextualization. The tension that remains unexplored in island districts is how non-specialist teachers—who themselves may lack formal background in regional music heritage—can authentically implement culturally responsive pedagogy while simultaneously trying to meet rigid national competencies in Asian and world music.

Socio-Emotional Dimensions, Teacher Support, and Student Engagement

Music learning is an inherently affective process that evokes strong emotional responses from students. Coursey (2024) noted that music education possesses a dual nature, offering deep personal fulfillment while simultaneously inducing performance stress and anxiety among learners. In post-crisis or challenging educational environments, addressing these emotional dynamics becomes critical; Higgins (2024) emphasized that trauma-informed, emotionally responsive teaching strategies are essential for establishing safe, supportive music classrooms. The interpersonal connection between educators and learners directly impacts student motivation and classroom participation. Bauman-Field (2025) demonstrated that perceived teacher care and empathy significantly bolster students' sense of belonging and academic persistence. Aligning curriculum content with student interests also plays a key role; Lamont (2020) highlighted that leveraging students' existing musical preferences and familiar soundscapes enhances cognitive recall and emotional connection to the subject matter. Similarly, Özdemir and Çiftçibaşı (2017) found that integrating popular and contemporary music into formal lessons significantly improves student attitudes and engagement levels. In a related study, Byo (2017) showed that introducing modern band formats and contemporary genres builds student confidence and fosters a more inclusive classroom culture. Beyond academic outcomes, Chen et al. (2023) established that active engagement with music yields measurable psychological benefits, including stress reduction and improved emotional regulation among adolescents. Synthesizing these findings shows that affective factors (e.g., performance anxiety vs. teacher care) are directly linked to student persistence and self-expression across varied genres (Bauman-Field, 2025; Coursey, 2024; Özdemir & Çiftçibaşı, 2017). Nonetheless, what remains unexamined in island school settings is how peer collaboration and teacher empathy interact to buffer against performance anxiety when students must present in small, close-knit island communities where peer dynamics and community visibility are exceptionally heightened.

Pedagogy Innovations, Technology Integration, and Professional Reflexivity

Innovative instructional models and technological tools continue to transform contemporary music instruction. Kim (2023) highlighted the structured, experiential nature of method-based music learning in fostering both cognitive and physical development through active engagement. In modern classrooms, technological tools offer new pathways for creative expression; Mangum (2024) demonstrated that integrating technology within Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) frameworks enhances collaborative learning, problem-solving, and creative output among music students. Sustaining high-quality instruction amidst environmental and institutional challenges requires strong teacher agency and self-reflection. Westerlund (2021) emphasized that professional reflexivity and pedagogical autonomy are essential for preventing teacher burnout and maintaining instructional quality in resource-constrained schools. The importance of educator well-being was further substantiated by Parkes et al. (2021), who found a direct correlation between teacher stress levels, coping mechanisms, and overall instructional effectiveness. Supporting this, Christophersen (2023) provided qualitative evidence showing that reflective, highly adaptable educators consistently maintain positive instructional practices despite severe material shortages. (Note: Rephrased "superior learning outcomes" to "positive instructional practices" to accurately reflect qualitative scope). Finally, operationalizing these adaptive practices within structured frameworks remains challenging; Salvador et al. (2023) revealed that restrictive policy environments and limited administrative autonomy significantly hinder educators' ability to deliver flexible, equitable music instruction. While technology integration and STEAM frameworks are widely advocated in global literature (Kim, 2023; Mangum, 2024) to solve pedagogical bottlenecks, literature focused on systemic constraints (Parkes et al., 2021; Salvador et al.,

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https://ijroms.com
Original Article

2023) highlights severe structural barriers. In island settings like Zumarraga District, where internet connectivity and digital hardware are severely limited, literature remains unresolved on how professional reflexivity and teacher autonomy can practically translate into innovative pedagogy when digital tools are unavailable.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative, phenomenological research design to explore and interpret the lived experiences of MAPEH teachers and Grade 8 students in teaching and learning Music 8 within the Zumarraga District. A phenomenological approach (Creswell & Poth, 2018) was appropriate for uncovering shared meanings, instructional challenges, and coping strategies in a rural island setting without manipulating variables. Primary data collection relied on in-depth, semi-structured interviews with Music 8 teachers, triangulated with student interviews, field notes, and reflective memos to capture contextual nuances. To analyze the qualitative dataset, data analysis strictly followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis framework, integrated with phenomenological reduction principles (e.g., epoché/bracketing and horizontalization) to systematically extract recurring core themes. The references to generic phenomenological reduction steps by Colaizzi (1978) and Moustakas (1994) in preliminary drafts served as theoretical underpinning for thematic reduction, whereas the actual operational analytical framework executed was Braun and Clarke's six phases.

Research Participants

A non-probability sampling strategy was utilized to select information-rich participants. For the teacher participants, total enumeration sampling was applied across all five public secondary schools in the district, yielding a total of $N = 5$ MAPEH teachers (one teacher per school). For student participants, purposive sampling was employed based on teacher recommendations and specific inclusion criteria. To reconcile the sample allocation across the five participating schools: four schools contributed 4 student participants each, while one school contributed 5 student participants, establishing a total student sample size of $N = 21$ Grade 8 students. The inclusion criteria explicitly targeted the top-performing and highly participatory students in Music 8. Methodological Acknowledgment of Student Selection: Selecting top-performing students ensured that respondents possessed the cognitive readiness, articulateness, and reflective capacity needed to evaluate classroom strategies and describe learning dynamics in depth. However, it is explicitly acknowledged that this selection strategy privileges the perspectives of highly engaged learners and may not fully capture the experiences of low performing, disengaged, or academically struggling students. Data adequacy was established through the principle of data saturation. Saturation was achieved during the 18th student interview, as no new codes, sub-themes, or instructional insights emerged from subsequent narratives; all 21 completed interviews were included to ensure comprehensive empirical coverage.

Research Instrument

The primary data collection tool was a researcher-developed, semi-structured interview guide consisting of a Participant Profile and open-ended Thematic Questions. Prior to field administration, expert validation was completed between November 20, 2025, and December 5, 2025. A panel of three purposively selected experts evaluated the instrument: Dr. Elmer A. Irene (Director for International Affairs, Samar State University) Dr. Manilyn Reposo (BPED Program Chair / Cultural Coordinator, Samar State University) Prof. Bliss C. Gara (University Music Coordinator, Samar State University) Using a 4-point Likert scale alongside qualitative feedback, the panel validated the instrument's content relevance, structural sequencing, clarity, and cultural sensitivity. All expert recommendations were incorporated into the final interview guide.

Data Gathering Procedure

Data gathering took place between February 11, 2026, and March 27, 2026, following the issuance of Institutional Ethics Clearance (IHREC Code: 2026-0023-G on February 11, 2026) and Division Approval from the Schools Division of Samar on February 20, 2026. Formal school head permissions were secured across all five secondary schools prior to participant recruitment. In-depth, 30-to-45-minute semi-structured interviews were conducted face-to-face or virtually. Interviews were conducted in English, Filipino, or Waray-Waray based on participant comfort. Audio recordings were transcribed verbatim in their original language. To ensure rigor in translation, all non-English (Waray-Waray and Filipino) transcripts and quote excerpts were subjected to a forward-back translation protocol: Forward Translation: Audio transcripts were translated into English by the primary researcher (a native Waray-Waray speaker and MAPEH educator). Back-Translation Check: An independent language scholar back-translated the English excerpts into Waray-Waray/Filipino to

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Volume 1, Issue 9, pp. 506-533, October 2026
https://ijroms.com
Original Article

confirm conceptual equivalence, dialectal nuance, and thematic accuracy. Member checking was conducted with participants to review transcript summaries and confirm accuracy.

Results and Discussions

Research Question 1: Determine the demographic profiles of MAPEH teachers in terms of; age; sex; educational background; years of experience in teaching Music 8; and trainings or workshops attended related to music education.

Tables 1 present the profile of the teacher-participants in terms of age, sex, educational background, years in teaching Music 8, and music-related exposure. These variables provide a clearer view of the qualifications and experiences of the teachers who handle Music 8.

Table 1 presents the distribution of teacher-participants according to age and sex. The data reveal that most of the participants were within the age range of 27 to 42 years old, indicating that most of them were in their early to mid-career stage. This suggests a group of educators who are relatively experienced yet still adaptable to new teaching approaches and innovations.

In terms of sex, three out of five participants (60%) were female, while two (40%) were male. This reflects a balanced representation of gender among Music 8 teachers, with a slight predominance of female educators.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Teacher-Participants

Variable	Category / Description	f	%
1. Age	20–30 years old	2	40%
	31–40 years old	1	20%
	41 years and above	2	40%
	Total	**5**	**100%**
2. Sex	Female	3	60%
	Male	2	40%
	Total	**5**	**100%**
3. Educational Background	Bachelor's Degree	3	60%
	With Master's Degree / Units (CAR)	2	40%
	Total	**5**	**100%**
4. Years in Teaching Music 8	1 year	1	20%
	More than 3 years	2	40%
	More than 10 years	1	20%
	Not specified	1	20%
	Total	**5**	**100%**
5. Music Background / Exposure	Ranges from no formal background to more than 10 years of experience in music		
6. Training Attended	INSET, LAC sessions, webinars, and curriculum-related trainings		
7. Instruments Used	Flute, Guitar, Ukulele, Piano, Keyboard, and Percussion instruments		
8. Other Notes	Some teachers reported no specific instrument specialization		

The findings suggest that the teaching workforce is composed of both younger and more experienced educators. This aligns with the study of Kinias and Sim (2016), which found that early- to mid-career teachers are more adaptable to innovation while maintaining developing expertise in pedagogy. Similarly, OECD (2020) reported that teachers within this age range tend to balance flexibility and professional maturity, contributing to effective teaching practices.

In terms of gender, the slight predominance of female teachers reflects global trends in the teaching profession, where females are more represented, particularly in basic education (OECD, 2020). Gender diversity, however, remains important as it contributes to varied teaching styles and inclusive classroom environments (Smith, 2018).

Educational Background of the Teacher-Participants. Table 2 presents the educational qualifications of the participants. The data show that most teachers possessed relevant degrees in education, particularly in MAPEH and related fields. Two participants had completed or were pursuing master's degrees, while others held bachelor's degrees with specialization or certification in teaching.

The presence of teachers with advanced studies suggests a commitment to professional development. This finding supports the study of Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), which emphasized that teachers with graduate-level education demonstrate stronger pedagogical competence and are more effective in delivering instruction.

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Volume 1, Issue 9, pp. 506-533, October 2026
https://ijroms.com
Original Article

Moreover, research by Hattie (2009) highlighted that teacher quality including educational attainment is one of the most significant factors influencing student learning outcomes. Teachers who pursue advanced studies are more likely to adopt evidence-based practices and reflective teaching strategies.

The years in teaching Music 8 as reflected in the transcripts. Among the five participants, one teacher or 20% had 1 year of teaching Music 8, two teachers or 40% had more than 3 years**,** and one teacher or 20% had more than 10 years of experience. One teacher or 20% did not specify years of service in teaching Music 8 in the transcript. These results indicate that most of the participants with available data already had several years of experience in handling Music 8.

The findings suggest that the teacher-participants generally had teaching experience sufficient to develop practical strategies in handling Music 8, although their level of experience varied. Teaching experience is an important factor in classroom effectiveness because it helps teachers refine instructional methods, improve classroom management, and respond better to learners' needs over time (Kini & Podolsky, 2016). In music education, longer teaching experience may also enhance a teacher's confidence in facilitating performance-based and creative learning activities, especially in diverse classroom settings (Conway, 2002).

The participants' music-related background, exposure, and instruments used. The data indicate that while some teachers had formal or extended experience in music (more than 10 years or with training), others had limited or unspecified backgrounds. Despite this variation, most teachers utilized available skills and resources to teach Music 8 effectively.

The findings reveal variability in teachers' music expertise, which influences their instructional approaches. This supports the study of Hallam (2010), which found that teachers with formal music training are more confident and effective in delivering music instruction, particularly in performance-based activities.

Similarly, Biasutti (2015) emphasized that music teachers' background and training significantly affect their teaching strategies, particularly in integrating creativity, improvisation, and experiential learning. Teachers with limited musical expertise often rely on multimedia resources and improvised materials, which are consistent with the findings of this study.

Furthermore, access to training such as INSET and LAC sessions aligns with the recommendations of UNESCO (2015), which stressed the importance of continuous professional development in enhancing teachers' competence in specialized subjects like music.

The profile of the teacher-participants reflects a diverse group in terms of age, gender, educational attainment, and music expertise. This diversity contributes to varied teaching practices and approaches in Music 8 instruction. However, it also underscores the importance of providing continuous training, adequate resources, and institutional support to ensure effective and consistent delivery of music education.

Table 2 presents the demographic profile of the student-participants in terms of age, sex, music background or exposure, attitude toward Music 8, and musical instruments used.

Table 2. Demographic Profile of Student-Participants

	Variable	Category	f	%
1.	Age	13 years old	3	14%
		14 years old	18	86%
		Total	**21**	**100%**
2.	Sex	Female	14	67%
		Male	7	33%
		Total	**21**	**100%**
3.	Music Background / Exposure	Singing / Pag-awit	8	38%
		Playing instruments	6	29%
		Singing and playing instruments	4	19%
		Choir participation	2	10%
		No experience	1	4%
		Total	**21**	**100%**
4.	Attitude toward Music 8	Likes / Enjoys	10	48%
		Interested	7	33%
		Highly positive (love, very interested, meaningful responses)	4	19%
		Total	**21**	**100%**
5.	Music Instruments Used	Guitar	10	48%
		Piano / Keyboard	3	14%
		Flute	2	10%
		Ukulele	1	5%
		Drum	1	5%
		None	4	19%
		Total	**21**	**100%**

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Original Article

In terms of age, the majority of the participants were 14 years old (86%), while only 14% were 13 years old. This indicates that most respondents belong to a similar developmental stage, which allows for relatively consistent learning experiences in Music 8.

Regarding sex, most of the participants were female (67%), while 33% were male. This suggests a higher representation of female students in the sample, which may influence classroom participation patterns and engagement in music-related activities.

In terms of music background or exposure, most students reported experience in singing or pag-awit (38%), followed by playing instruments (29%), and a combination of singing and playing instruments (19%). A smaller proportion participated in choir activities (10%), while only one student (4%) reported having no prior musical experience. These findings indicate that most students have some level of exposure to music, which may contribute to their engagement in Music 8.

About their attitude toward Music 8, most students expressed positive perceptions. Nearly half (48%) reported that they like or enjoy the subject, while 33% expressed interest, and 19% demonstrated highly positive attitudes by describing music as enjoyable, meaningful, or aligned with their talents. This suggests that Music 8 is generally well-received among students and may serve as a motivating subject in the curriculum.

In terms of musical instruments used, the guitar was the most reported instrument (48%), followed by piano or keyboard (14%), flute (10%), ukulele (5%), and drums (5%). However, 19% of the students reported that they do not play any musical instrument. This indicates variability in students' practical musical skills, which may influence their participation and performance in music activities.

The profile of the student-participants reveals a group with generally positive attitudes toward Music 8 and varying levels of musical exposure and skills. These differences provide a meaningful context for understanding students lived experiences in learning Music 8 and how they engage with music instruction in the classroom.

Research Question 2: Explore the lived experiences of MAPEH teachers in teaching Music 8 and students learning Music 8.

Table 4. Matrix of Emergent Themes on the Lived Experiences of MAPEH Teachers in Teaching Music 8

Theme	Description
1. Theme 1: Teaching as a Meaningful and Transformative Experience	Teaching Music 8 is viewed as a fulfilling and impactful process that shapes both teacher and student growth.
2. Theme 2: Challenges in Resources and Learner Diversity	Teachers experience difficulties related to limited instructional materials, lack of musical instruments, and varied student abilities.
3. Theme 3: Adaptive and Resourceful Teaching Practices	Teachers employ creativity and improvisation to overcome limitations in resources and context.
4. Theme 4: Use of Experiential and Performance-Based Strategies	Instruction emphasizes hands-on learning, performance tasks, and active student participation.
5. Theme 5: Student Engagement through Relevance and Interaction	Teachers enhance engagement by making lessons relevant and interactive for learners.
6. Theme 6: Role of Institutional Support	Administrative support, training, and resources influence the effectiveness of music instruction.
7. Theme 7: Assessment and Recommendations for Improvement	Teachers reflect on current practices and suggest improvements for better Music 8 instruction.

This section presents the lived experiences of MAPEH teachers in teaching Music 8, derived from the narratives of the participants. Through thematic analysis, several key themes emerged: (1) Teaching as Meaningful and Transformative Experience, (2) Challenges in Resources and Learner Diversity, (3) Adaptive and Resourceful Teaching Practices, (4) Use of Experiential and Performance-Based Strategies, (5) Student Engagement through Relevance and Interaction, (6) Role of Institutional Support, and (7) Assessment and Recommendations for Improvement. These themes reflect the realities of Music 8 instruction in the local context.

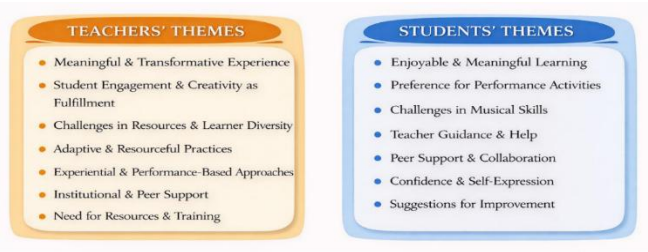


Figure 2: *Summary of Themes in Teaching and Learning Music 8*

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Volume 1, Issue 9, pp. 506-533, October 2026
https://ijroms.com
Original Article

Theme 1: Teaching Music 8 as a Meaningful and Transformative Experience

Teachers described teaching Music 8 as a deeply meaningful, engaging, and transformative professional process. For some teachers, the experience was immediately perceived as meaningful, particularly in helping students connect music with culture, history, and identity. One participant shared how teaching became a medium for opening students' awareness to Asian musical traditions:

> *"My experience in teaching Music 8 has been both meaningful ang engaging. I focused on helping students appreciate the diverse musical traditional of Asia, especially how these traditions reflect culture, history and identity. I also encouraged creativity by integrating simple activities. It strengthened my understand of Asian music and helped me appreciate the value of music in shaping culture and fostering unity among learners."*
>
> — Participant 1, Transcript 1, Lines 12–19

This experience highlights how teaching Music 8 extends beyond technical instruction into a process of cultural transmission. The teacher's reflection demonstrates that learning is reciprocal; while students gain cultural knowledge, teachers simultaneously deepen their own musical appreciation.

For other participants, the meaning of teaching Music 8 developed over time through continuous practice and adaptation. An experienced teacher described this evolving journey:

> *"My experience in teaching Music 8 has been very meaningful and enriching. Over more than a decade of teaching, I have observed how students' interests and learning styles evolve over time. At the beginning, I found it challenging to engage students, but through experience, I became more confident and effective. One of the most memorable experiences is seeing students perform confidently and creatively, especially those who were initially shy or uninterested."*
>
> — Participant 2, Transcript 2, Lines 17–23

Similarly, another participant reflected on the initial feelings of vulnerability when assigned to teach outside their area of specialization:

> *"When I first started teaching Music 8, I felt a mix of excitement and fear—like jumping into the deep end without knowing how to swim. I am not a music major; my background is in literature and general education, so I had to learn MAPEH basics quickly. The students' energy helped me, and over time my experience became more enjoyable. I began connecting music to literature and Filipino culture, making lessons more meaningful and engaging."*
>
> — Participant 4, Transcript 4, Lines 11–17

The metaphor of "jumping into the deep end" captures the professional uncertainty experienced by non-specialist educators. Despite these initial anxieties, teachers demonstrated adaptability by connecting music to literature and local culture, transforming instructional challenges into interdisciplinary learning opportunities.

Taken together, these narratives illustrate a clear trajectory from uncertainty to confidence. Teachers experienced personal and professional growth while observing positive transformations in their students' confidence and participation. These self-reported experiences align with teacher identity development theory, illustrating how non-specialists construct pedagogical confidence through continuous reflection, contextual adaptation, and ongoing interaction with learners.

Theme 2: Challenges in Resources and Learner Diversity

While teaching Music 8 is fulfilling, participant narratives reveal that instructional delivery is accompanied by significant operational friction stemming from resource deficits and wide variations in student backgrounds. Teachers must navigate classrooms where learners differ markedly in prior musical exposure, skill levels, and confidence, creating a complex teaching environment.

Managing diverse entry points requires significant instructional effort, particularly when introducing unfamiliar musical traditions:

> *"Seeing my students discover how rich and diverse Asia music truly is. Many of them are inspired by the unique instruments, rhythms, and performance traditions from countries*

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https://ijroms.com
Original Article

> *like Japan, China and Indonesia. Most of all, I appreciate how music 8 helps students understand culture and identity."*
>
> — Participant 1, Transcript 1, Lines 20–24

Although introducing Asian music fosters cultural appreciation, achieving meaningful participation among students with limited prior music background requires continuous instructional scaffolding. Encouraging participation among shy or hesitant learners presents another ongoing challenge:

> *"What I enjoy most is helping students develop their creativity and self-expression. I particularly value performance-based activities where students can showcase their talents. It is fulfilling to see students gain confidence and develop a deeper appreciation for music through participation."*
>
> — Participant 2, Transcript 2, Lines 24–28

> *"I enjoy students express themselves through music the most enjoyable part is when student's performer participates actively in class activities. One memorable experience was when a shy student confidently performed in front of the class. Students' positive reactions and enthusiasm motivated mw to teach better."*
>
> — Participant 3, Transcript 3, Lines 20–24

These accounts illustrate that addressing learner diversity requires designing performance tasks that encourage students to step out of their comfort zones. However, facilitating these tasks becomes particularly demanding when classrooms lack sufficient instruments or spaces. Furthermore, engaging uninterested learners requires teachers to constantly adjust their instruction:

> *"Engaging students who show little in music can be challenging but it's very doable when you meet them where they are and make the experience meaningful, active and relatable"*
>
> — Participant 5, Transcript 5, Lines 12–14

These findings demonstrate that learner diversity and resource scarcity are interconnected challenges. Teachers must differentiate instruction for varying skill levels while simultaneously operating with limited instructional materials.

Theme 3: Structural and Instructional Challenges in Teaching Music 8

When discussing specific operational hurdles, teachers identified three primary structural barriers: lack of physical musical instruments and facilities, large class sizes, and non-specialist content anxiety.
The primary barrier reported across schools is the lack of physical instruments and performance space:

> *"One of the main challenges in teaching Music 8 is our materials and reference limited. We don't have an instrument and enough space for the presentation."*
>
> — Participant 1, Transcript 1, Lines 25–27

> *"Despite my experience, I still encounter challenges such as limited musical instruments, large class sizes, and differences in students' abilities and interests. Some students are not naturally inclined toward music, making engagement more difficult. Time management for both theory and performance are also a challenge."*
>
> — Participant 2, Transcript 2, Lines 29–33

> *"Some challenges include lack of instruments, limited, time and varying student interest. Sometimes students are not engaged or feel shy to participate, the most difficult challenge in motivating uninterested students and managing different skills levels."*
>
> — Participant 3, Transcript 3, Lines 25–28

In addition to physical shortages, non-specialist educators described the internal challenge of teaching technical concepts without formal music specialization:

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Volume 1, Issue 9, pp. 506-533, October 2026
https://ijroms.com
Original Article

> *"One of the biggest difficulties is teaching concepts I am not fully confident in, such as musical notation, intervals, and identifying instruments in ensembles. Sometimes I feel like I am learning the lesson just before teaching it, which affects my confidence."*
>
> — Participant 4, Transcript 4, Lines 23–26

These accounts reveal that non-specialist teachers experience considerable anxiety when delivering technical content such as notation and intervals. Without physical instruments, instruction risks shifting toward passive theoretical lectures rather than hands-on performance, directly impacting how music concepts are delivered.

Theme 4: Adaptive Coping Mechanisms and Resourceful Practices

Rather than allowing resource shortages and content gaps to halt instruction, teacher narratives demonstrate proactive coping mechanisms and creative pedagogical adaptations. Teachers actively adjust their methodologies to navigate material limitations.

To address the absence of physical instruments, teachers leverage digital multimedia tools as alternative instructional aids:

> *"Through using multimedia resources such as videos of performance, playing audio sample and image sample instruments. Also, in making my lesson plan, I always check the available materials that I can use in teaching."*
>
> — Participant 1, Transcript 1, Lines 28–31

To manage large class sizes and varying student abilities, teachers apply differentiated tasks, group work, and localized material improvisation:

> *"I manage these challenges by being adaptable and resourceful. I use improvised instruments when needed and apply differentiated instruction to address different skill levels. I also incorporate group activities to promote collaboration and peer learning."*
>
> — Participant 2, Transcript 2, Lines 34–37

> *"When challenges arise, I adjust my teaching strategies by making lessons more interactive and relatable. I use group activities and simple instrument or improvised materials. I also seek support from colleagues and share to improve my teaching"*
>
> — Participant 3, Transcript 3, Lines 29–32

Furthermore, non-specialist educators cope with content unfamiliarity by simplifying lesson objectives and utilizing online audio-visual references:

> *"I build confidence by focusing on simple and achievable skills such as call-and-response rhythms, basic musical forms, and simple songs. I use audio and video resources like YouTube and short listening clips to support my teaching."*
>
> — Participant 4, Transcript 4, Lines 27–30

Interpreted through the lens of teacher resilience, these practices demonstrate active pedagogical coping. Teachers utilize digital media, peer consultation, simplified skill sequences, and improvised tools to ensure instructional continuity despite severe material and professional constraints.

Theme 5: Use of Experiential and Performance-Based Strategies

When describing successful classroom engagement, teachers consistently emphasized experiential, performance-based, and student-centered approaches. Participants reported that active participation yields higher engagement than passive lecture delivery.

Teachers utilize physical movement, rhythm exercises, and ensemble activities as primary teaching strategies:

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Volume 1, Issue 9, pp. 506-533, October 2026
https://ijroms.com
Original Article

> *"The strategies on teaching methods I usually use is performance –based and integrating on activities such as group performance, clapping and simple exercises."*
>
> — Participant 1, Transcript 1, Lines 32–34
>
> *"I use a combination of demonstrations, audio-visual presentations, and performance-based learning. Experiential learning is very effective in music. I also integrate modern technology and adjust my teaching methods based on students' needs and abilities."*
>
> — Participant 2, Transcript 2, Lines 38–41

Differentiated performance tasks are also used to keep both beginners and advanced students engaged:

> *"I use demonstrations, videos, and performance-based activities, I find hands-on activities and group performance most effective. I adjust my methods by simplifying tasks for beginners and giving advance students more challenging activities"*
>
> — Participant 3, Transcript 3, Lines 33–36

A structured, multi-sensory listening approach was described as a key strategy for introducing theoretical concepts:

> *"I start with listening activities before introducing concepts. Students first hear music, then describe what they hear, and later connect these two terms like melody, rhythm, and form. I design group activities using improvised instruments, encouraging creativity, collaboration, and active participation."*
>
> — Participant 4, Transcript 4, Lines 31–35

This "listen-describe-connect" sequence reflects an experiential learning cycle (Kolb, 1984), where concrete musical experience precedes abstract theory. By grounding lessons in active listening, clapping, and performance with improvised materials, teachers report creating an accessible learning environment that supports student participation within their specific classroom contexts.

Theme 6: Support Systems and Professional Development.

The lived experiences of the teacher-participants reveal that institutional support and professional development play a crucial role in shaping their effectiveness in teaching Music 8. While teachers often rely on their own creativity and resourcefulness, the presence of support systems significantly enhances their confidence, instructional practices, and overall teaching experience.

For some teachers, support is minimal and often takes the form of personal initiative. One participant briefly expressed:

> *"Available/ be resourceful"*– Participant 1, Transcript 1, Line 38

This statement reflects a reality where teachers are expected to make do with what is available. In such contexts, resourcefulness becomes an essential skill. Rather than relying solely on institutional provisions, teachers take the initiative to adapt, improvise, and find alternative ways to deliver instruction.

The same participant also highlighted that support is sometimes more emotional than material:

> *"The support that I've received is words encouragement"*– Participant 1, Transcript 1, Page 2, Line 1

This suggests that even simple gestures such as encouragement from administrators can positively influence teachers' motivation. Although material support may be limited, emotional and moral support still contribute to sustaining teachers' commitment and resilience.

Other participants, however, described more structured forms of institutional support. One teacher shared:

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https://ijroms.com
Original Article

"I receive support from the school administration through basic materials and professional development opportunities. Trainings have helped improve my teaching practices. My colleagues also provide support through sharing ideas and best practices."

– Participant 2, Transcript 2, Lines 8–11

This experience highlights the importance of both administrative and peer support. Access to training opportunities enables teachers to enhance their pedagogical skills, while collaboration with colleagues fosters the exchange of ideas and teaching strategies. These forms of support contribute to continuous professional growth.

Similarly, another participant emphasized the combined role of school leadership and peer collaboration:

"The school administrator provide support through materials and encouragement. Sometimes there are training or seminars for professional development colleagues also help by sharing strategies and teaching resources"– Participant 3, Transcript 3, Lines 7–10

This narrative reinforces the idea that effective support systems are not limited to formal structures but also include informal networks among teachers. The sharing of resources and experiences creates a collaborative environment that benefits both teachers and students.

In addition, support in terms of scheduling and organization was identified as an important factor:

"Administrative and scheduling support help by giving proper time for Music 8 in the timetable. Support from school heads and colleagues, including shared materials and ideas, also helps improve my teaching."– Participant 4, Transcript 4, Lines 3–5

This statement highlights that institutional support extends beyond materials and training. Proper scheduling ensures that Music 8 is given adequate time for instruction, which is essential for a subject that involves both theoretical and performance-based components.

Across these experiences, a common pattern emerges. Teachers benefit from three key forms of support: administrative support, peer collaboration, and professional development opportunities. When these elements are present, teachers are better equipped to handle challenges and improve their instructional practices.

These findings align with existing literature on teacher development. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) emphasized that sustained and collaborative professional development significantly enhances teaching quality. Similarly, Desimone and Garet (2015) noted that effective professional learning should be continuous, content-focused, and grounded in collaboration among educators.

In the context of music education, professional development becomes even more critical. Since Music 8 requires specialized skills and knowledge, teachers, particularly those without a strong music background, rely on training and support to build their competence and confidence. Without such support, teachers may struggle to deliver effective instruction.

In relation to the present study, the lived experiences of teachers highlight that while individual effort and resourcefulness are important, institutional support remains a key factor in improving the quality of Music 8 instruction. Strengthening support systems, increasing access to training, and promoting collaborative practices can significantly enhance teachers' capacity to provide meaningful and engaging music education.

Theme 7: Recommendations for Improvement.

The lived experiences of the teacher-participants do not only highlight the realities and challenges of teaching Music 8 but also provide meaningful insights into how music instruction can be improved. Drawing from their experiences, teachers offered practical and experience-based recommendations focused on enhancing resources, strengthening professional development, and improving institutional support.

One of the most consistent suggestions among the participants is the need to strengthen experiential and interactive teaching approaches. A teacher emphasized the importance of learning through direct experience:

"I recommended to use more interactive and hands-on activities because I believe a learners learn if they experience what we are talking about."– Participant 1, Transcript 1, Page 2, Lines 4–5

This recommendation reflects the teachers' recognition that music learning is most effective when students are actively engaged. It reinforces the idea that instruction should move beyond theoretical

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discussions and focus more on participation, performance, and experiential activities that allow students to internalize musical concepts.

Another key recommendation centers on the provision of adequate resources and updated instructional materials. One participant stated:

> *"I recommend providing more musical instruments and updated instructional materials. Continuous training for teachers is important, especially in integrating technology. Stronger support from school leaders can also improve the quality of Music 8 instruction."*– Participant 2, Transcript 2, Lines 15–18

This narrative highlights the interconnected nature of resources, training, and leadership support. Teachers recognize that without sufficient instruments and materials, it becomes difficult to implement effective music instruction. At the same time, continuous professional development is necessary to equip teachers with updated knowledge and skills, particularly in integrating technology into teaching.

In addition, teachers emphasized the need for structured and sustained professional development programs. One participant suggested:

> *"Requires both instructional support and practical resources. Conduct regular LAC sessions workshop, and demo teaching and also invite skilled music teachers or practitioners for mentoring."*– Participant 5, Transcript 5, Lines 24–27

This recommendation reflects a desire for collaborative and practice-oriented learning opportunities. Activities such as Learning Action Cell sessions, workshops, and mentoring programs provide teachers with avenues to enhance their competence, share best practices, and learn from experts in the field. Such initiatives are especially important for teachers who may not have a strong background in music.

Across these narratives, a clear pattern emerges. Teachers are calling for improvements that go beyond individual effort and require systemic and institutional support. While they have demonstrated adaptability and resilience in addressing classroom challenges, they recognize that sustainable improvement cannot rely solely on personal initiative.

These findings are supported by existing literature. UNESCO (2019) emphasized that quality arts education depends on the availability of adequate resources, well-trained teachers, and supportive institutional policies. Similarly, Schmidt (2020) highlighted that strong leadership and institutional commitment are essential in sustaining and improving arts education programs.

In the context of this study, the recommendations provided by teachers point toward the need for a whole-system approach to improving Music 8 instruction. This includes the provision of musical instruments and learning materials, the implementation of continuous and relevant training programs, and the strengthening of administrative support systems. Collaboration among school leaders, teachers, and stakeholders is essential in ensuring that music education is not only maintained but continuously enhanced.

Ultimately, the lived experiences of the participants show that while teaching Music 8 can be meaningful and transformative, its full potential can only be realized when teachers are adequately supported. By addressing these recommendations, schools can create more effective, engaging, and inclusive music learning environments for all students.

Research Question 3: Formulate a recommendation policy for MAPEH teachers in Music 8?

Table 5. Matrix of Emergent Themes on the Lived Experiences of Students in Learning Music 8

Theme	Description
1. Theme 1: Music 8 as Enjoyable and Meaningful Learning	Students describe Music 8 as enjoyable and meaningful, characterized by happiness, excitement, and memorable learning experiences that make the subject distinct from others.
2. Theme 2: Preference for Performance-Based and Interactive Activities	Students prefer performance-based and interactive activities where they actively participate, perform, and apply their learning through real experiences.
3. Theme 3: Challenges in Musical Skills and Learning Conditions	Students experience difficulties in music literacy and understanding, compounded by limited time, lack of instruments, and heavy academic workload, affecting mastery of skills.
4. Theme 4: Teacher Guidance as a Source of Understanding and Encouragement	Teachers help students understand lessons through clear explanations, encouragement, and supportive strategies, creating a safe and motivating learning environment.

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Volume 1, Issue 9, pp. 506-533, October 2026
https://ijroms.com
Original Article

5.	Theme 5: Peer Support and Collaboration in Learning	Peers influence learning by providing encouragement, collaboration, and support, which enhances confidence, participation, and social interaction.
6.	Theme 6: Music 8 as a Source of Confidence, Creativity, and Self-Expression	Music 8 develops students' confidence, creativity, and self-expression, allowing them to discover hidden talents and express emotions through performance.
7.	Theme 7: Students' Suggestions for Improving Music 8 Instruction	Students recommend improving Music 8 through better resources, increased time, and enhanced activities to support more effective and engaging learning.

The lived experiences of students in Music 8 revealed that the subject was generally perceived as enjoyable, expressive, and confidence-building, while also presenting challenges related to musical skills, time, and access to resources. From the narratives, seven themes emerged: (1) Music 8 as enjoyable and meaningful learning, (2) Preference for performance-based and interactive activities, (3) Challenges in musical skills and learning conditions, (4) Teacher guidance as a source of understanding and encouragement, (5) Peer support and collaboration in learning, (6) Music 8 as a source of confidence, creativity, and self-expression, and (7) Students' suggestions for improving Music 8 instruction. These themes were drawn from the student-participants' narratives in the transcript file.

Theme 1: Music 8 as Enjoyable and Meaningful Learning.

The lived experiences of the student-participants revealed that Music 8 is not simply perceived as another academic subject, but as a space where enjoyment, creativity, and meaningful learning take place. For many students, the subject stands out because it allows them to actively participate through singing, dancing, listening, and performing, making learning more engaging and memorable.

Several students described their experiences as both enjoyable and enriching, highlighting how Music 8 contributed to their personal growth and appreciation of culture. One student shared:

> *"Bilang grade 8 students marami akong mga karanasan sa music gaya ng pag improve sa pagkanta ma enhance ang aking pag-aaral sa musika. Karaniwang nararamdaman ko ay pag katura at saya kasi binibigyan ako ng bagong kaalaman at karanasan. Oo, lahat ng asignature may pag-kakaoba, tulad ng musika na enhance tayo sap ag kanta, sayaw at kaalaman sa kultura. Para sa akin ang pinaka tumatak sa akin ay tungkol sa mga kanta like, opera at iba pa."*– Participant 1, Transcript 1, Lines 11–18 (*"As a Grade 8 student, I have many experiences in music, such as improving my singing and enhancing my studies in the subject. I usually feel excitement and joy because it provides me with new knowledge and experiences. Yes, every subject has its differences, like music, which enhances our skills in singing, dancing, and cultural knowledge. For me, what left the biggest impression were the lessons about songs like opera and others." – Participant 1, Transcript 1, Lines 11–18")*

This narrative reflects how Music 8 provides students with opportunities to develop their skills while also gaining new knowledge. The student's emphasis on enjoyment and cultural learning suggests that music education fosters both cognitive and emotional engagement. Learning about different musical forms, such as opera, also exposes students to broader cultural perspectives, making the subject more meaningful.

Another student highlighted how Music 8 differs from traditional classroom instruction:

> *"Masaya at intereting ang experience ko sa Music 8 kasi hindi lang puro lecture, may activities din tulad ng pag-awit at pakikinig ng iba't ibang music. Minsan nakakaba lalo nap ag may performance, pero enjoyable parin. Iba sya sa ibang subject kasi mas expressive at creative."*– Participant 12, Transcript 12, Lines 13–17 *("My experience in Music 8 is happy and interesting because it's not just pure lecture; there are also activities like singing and listening to different kinds of music. Sometimes it's nerve-wracking, especially when there's a performance, but it's still enjoyable. It's different from other subjects because it's more expressive and creative." – Participant 12, Transcript 12, Lines 13–17)*

This account illustrates that the interactive nature of Music 8 plays a significant role in student engagement. Unlike subjects that rely heavily on lectures, Music 8 incorporates activities that allow students to express themselves. Although performance tasks may cause nervousness, they are still perceived as enjoyable, indicating that challenge and enjoyment can coexist in meaningful learning experiences.

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International Journal of Research on Multidisciplinary Studies
Online ISSN: 3116-4137 | Print ISSN: 3116-4145
Volume 1, Issue 9, pp. 506-533, October 2026
https://ijroms.com
Original Article

Similarly, another participant emphasized the deeper value of music in understanding culture and society:

> *"Being a student in MAPEH 8 it is amazing becaue understanding music ultural roots and role in community is just as meaningful as performing it. It truly enriches how we see the world round us. I usually feel engaged and curios even though I can't sing or play instrument. I look forward to learn new things about music. Unlike other subject that focus more on reading, writing or calculation, Music 8 focus on sound, rhythms and cultural stories."*– Participant 17, Transcript 17, Lines 12–18

This reflection shows that students recognize Music 8 as a subject that goes beyond performance. It serves as a medium for understanding cultural identity and social context. Even students who do not consider themselves musically skilled still find value in learning about music, demonstrating that the subject is inclusive and accessible.

In addition, another student described Music 8 as a relaxing and refreshing learning experience:

> "*Ang karanasan ko sa Music 8 ay masaya at puno ng bagong kaalaman. Nakakarelax ito kumpara sa ibang subject dahil higit na nakatuon ito sa sining at kultura."*– Participant 19, Transcript 19, Lines 11–13 *("My experience in Music 8 is happy and full of new knowledge. It is relaxing compared to other subjects because it focuses more on arts and culture." – Participant 19, Transcript 19, Lines 11–13)*

This perspective highlights the emotional dimension of music education. In contrast to more academically demanding subjects, Music 8 provides a space where students can feel relaxed while still learning. This balance between enjoyment and learning contributes to a positive classroom environment. Taken together, these narratives show that students experience Music 8 as enjoyable, expressive, and culturally meaningful. The subject allows them to engage not only intellectually but also emotionally and socially. Their descriptions of Music 8 as "masaya," "interesting," and "creative" indicate that the subject promotes both engagement and meaning making. These findings are supported by recent literature. A systematic review by Kiss et al. (2025) found that music education provides emotional and educational benefits, including increased confidence, self-expression, attention, and perseverance.

The study also emphasized that students' perceptions of music classes significantly influence their motivation and continued engagement. Similarly, Jiang and Tong (2025) concluded that music education contributes positively to students' self-esteem and overall psychological development. This is largely because music learning involves not only skill acquisition but also cultural understanding, emotional expression, and social interaction. In the context of this study, the lived experiences of students demonstrate that Music 8 plays a vital role in creating a positive and meaningful learning environment. By combining enjoyment with cultural and creative learning, the subject becomes more than just a requirement; it becomes an experience that students value and remember. These insights highlight the importance of maintaining engaging and student-centered approaches in teaching Music 8 to sustain students' interest and participation.

Theme 2: Preference for Performance-Based and Interactive Activities.

The lived experiences of the student-participants reveal a strong preference for performance-based and interactive learning activities in Music 8. Across their narratives, students consistently highlighted that they learn best and feel most engaged when they are actively involved in singing, dancing, playing instruments, and participating in group performances. These activities transform the classroom into a dynamic and enjoyable learning environment.

One student vividly described how performance activities made learning both enjoyable and memorable.

> *"Ang aking pinakanagustuhan sa araling Music 8 ay ang pagsasayaw at ang mga ibinibigay na pagsusulit ng aming guro dahil sa pamamagitan nito mas naisasaulo ko at mas marami akong natutunan. Ang pinaka-kinagigiliwan ko sa music 8, ay ang bahagi ng Music Art dahil mas nagugustuhan koi to ay ang mga festival sa iba't-ibang lugar, dahil may kinalaman ito sap ag sasayaw, na mas pinaka gustong-gusto ko. Mas gusto kop o ay yung performance dahil yan talaga yung nag papasaya sa akin dahil yong performance nay an ay may madalas kong makakasalimuha o makakasama para gawin ang maga performance na iyan."*– Participant 4, Transcript 4, Lines 26–36 *("What I liked most about Music 8 were the dancing and the quizzes given by our teacher because, through these, I am able to memorize better and learn more. My favorite part of Music 8 is the Music Art section, especially the festivals from different places,*

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Online ISSN: 3116-4137 | Print ISSN: 3116-4145
Volume 1, Issue 9, pp. 506-533, October 2026
https://ijroms.com
Original Article

because they involve dancing, which I really love. I prefer the performances because they truly make me happy, and those performances allow me to frequently interact or collaborate with others to complete them." – Participant 4, Transcript 4, Lines 26–36)

This narrative shows that performance is not only about demonstrating skills but also about experiencing joy and collaboration. The student emphasized the social aspect of performance, where working with classmates becomes part of the enjoyment. This suggests that Music 8 fosters not only individual expression but also teamwork and shared experiences.

Similarly, another participant highlighted how performance-based activities help students discover and develop their talents:

> *"Ang nagutuhan ko sa aralin sa Musika 8 ay ang nabibigyan ng pagkakataon ang bawat mag-aaral na maibahagi ang kanilang mga talento. ANg bahagi ng aralin na talagang aking kinagigiliwan ay pag tugtog ng iba't-ibang instrument ito may local o sa ibang bahagi ng mundo. Ma gusto ko it ay itinatanghal. Mas nahahasa ng mga mag-aaral ang kanilang mga talinto at mas napapalakas nito ang loob ng mga studyante sa maraming tao nailalabas nito ang kanilang mga talinto."*– Participant 7, Transcript 7, Lines 23–31 *("What I learned from the Music 8 lesson is that every student is given the opportunity to share their talents. The part of the lesson that I truly enjoy is playing different instruments, whether they are local or from other parts of the world. I like it when these are performed. It helps students further develop their talents and boosts their confidence in front of many people, allowing them to express their abilities." – Participant 7, Transcript 7, Lines 23–31)*

This account highlights the role of both performance and teacher facilitation in enhancing engagement. Activities such as demonstrations and group performances make the class more interactive and less monotonous. The term "alive" suggests that students perceive Music 8 as a vibrant and active learning space compared to more traditional subjects.

In the same way, another participant emphasized the enjoyment and relaxation that comes from interactive music activities:

> *"Pinaka gusto ko yung part na may performance at pakikinig ng music. Mas nagging alive yung klase at hindi boring. Nagugustuhan koi to kasi na eexpress ko yung sarili ko at mas naiintindihan ko ang musika. Yung mga group performances at activities ang nagpapasaya sa akin. Nakakatulong din yung teacher kapag nag de-demontrate siya. Dahil ditto, mas nagiging confident ako at mas nag eenjoy sa kalse."*– Participant 12, Transcript 12, Lines 18–24 *("My favorite part is when there are performances and when we listen to music. The class becomes more lively and not boring. I like it because I can express myself and understand music better. Group performances and activities make me happy. It also helps when the teacher demonstrates. Because of this, I become more confident and enjoy the class more." – Participant 12, Transcript 12, Lines 18–24)*

This experience reflects the empowering nature of music education. Performance activities provide a platform for students to showcase their abilities, which in turn builds their confidence. The opportunity to perform in front of others encourages students to overcome fear and express themselves more freely.

Another student described how interactive activities make the class livelier and more meaningful:

> *"I enjoy the performance and listening parts the most. I likw learning different types of music and expressing myself through singing or activities. It's fun and relaxing. Yes, activities like group performance and music listening make the class more enjoyable. I likeit when over teacher plays songs and explains their mening and makes me more confident."*– Participant 18, Transcript 18, Lines 16–21

This narrative reinforces the idea that music learning is both enjoyable and emotionally beneficial. The combination of listening and performing allows students to experience music in multiple ways, enhancing both understanding and appreciation.

Taken together, these narratives clearly show that students prefer active, participatory, and performance-based learning experiences. They value activities that allow them to move, create, and interact, rather than simply listen to lectures. Performance is not only a method of assessment but also a meaningful learning process that builds confidence, encourages collaboration, and allows students to express their talents.

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https://ijroms.com
Original Article

These findings are supported by existing literature. Haning (2021) found that performance plays a central role in shaping student motivation and engagement in music education. Rather than being a final output, performance becomes an integral part of the learning process that influences how students perceive and value music.

Similarly, Hendriks et al. (2023) emphasized that embodied and interactive music teaching strengthens creativity and engagement. Students learn music more effectively when they actively participate through singing, movement, and musical expression. This aligns with the experiences of the participants, who described performance and group activities as the most enjoyable and meaningful aspects of Music 8.

In the context of this study, the students' strong preference for performance-based and interactive activities highlights the importance of maintaining experiential and student-centered teaching approaches in Music 8. These strategies not only enhance engagement but also support the holistic development of learners by fostering confidence, creativity, and social interaction.

Theme 3: Challenges in Musical Skills and Learning Conditions.

The lived experiences of the student-participants reveal that, despite their enjoyment of Music 8, they encounter several challenges related to musical skills and learning conditions. These difficulties include technical aspects of music such as reading notes, following rhythm and tempo, as well as emotional barriers like shyness, lack of confidence, and fear of making mistakes. In addition, limited access to instruments and insufficient practice time further affects their learning experience.

One student shared how personal shyness affects participation and focusses during performance activities:

> *"Dahil sa aking kahiyaan, nakaka-apekto ito saakin dahil nilalaman ako ng kaba akaya hindi ako masaling maka focus. Medyo, pero naniniwala po ako na kapag nilalaanan koi to ng panahoon ay magagawa koi to ng tama. Madalas Oo, madalas hindi. Masasabi kong kung talagang interasado ka kailangan mong paglaanan ito ng oras."– Participant 2, Transcript 2, Lines 36–40 "Because of my shyness, it affects me since I feel nervous, so I can't focus well. Sometimes yes, sometimes no—but I believe that if I give it enough time, I will be able to do it properly. I can say that if you are truly interested, you need to dedicate time to it." – Participant 2, Transcript 2, Lines 36–40).*

This narrative highlights the emotional challenges that students face in music learning. While performance activities are engaging, they can also trigger anxiety, especially for students who are not confident in their abilities. The student's reflection, however, also shows a willingness to improve, suggesting that these challenges can be overcome with time, effort, and support.

Similarly, another participant pointed out difficulties in mastering technical musical skills:

> *"Nahihirapan ako minsan sap ag babasa ng notes at pag sabay sa rhythms. Minsan kulang din sa practice kaya nahihirapan. Nakakaapekto ito kasi minsan nawawala ako ng confidence."–* Participant 12, Transcript 12, Lines 25–27 *("I sometimes find it difficult to read notes and keep up with the rhythms at the same time. Sometimes I also lack practice, which makes it harder. This affects me because I sometimes lose confidence." – Participant 12, Transcript 12, Lines 25–27)*

This experience reflects the complexity of learning music, which requires both cognitive understanding and physical coordination. Difficulties in reading notation and maintaining rhythm can lead to frustration and decreased confidence, especially when students are unable to practice regularly.

Another student expressed feelings of being left behind due to limited musical background:

> *"Yes, I struggle with reading musical notation and can't sing or play instrument. It's mainly about my own ability since I don't have experience with music skill. They make me feel a bit behind at times, but I still focus on what I can understand. Like the cultural and historical parts of the lesson."–* Participant 17, Transcript 17, Lines 34–37 on page 31 and Lines 1–2 on page 32

This account highlights the impact of prior experience on learning. Students without a musical background may feel disadvantaged compared to their peers. However, the student's ability to focus on other aspects of the lesson, such as cultural understanding, shows adaptability and suggests that music learning can still be meaningful even without strong technical skills.

In addition to personal and technical challenges, students also identified limitations in their learning environment:

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https://ijroms.com
Original Article

> *"Nahihirapan ako sa pagbasa ng mga nota at pagsunod sa tamang tempo. Minsan din ay kulang kami sa mga instrument kaya mahirap i-apply ang itinuro ng guro."* – Participant 19, Transcript 19, Lines 20–22 *("I have difficulty reading musical notes and following the correct tempo. Sometimes we also lack instruments, which makes it hard to apply what the teacher taught." – Participant 19, Transcript 19, Lines 20–22)*

This statement emphasizes how external factors, such as lack of instruments, affect the application of learned concepts. Music education relies heavily on practice and performance, and without adequate resources, students may struggle to fully experience and understand the lessons.

Taken together, these narratives show that while Music 8 is enjoyable and engaging, students face real and multifaceted challenges. These include technical difficulties, emotional barriers, and resource-related constraints, all of which influence their learning experiences.

These findings are supported by current literature on music education. Gómez-López et al. (2023) noted that music performance anxiety is a common issue that affects students' confidence, participation, and overall learning. Similarly, Jiang and Tong (2025) found that students' self-esteem is closely linked to their perceived abilities in music, meaning that difficulties in performance can negatively impact confidence.

Furthermore, Wang et al. (2022) emphasized that negative emotions, such as frustration and anxiety, can hinder creativity and learning if not properly addressed. However, these challenges can also become opportunities for growth when students are supported through encouragement, practice, and appropriate instructional strategies.

In the context of this study, the lived experiences of students highlight that challenges in Music 8 are a natural part of the learning process. While students may struggle with skills and confidence, these difficulties do not diminish their interest in music. Instead, they emphasize the need for supportive, inclusive, and resource-sensitive teaching approaches that help students overcome obstacles and build confidence in their musical abilities.

Theme 4: Teacher Guidance as a Source of Understanding and Encouragement.

The lived experiences of the student-participants consistently highlight the significant role of the teacher in making Music 8 understandable, engaging, and encouraging. For many students, the teacher serves not only as a source of knowledge but also as a guide who supports their learning through clear explanations, demonstrations, patience, and encouragement.

One student emphasized how the teacher helps them understand the value of music through guidance and motivation:

> *"Pag papaunawa kung ano ang musika at ano ang kahalagahan nito sa mga buhay natin. as I say encouragement ng and patient. Oo. Pagbibigay ng malinaw na paliwanag."* – Participant 1, Transcript 1, Lines 31–35 *("Explaining what music is and what its importance is in our lives. As I say, encouragement and patience. Yes—giving clear explanations." – Participant 1, Transcript 1, Lines 31–35)*

This reflection shows that teacher guidance goes beyond explaining concepts. It involves helping students see the relevance of music in their lives while also providing emotional support. The mention of patience and encouragement indicates that students value teachers who create a supportive and understanding learning environment.

Similarly, another participant described how clear instruction improves comprehension:

> *"Tinutulungan ako ng aking guro sa pamamagitan ng pag tuturo niya ng malinaw, kaya dahil roon mas malinaw sa akin ang musika."*– Participant 4, Transcript 4, Lines 17–18 *("My teacher helps me by teaching clearly, and because of that, music becomes clearer to me." – Participant 4, Transcript 4, Lines 17–18)*

This simple yet direct statement highlights the importance of clarity in teaching. When lessons are explained clearly, students can grasp concepts more easily, which enhances their confidence and participation.

Another student shared a more detailed experience, emphasizing the importance of demonstration and step-by-step instruction:

> *"Tinuturuan ako ng aking guro sa oag-basa nga mga iba't-ibang klaseng mga tug-tugin. Ang guro ay nagbibigay nga malinaw na paliwanag at demonstrasyon ng mga teknik. Oo, madalas siyang bag dedemontrasyon ng tamang paraan ng pagtugtog. Tinutulungan niya ako sa pamamagitan ng step-bu-step na pag tuturo at pag bibigay ng extra practive material."*–

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https://ijroms.com
Original Article

Participant 9, Transcript 9, Lines 36–37 *("My teacher teaches me how to read different kinds of musical pieces. The teacher gives clear explanations and demonstrates techniques. Yes, they often demonstrate the correct way of playing. They help me through step-by-step instruction and by providing extra practice materials." – Participant 9, Transcript 9, Lines 36–37)*

This narrative reflects how structured guidance supports skill development in music. Demonstrations allow students to see how techniques are performed, while step-by-step instruction helps them follow the process more effectively. The provision of additional practice materials further reinforces learning and allows students to improve at their own pace.

In the same way, another participant emphasized how teacher support helps overcome difficulties:

"Tinulungan kami ng teacher sa pamamagitan ng clear na explaination at pagpapakitang example. Kapag nahihirapan kami, ginagabayan niya kami step by step. Nakakatulong ito para mas maintindihan ko ang lesson."– Participant 12, Transcript 12, Lines 28–31 *("Our teacher helped us by giving clear explanations and showing examples. When we have difficulty, they guide us step by step. This helps me understand the lesson better." – Participant 12, Transcript 12, Lines 28–31)*

This account highlights the responsiveness of the teacher to students' needs. The ability to guide students when they struggle is a key factor in maintaining engagement and preventing frustration. It also shows that learning becomes more effective when students feel supported.

Another student echoed the same experience, particularly during performance tasks:

"My teacher helps by giving clear explanation and showing examples, they also give step by step, especially during performance."– Participant 18, Transcript 18, Lines 25–26

This reinforces the idea that teacher guidance is especially important in performance-based activities, where students may feel uncertain or anxious. Clear instructions and demonstrations provide direction and build confidence.

Across these narratives, a consistent pattern emerges. Students value teachers who are clear, patient, supportive, and responsive. Teacher guidance is not limited to delivering content but includes facilitating understanding, building confidence, and encouraging participation. These qualities make learning more accessible and meaningful for students, especially in a subject like Music 8 that involves both cognitive and performance skills.

These findings are strongly supported by recent research. Kiss et al. (2025) emphasized that teachers' instructional strategies play a crucial role in enhancing student motivation in music education. When teachers provide clear explanations and engaging activities, students are more likely to participate actively and sustain their interest.

Similarly, Hendriks et al. (2023) found that autonomy-supportive teaching, which includes guidance, encouragement, and responsiveness, significantly enhances students' creativity and engagement. Both verbal and non-verbal support from teachers contributes to a positive learning environment where students feel confident to express themselves.

In the context of this study, the lived experiences of students demonstrate that teacher guidance is one of the most important factors in successful Music 8 instruction. Through clear explanations, demonstrations, and patient support, teachers help students overcome challenges, build confidence, and develop a deeper understanding of music. These findings highlight the need for teaching practices that prioritize clarity, encouragement, and responsiveness to learners' needs.

Theme 5: Peer Support and Collaboration in Learning Music 8.

The lived experiences of the student-participants reveal that learning in Music 8 is not an individual process but a shared and collaborative experience. Students consistently highlighted the important role of their classmates in helping them understand lessons, build confidence, and enjoy classroom activities. Peer support emerged as a significant factor that made learning more meaningful, less stressful, and more engaging.

One student described how classmates serve as a source of confidence and motivation:

"Sila ang isa sa mga nagbibigay sa akin ng confident. Opo, dahil kapag mayron akong bagay na hindi pa at alam na nila ay ipinapaalam nila sa amin. Opo, dahil sa oras na wala ka nanag maisip ay nandiyan sila para tumulong. Nagbibigay sila ng motibasyon para sa akin." – Participant 2, Transcript 2, Lines 17–22 *("They are one of the people who give me confidence. Yes, because when there is something, I don't know yet but they do, they share it with us. Yes,*

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https://ijroms.com
Original Article

because when I can't think of anything, they are there to help. They give me motivation." – Participant 2, Transcript 2, Lines 17–22)

This narrative shows that peer interaction creates a supportive learning environment where students feel comfortable asking for help. Instead of feeling isolated, learners rely on their classmates for guidance and encouragement, which strengthens their confidence and willingness to participate.

Similarly, another participant emphasized how group activities enhance learning through cooperation:

"Kapag binibigyan kami ng aming guro ng mga aktibidad na grupo-grupo, dahil maari kayong magtulungan mas mapatubo pa ang kakayahan ngg bawat isa. Naapektuhan ng aking mga kaklasi ang aking pag katuto sa paraang natuklasan nila kung paano koi to nagagwa at naisasaad nila kung pano ko pa ito mas maipabubuti bilang isang mag-aaral."– Participant 7, Transcript 7, Lines 12–20 *("When our teacher gives us group activities, because we are able to help each other, the abilities of each one are further developed. My classmates affect my learning in the way that they discover how I do things and they tell me how I can further improve as a student." – Participant 7, Transcript 7, Lines 12–20)*

This experience highlights the value of collaborative learning in developing students' skills. Through group work, students are able to share ideas, learn from each other, and improve their performance. The process of working together allows them to discover new strategies and refine their abilities.

Another student explained how peer support contributes to both understanding and confidence:

"My classmate helps me when I have difficulty or understanding by sharing ideas and together, their support also helps me feel more confident. Yes, my classmates help me by sharing ideas and supporting each other. Yes, teamwork and group performances make me more interested in class. My classmate influences me positively by encouraging me and helping me." – Participant 15, Transcript 15, Lines 22–30

This account demonstrates that peer collaboration does not only improve comprehension but also increases interest in the subject. When students work together, learning becomes more interactive and engaging, which motivates them to participate more actively.

In the same way, another participant emphasized how classmates make learning easier and faster:

"Tinulungn nila ako para mabilis kung matutunan ang aming mga aralin. Opo, mabilis kung naiintindihan an gaming aralin at pag hindi ko masyadong natutunan ang aralin nadiyan sila para gabayan ako. Opo, mas epektibo pag marami at may katulong sa mga gawain. Mas mabilis ako matuto at aktibo lagi." – Participant 16, Transcript 16, Lines 1–5 *("They helped me so I could quickly learn our lessons. Yes, I can understand our lessons faster, and when I don't fully learn the lesson, they are there to guide me. Yes, it is more effective when there are many people and someone to help with the tasks. I learn faster and am always active." – Participant 16, Transcript 16, Lines 1–5)*

This statement highlights the efficiency of collaborative learning. With the support of peers, students can grasp lessons more quickly and become more actively involved in classroom activities. The presence of classmates as learning partners reduces difficulty and enhances participation.

Taking together, these narratives clearly show that students benefit from peer support, teamwork, and collaborative learning. Music 8, as a performance-based subject, naturally encourages interaction through group activities, rehearsals, and presentations. These shared experiences help reduce fear, especially during performances, and create a sense of belonging among students.

Peer influence was largely described in positive terms. Classmates not only help explain lessons but also encourage participation and provide emotional support. This creates a learning environment where students feel more confident expressing themselves and take risks in performing.

These findings are supported by recent research. Mawang (2024) found that collaborative learning in music education enhances student engagement, persistence, and performance by exposing learners to diverse perspectives and strengthening their self-perception in music.

Similarly, Zarza-Alzugaray et al. (2024) emphasized that social support is closely linked to students' musical self-concept. Positive peer relationships contribute to students' sense of competence, confidence, and motivation in learning music.

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Original Article

In the context of this study, the lived experiences of students demonstrate that peer support is a vital component of effective Music 8 instruction. Learning becomes more meaningful when students work together, share ideas, and support one another. These findings highlight the importance of incorporating collaborative activities and group-based learning strategies to enhance student engagement, confidence, and overall learning outcomes in Music 8.

Theme 6: Music 8 as a Source of Confidence, Creativity, and Self-Expression.

The lived experiences of the student-participants reveal that Music 8 plays a significant role in shaping their personal development. Beyond learning musical concepts and skills, students described how the subject helps them build confidence, express themselves, develop creativity, and find personal meaning in music. For many, Music 8 becomes more than a classroom subject; it becomes a space for self-discovery and emotional expression.

One student shared how participation in music-related activities contributed to increased confidence:

> *"Nakakatulong ang music 8 sa kabuhang kaalaman sa pamagitan ng pag-gawa o pag-guhit ng mga larawan. Oo naman. Oo binigyan ako nito ng kumpiyansa. Sa paaraan ng pag Sali ng singing contest, dance at iba pa na enhance ko din kung ano ang taas ng nota."– P*articipant 1, Transcript 1, Lines 7–12 *("Music 8 helps in overall knowledge through creating or drawing images. Yes, of course. Yes, it gave me confidence. Through joining singing contests, dancing, and others, I was also able to enhance my understanding of the pitch of notes." – Participant 1, Transcript 1, Lines 7–12)*

This narrative shows that active participation in performances such as singing and dancing allows students to develop both their skills and self-confidence. Engaging in these activities helps them overcome fear and become more comfortable expressing themselves in front of others.

Similarly, another participant emphasized how Music 8 supports creativity and emotional expression:

> *"Music helps me develop creativity, confidence and listening skills, and also it helps me express myself better. Yes, I learned skills like listening, creativity and confidence. Yes, Music 8 helps build my confidence and self-expression. I sue what I've learned by listening to music more carefully and expressing my feelings through it."*– Participant 15, Transcript 15, Lines 31–36

This account highlights the multidimensional benefits of music education. Students not only learn technical skills but also develop the ability to interpret and express emotions through music. This deepens their connection to the subject and enhances their overall learning experience.

Another student reflected on how Music 8 influences personal growth and emotional well-being:

> *"Malaki ang epekto ng Music 8 sa akin dahil hindi lang ito tungkol sa mga aralin marami kang aral na matutunan na magagamit sa pang araw-araw na pamumuhay. Opo, mas lalo akong napalapit sa musika. Marami, mas nagging malalim ang pag intindi ko sa musika. Nakakarelax at nagbibigay ng mapayapa na personal space."*– Participant 16, Transcript 16, Lines 17–22 *("Music 8 has a big impact on me because it is not only about lessons; there are many things you can learn that can be used in daily life. Yes, I became even more drawn to music. A lot—I developed a deeper understanding of music. It is relaxing and gives me a peaceful personal space." – Participant 16, Transcript 16, Lines 17–22)*

This experience shows that music serves as a form of emotional support and relaxation for students. In contrast to more academically demanding subjects, Music 8 provides a space where learners can feel calm and at ease while still engaging in meaningful learning.

In the same way, another participant described how the subject enhances appreciation and understanding of music:

> *"Music 8 helps me build confidence and express myself better. It also improves my listening skills and creativity, which I can use in other subjects. My experience in Music 8 made me appreciate music more. I now understand the meaning and effort behind songs."*– Participant 18, Transcript 18, Lines 32–34 on page 33 and Lines 1–2

This narrative suggests that music education fosters deeper appreciation. Students begin to see music not just as entertainment but as an art form that requires effort, meaning, and creativity.

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Volume 1, Issue 9, pp. 506-533, October 2026
https://ijroms.com
Original Article

Another student further emphasized the role of Music 8 in developing discipline and creativity:

> *"Ang Music 8 ay nakakatulong sa akin upang maging ma malikhain at disiplinado sa lahat ng aking ginagawa. Dahil sa subject na ito tumataas ang aking kumpyansa sa sarili at natutunana kong gamitin ang musika sa pamamagitan ng pag relax an aking sarili."*– Participant 19, Transcript 19, Lines 31–34 *("Music 8 helps me become more creative and disciplined in everything I do. Because of this subject, my self-confidence increases and I have learned to use music to relax myself. – Participant 19, Transcript 19, Lines 31–34)*

This statement reflects the holistic impact of music education. Music 8 does not only develop artistic skills but also promotes discipline, self-regulation, and emotional balance.

Taking together, these narratives reveal that Music 8 significantly contributes to self-confidence, creativity, emotional expression, and personal growth. Students do not only talk about learning music as a subject but also about discovering their talents, expressing their feelings, and developing a stronger sense of self.

These findings are strongly supported by recent literature. Jiang and Tong (2025) concluded that music education has a positive relationship with students' self-esteem, as active participation in music enhances self-worth and emotional development. Similarly, Janurik et al. (2023) found that mastery experiences in music strengthen students' self-concept, meaning that successful musical activities reinforce their belief in their own abilities.

Furthermore, Wang et al. (2022) emphasized that creativity in music learning is closely linked to emotional regulation and the ability to cope with challenges. This explains why students in this study often associate Music 8 with increased confidence and self-expression, even when they initially face difficulties.

In the context of this study, the lived experiences of students demonstrate that Music 8 contributes not only to the development of musical skills but also to broader aspects of personal growth. By providing opportunities for expression, creativity, and emotional engagement, Music 8 becomes a meaningful and transformative subject that supports the holistic development of learners.

Theme 7: Students' Suggestions for Improving Music 8 Instruction.

The lived experiences of the student-participants not only reflect how they experience Music 8 but also reveal their insights on how the subject can be improved. Their suggestions are grounded in their actual classroom experiences and focus on making learning more engaging, accessible, and meaningful. Across their responses, students consistently emphasized the need for more instruments, increased practice time, more interactive activities, and the integration of technology.

One student highlighted the importance of having sufficient musical instruments to enhance learning:

> *"Dapat mag donate sila ng mga instruments para mapabago ang klase sa music 8. Vocal lesson at iba pang mga bagay para ma improve ang mga music. Lahat ng ito ay importante kung wala ito hindi mo mapapabago ang sarili mo. Mas makakatulong talaga kapang maraming equipment na gagamitin ang mga estudyante."*– Participant 1, Transcript 1, Lines 13–19 *("They should donate instruments to improve the Music 8 class. Vocal lessons and other things can help improve music. All of these are important—without them, you cannot improve yourself. It would really help more if there were many equipment that students can use." – Participant 1, Transcript 1, Lines 13–19)*

This statement reflects a clear awareness among students that access to instruments is essential in music learning. Without adequate resources, their ability to practice and fully experience the subject becomes limited. The student also connects resources to self-improvement, suggesting that better materials lead to better learning outcomes.

Similarly, another participant emphasized the need for more activities and extended practice time:

> *"Pwedi pang mas pagandahin ang class kung mas maraming activities at instruments. Mas okay din kung mas mahaba ang time sap ag pra-practice. Makakatulong ito para, mas mahaba ang skils ng studnets."*– Participant 12, Transcript 12, Lines 4–7 *("The class could be improved if there were more activities and instruments. It would also be better if there was more time for practice. This would help students develop their skills further." – Participant 12, Transcript 12, Lines 4–7)*

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Similarly, another participant emphasized the need for more activities and extended practice time:

> *"I suggest adding more interactive activities like performances or games. It would also help if we had more time to practice and better access to instruments."*– Participant 18, Transcript 18, Lines 35–37 on page 33

This response shows that students are not asking for less academic rigor but for more meaningful engagement. Activities such as games and performances make learning enjoyable while still promoting skill development.

In addition, some students emphasized the importance of integrating modern technology into music instruction:

> *"Iminumungkahi ko ang pagkakaroon ng mas maraming hands-on ng aktibidad at pag gamit ng mga aktwal na instrument sa klase at mainam kung idadagdag ang makabagong teknolohiya o vedio presentations para mas maging kawili-wili."*– Participant 19, Transcript 19, Lines 35–38 *("I suggest having more hands-on activities and using actual instruments in class, and it would be better if modern technology or video presentations were added to make it more interesting." – Participant 19, Transcript 19, Lines 35–38)*

Another participant further elaborated on this idea:

> *"Mayroon akong karagdagang nais idagdag tungkollsa pagtuturo o pag-aaral ng Music 8, ang kahalagahan ng pag-integrate ng teknolohiya sa pagtutro ng musika upang magbigay ng mas interactive na karanasan sap ag-aaral at pagbibigay ng mga proyekto sa paglikha ng sariling musika par mag explore ng kakayahan ng mga estudyante."*– Participant 9, Transcript 9, Lines 26–30 on page 18 ("I have something additional I would like to add about the teaching or learning of Music 8: the importance of integrating technology into music instruction to provide a more interactive learning experience, and giving projects that involve creating their own music so students can explore their abilities." – Participant 9, Transcript 9, Lines 26–30 on page 18)

The suggestions made by students are consistent and practical: they want Music 8 to remain active, interactive, and resource supported. Their emphasis on more instruments, more time to practice, more games and performances, and technology integration suggests that students are aware of what helps them learn best. They are not asking for less rigor; rather, they are asking for better conditions to participate meaningfully.

This is supported by recent scholarship. Kiss et al. (2025) emphasized that teacher strategies and classroom climate are central in sustaining student motivation for music. Haning (2021) also noted that performance in school music programs influences motivation, teaching strategies, and time management, which supports students' repeated calls for more practice time and richer performance opportunities. In addition, collaborative and interactive learning environments have been shown to enhance persistence and confidence in adolescent music students (Mawang, 2024). The students' recommendations therefore reinforce an evidence-based direction for improving Music 8: stronger access to resources, more active pedagogy, and learning environments that connect performance, creativity, and technology.

The lived experiences of students in Music 8 show that the subject is widely perceived as enjoyable, expressive, and confidence-building. Students value Music 8 because it differs from other subjects through singing, dancing, listening, cultural learning, and performance. They are especially motivated by active and collaborative learning experiences. At the same time, their narratives reveal real challenges involving shyness, difficulty with notes and rhythm, limited practice time, and lack of instruments. Teacher guidance and peer support emerged as major enabling factors that help students overcome these barriers. Overall, Music 8 contributes not only to musical learning but also to self-confidence, creativity, cultural appreciation, and personal expression. The students' recommendations further suggest that the subject can be strengthened through more instruments, more practice time, more interactive activities, and thoughtful integration of technology.

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Volume 1, Issue 9, pp. 506-533, October 2026
https://ijroms.com
Original Article

Ethical Considerations

This study strictly adhered to qualitative ethical standards to safeguard participants' rights, dignity, and overall well-being. Prior to data collection, formal ethical approval was granted by the Samar State University - Institutional Human Research Ethics Committee (SSU-IHREC) under Ethics Clearance Certificate Code: 2026-0023-G, issued on February 11, 2026 (valid through February 11, 2027). Official division approval was subsequently obtained from the Department of Education (DepEd) Schools Division of Samar on February 20, 2026, alongside administrative permissions from school heads across the five participating sites in the Zumarraga District. Informed consent protocols were rigorously enforced. All adult teacher participants provided written informed consent, while minor student participants provided written assent accompanied by signed parental or guardian consent. Participants were briefed on the study's purpose and informed of their explicit right to decline or withdraw from participation at any stage without penalty, academic prejudice, or administrative repercussions. To protect confidentiality and privacy in close-knit island school communities, individual teacher and student identities were strictly protected through the assignment of alphanumeric pseudonyms (e.g., Participant 1, Teacher Transcript 1; Participant 12, Student Transcript 12) and the removal of all personal identifiers from reported transcripts and excerpts. While the five participating public secondary schools are named at the study level to provide essential regional and geographical context for rural island education, participant data were generalized and unlinked from specific institutional designations in all results and reporting, ensuring that individual responses cannot be traced back to a specific teacher or student within a given school. To avoid participant pressure during recruitment—particularly given that teachers assisted in recommending top-performing students—the researcher personally conducted all briefing and assent sessions independently of classroom teachers. Students were informed privately that teacher recommendations served solely to identify candidate participants, that participation was entirely voluntary, and that their decision to participate (or decline) would remain completely confidential and would have no bearing on their academic grades, class standing, or relationship with their teachers. All digital audio recordings, transcribed files, and reflective field notes were encrypted and stored in password-protected drives accessible exclusively to the primary researcher. Data privacy was maintained in accordance with national data privacy standards, and all files will be securely archived and destroyed following required academic retention periods. Interviews were conducted respectfully in familiar school settings to prevent discomfort or pressure, upholding the ethical principles of autonomy, non-maleficence, beneficence, and research integrity.

Conclusion

This study highlights the multifaceted realities of teaching and learning Grade 8 Music in an isolated island district, illustrating how teacher adaptability, student engagement, and systemic resource limitations intersect. The qualitative findings confirm that while MAPEH educators demonstrate resilience by leveraging improvised materials, digital media, and performance-based methods to navigate shortages of musical instruments and instructional time, their instructional confidence remains constrained by limited access to specialized music training. Concurrently, student narratives indicate that Music 8 is perceived as an enjoyable and enriching medium for self-expression, cultural awareness, and personal growth, although participants reported experiencing technical friction in musical notation and rhythm due to practice gaps and performance anxiety. Crucially, active teacher mentorship and peer collaboration were described by participants as key enabling factors for mitigating student self-consciousness in resource-scarce environments. The primary contribution of this research lies in documenting how music education in a rural island context is experienced as a valuable vehicle for socio-emotional and creative expression alongside technical instruction. By capturing the lived realities of both teachers and top-performing students in the Zumarraga District, this study provides an empirical foundation for context-grounded educational planning. These insights informed the formulation of a proposed policy framework—titled the Enhanced Music 8 Instructional Support and Capacity Building Policy—which offers actionable recommendations for school administrators, emphasizing localized teacher professional development (particularly for non-MAPEH majors), targeted resource allocation, and sustained institutional support to bridge the gap between national curriculum expectations and island classroom realities. To build upon these insights, future research should explore the longitudinal outcomes of context-grounded policy interventions across diverse island communities. Additionally, quantitative or mixed-methods studies could formally evaluate the comparative efficacy of improvised instructional tools versus standardized instruments in developing technical music competencies, as well as examine the experiences of lower-performing or disengaged students whose perspectives were beyond the scope of this study.

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https://ijroms.com
Original Article

Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, the following proposed measures are recommended to enhance Grade 8 Music instruction in the Zumarraga District. These recommendations represent proposed, context-grounded action steps that require local stakeholder consultation, administrative review, and Division-level feasibility assessments prior to adoption or implementation: Targeted Resource Mobilization (School Heads & Division Supply Officer): Prioritize the procurement and equitable distribution of basic, durable musical instruments (e.g., guitars, ukuleles, keyboards) and digital audio-visual resources for island secondary schools, supplementing these with teacher-led local material improvisation. Continuous Capacity Building for Non-Specialists (Division MAPEH Supervisor & District Coordinators): Design and conduct regular, practical Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, workshops, and peer-mentoring programs focused on basic music theory, notation, rhythm, and multi-sensory teaching strategies specifically tailored for non-MAPEH majors. Active and Experiential Pedagogy (MAPEH Teachers): Emphasize hands-on, performance-based approaches, collaborative ensemble activities, and "listen-describe-connect" instructional sequences to make music lessons accessible, interactive, and engaging for diverse learners. Instructional Time and Scheduling Support (School Heads & Curriculum Program Executors): Allocate dedicated practice periods within the master school schedule to provide students sufficient opportunity to master performance tasks and reduce music anxiety. Administrative and Institutional Backing (Schools Division Superintendent & School Heads): Integrate music education support into School Improvement Plans (SIP) and Annual Implementation Plans (AIP) to secure sustained institutional funding, administrative support, and instructional monitoring. Proposed Policy Framework (Draft Proposal) To organize these recommendations into an actionable format, the following proposed policy framework—titled the Enhanced Music 8 Instructional Support and Capacity Building Policy—is presented as an intended output of this research. This framework is a proposed model designed for future administrative review and local consultation; it has not been validated, formally approved, or implemented.

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