

Transformational Leadership Practices Among Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH) Department Heads in Promoting Holistic Education

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Abstract

This study examined the transformational leadership practices of MAPEH department heads and their influence on the promotion of holistic education in selected secondary schools. Specifically, it aimed to determine the level of transformational leadership practices in terms of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration; assess the level of promotion of holistic education in MAPEH across physical development, emotional and mental well-being, creative and artistic expression, and social and ethical growth; identify significant differences in the perceptions of teachers and department heads; examine the relationship between leadership practices and holistic education; and determine the challenges encountered by department heads in implementing leadership strategies. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed, utilizing survey questionnaires administered to teachers and MAPEH department heads. Data were analyzed using weighted mean, independent samples t-test, and Pearson r correlation. Findings revealed that transformational leadership practices were generally evident among department heads, with strengths in ethical leadership and motivation, but with areas for improvement in vision communication, innovation support, and recognition of teachers. Holistic education in MAPEH was rated positively across all domains, indicating that the subject contributes meaningfully to learners' overall development. However, significant differences were found between the perceptions of teachers and department heads, with department heads consistently giving higher ratings. Furthermore, results showed a strong to very strong positive relationship between transformational leadership practices and holistic education, highlighting the critical role of leadership in enhancing instructional outcomes. The study also identified key challenges, including time constraints, resource limitations, and student-related concerns. The study concludes that while MAPEH effectively promotes holistic education, strengthening leadership practices, improving resource support, and aligning institutional expectations with classroom realities are essential to further enhance program implementation.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Holistic Education, MAPEH

1. Introduction

Transformational leadership is a well-studied leadership style characterized by four key dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Leaders who practice these dimensions tend to cultivate vision, inspire and motivate followers, stimulate innovation, and attend to individual needs. Studies in the Philippine educational context (for example, among public elementary schools in Davao Oriental) have shown that transformational leadership positively influences teacher motivation — both intrinsic and extrinsic — by providing clear vision, empowering teachers, and addressing their professional and personal needs (Anong, 2024).

Holistic education emphasizes not only academic competence but also the development of students' emotional, physical, artistic, social, and ethical capacities. In a curriculum such as MAPEH (Music, Arts, Physical Education, Health), there lies a natural alignment with holistic development, since the subjects directly deal with arts, health, physical well-being, and creativity. Yet whether the potential of MAPEH to promote holistic education is fully realized often depends on the leadership within the school, especially those of MAPEH Department Heads who oversee implementation, resource allocation, teacher mentoring, and curriculum adaptation.

Teacher motivation is strongly linked with teacher performance, willingness to innovate, commitment, and overall job satisfaction. In Sta. Josefa District, Agusan del Sur, researchers found that motivation mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' work performance. This suggests that transformational practices among leaders do more than affect teacher attitudes; they translate into better teacher performance when motivation acts as a pathway (Dela Rosa, 2025)

There is also evidence that transformational leadership practices among school heads correlate with broader school outcomes beyond teacher motivation. For example, a study in Laguna (Division of First District) assessed transformational leadership practices of school heads in terms of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, and found significant relationships with performance indicators such as dropout rate, cohort survival rate, completion, and achievement rates (Buenvinida, 2019). Organizational commitment is another key factor that often mediates or moderates outcomes linked with leadership. A study among public secondary teachers in Davao City revealed that both transformational leadership and school environment significantly predict teachers' organizational commitment, though the school environment had somewhat more predictive power in one case. This suggests that while leadership is important, the context or environment (e.g. school culture, facilities, support, teacher conditions) also plays a significant role.

In reviewing literature on transformational leadership in Philippine basic education, Cadiz (2024) analyzed how such leadership is necessary for achieving transformative education, which overlaps with holistic education in its focus on empowering learners, engaging whole person development, and integrating multiple domains (cognitive, affective, psychosocial, civic). In this lens, leadership practices that foster shared vision, inclusivity, continuous learning, and participatory decision-making become critical. Although several studies focus on principals or school heads, fewer studies investigate leadership practices at the level of department heads, particularly in specialized departments like MAPEH. Yet, departmental leadership matters: a Department Head of MAPEH can influence how the curriculum is delivered in arts, music, health, and physical education; can foster creativity, allocate resources for equipment, advocate for teacher specialization and training; and promote activities that integrate health, fitness, ethical concerns, artistic expression, and social awareness.

Moreover, MAPEH teachers often face unique challenges: limited resources, lack of specialized training (especially in arts/music), large class sizes, and sometimes undervaluation of non-core subjects. Under transformational leadership, Department Heads might mitigate these challenges by inspiring teachers, pushing for innovations (e.g., integrating arts in other subjects or community partnerships), providing individualized support, and motivating teachers to go beyond minimal compliance.

Empirical evidence supports the beneficial effects of transformational leadership for teacher performance and student achievement. For instance, in a study by Reyes (2024), transformational leadership in Philippine schools was shown to significantly influence student academic outcomes via strategies and practices of educational leaders. Although that study did not focus on MAPEH per se, its findings suggest that strong leadership practices can alter outcomes in important ways. In another qualitative case study of a Head Teacher in Masbate, leadership practices such as visionary leadership, collaboration and networking, maximizing resources, balanced leadership, and over-all effectiveness were found. These practices helped in aligning school policies with educational goals, enabling better teacher support and fostering a collaborative culture. Such qualities are likely to be valuable in the MAPEH context as well.

Finally, in view of the Department of Education's policies in the Philippines, which increasingly emphasize learner-centered pedagogy, holistic development, health and wellness, and the arts, understanding how transformational leadership at the departmental level operates in MAPEH becomes not just theoretically important but practically urgent. Studying how MAPEH Department Heads utilize transformational practices can provide insights into training, policy, and institutional supports needed to better promote holistic education in schools.

2. Material and methods

This study employed descriptive-correlational research design to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the transformational leadership practices of MAPEH Department Heads and their role in promoting holistic education in public secondary schools under the Angeles City Division for the School Year 2025–2026.

The quantitative component utilized a descriptive design to measure and analyze the level of transformational leadership practices (SOP 1), the level of holistic education promotion in MAPEH (SOP 2), and challenges encountered (SOP 5). Standardized survey questionnaires were administered to MAPEH teachers and department heads to assess perceptions across the key indicators. These data were statistically analyzed using mean, t-tests, and Pearson correlation, to determine the differences and relationships (SOPs 3 and 4).

To address the research objectives and effectively interpret the collected data, various statistical tools and quantitative analysis techniques were employed. Each tool was carefully selected to match the specific type of data and research questions derived from the study's Statement of the Problem (SOP).

For SOP 1, which sought to determine the level of transformational leadership practices exhibited by MAPEH Department Heads in terms of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration,

descriptive statistics such as mean, was used. These summarized the perceptions of teachers and department heads regarding the extent of leadership behaviors observed.

For SOP 2, which focused on the level of promotion of holistic education, descriptive statistics was used. Specifically, the weighted mean was applied to analyze the perceptions of respondents on the degree to which MAPEH programs support physical, emotional, creative, and social development. Interpretation of the weighted mean followed a predefined scale to categorize levels.

For SOP 3, which examined whether there is a significant difference in perception between MAPEH Department Heads and teachers regarding the implementation of transformational leadership practices, an Independent Samples t-test was employed. This inferential statistical test was suitable for comparing the means of two independent groups to determine whether observed differences are statistically significant.

To answer SOP 4, which investigated whether a significant relationship exists between transformational leadership practices and the promotion of holistic education, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was utilized. This test is appropriate for determining the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two continuous variables. A significance level of 0.05 was set as the threshold for interpreting the results.

To address SOP 5, which explored the challenges encountered by MAPEH Department Heads in implementing leadership strategies, descriptive statistics was used.

Finally, SOP 6, which involved the development of a Leadership-Based Program, was based on the integrated findings from both quantitative and qualitative analyses. The patterns, strengths, and gaps identified through statistical results and thematic narratives were inform the design of a contextualized, evidence-based intervention aimed at improving leadership practices in the MAPEH department.

3. Results and discussion

3.1 Transformational Leadership Practices of MAPEH Department Heads

3.1.1 Idealized Influence

The results show that the level of Idealized Influence of the department head is generally high, with an average weighted mean of 3.65 (Agree). This indicates that teachers perceive their department head as a positive role model who demonstrates appropriate values, behavior, and leadership credibility in the school setting. The highest-rated indicator is acting with integrity and high ethical standards (3.92). This suggests that teachers strongly trust their department head in terms of fairness, honesty, and professionalism. In daily school operations, this is usually observed when the department head handles conflicts objectively, implements policies consistently, and treats teachers without favoritism. Because teachers experience this consistency, trust becomes naturally established. The lowest-rated indicator is sharing vision and goals clearly (3.28). This implies that although the leader is respected, the direction of the department is not always strongly communicated or internalized by all teachers. In practice, vision sharing may happen only during meetings or planning sessions but may not be reinforced regularly in classroom-level implementation or instructional supervision. As a result, teachers may focus more on task completion rather than long-term departmental goals. This aligns with Bass (2005), who emphasized that idealized influence is strongest when leaders not only model values but also consistently communicate a shared vision. Without strong vision reinforcement, leadership influence remains positive but incomplete.

3.1.2 Inspirational Motivation

The results indicate that the level of Inspirational Motivation of the department head is generally high, with an average weighted mean of 3.56 (Agree). This shows that teachers perceive their leader as capable of encouraging, energizing, and giving meaning to their work in the school setting. The highest-rated indicator is inspiring teachers to perform at their best (3.72). This indicates that teachers feel emotionally supported and encouraged, especially during busy periods such as grading, school events, and deadlines. The department head likely provides encouragement, affirmation, and presence, which helps sustain teacher effort even under pressure. However, the lowest-rated indicator is articulating a clear and compelling vision (3.30). This suggests that while teachers feel motivated in the short term, they may not always understand the deeper purpose behind their work. Motivation becomes activity-based rather than purpose-driven. In real school contexts, this happens when leaders focus more on operational reminders than long-term direction-setting conversations.

3.1.3 Intellectual Stimulation

The results show that the level of Intellectual Stimulation of the department head is moderate, with an average weighted mean of 3.32 (Moderately Agree). This indicates that while there are efforts to encourage innovation, critical thinking, and openness to new ideas, these practices are not yet consistently or fully experienced by teachers. The highest-rated indicator is welcoming new ideas from teachers (3.47). This shows that teachers feel psychologically safe to express suggestions

and participate in discussions. The department head is perceived as open to input, which is essential in collaborative school environments. The lowest-rated indicator is supporting new teaching strategies (3.18). This indicates a gap between openness and actual implementation. While teachers may be encouraged to innovate, they may not always receive enough support in terms of time, materials, monitoring, or follow-up. In real school practice, innovation often remains at the planning stage due to workload pressure and limited instructional resources.

3.1.4 Individualized Consideration

The results reveal that the level of Individualized Consideration of the department head is generally high, with an average weighted mean of 3.42 (Agree). This indicates that teachers perceive their leader as supportive and attentive to their individual needs, professional growth, and overall well-being. The highest-rated indicator, helping teachers grow professionally (3.54), suggests that the department head plays an active role in mentoring and developing teachers. This may be evident through coaching, providing instructional guidance, encouraging participation in trainings, and supporting career advancement. Teachers view this as a strong aspect of leadership, as it directly contributes to their competence and confidence in teaching. On the other hand, the lowest-rated indicator, recognizing teacher achievements (3.20), with a descriptive equivalent of Moderately Agree, highlights an area that needs improvement. While teachers receive support, their efforts and accomplishments may not always be consistently acknowledged. Recognition may be given informally or occasionally, but not in a way that is visible, regular, or meaningful to all teachers. Additionally, indicators such as showing concern for well-being and development (3.38) also fall under Moderately Agree, suggesting that although care and support are present, they may not always be consistently experienced by every teacher. Workload, time constraints, and competing responsibilities may affect how consistently individualized attention is provided. Overall, the findings suggest that the department head is effective in supporting teachers' professional growth and maintaining positive relationships. However, strengthening systems for recognizing achievements and consistently addressing teachers' well-being can further enhance individualized consideration, leading to higher teacher morale, motivation, and engagement.

3.2 Level of Promotion of Holistic Education in MAPEH

3.2.1. Physical Development

The results for Physical Development reveal that both teachers and department heads generally perceive MAPEH as an effective avenue for promoting learners' physical well-being, although the level of implementation varies depending on specific indicators. The overall teacher mean of 4.00 (Agree) and department head mean of 4.34 (Agree) suggest that while the program is positively received, there are still practical challenges that affect full implementation, particularly in the areas of facilities and curriculum integration. It is notable that the highest ratings were given to the promotion of healthy lifestyle and enhancement of motor skills, which indicates that classroom instruction in MAPEH is effectively reinforcing awareness of physical fitness and wellness. However, the lower ratings in the adequacy of facilities and meaningful integration of physical education into the curriculum reflect common realities in many public schools where resources, space, and equipment are often limited. Teachers, being directly engaged in classroom implementation, tend to provide more critical and realistic assessments compared to department heads. This finding aligns with the study of Bailey et al. (2009), who emphasized that while physical education contributes significantly to students' physical competence and health awareness, its effectiveness is strongly influenced by the availability of resources and quality of instructional delivery. Similarly, UNESCO (2015) highlighted that well-structured physical education programs require not only competent teachers but also sufficient facilities and institutional support to achieve optimal outcomes. Overall, the results suggest that while MAPEH is successful in promoting physical development, strengthening infrastructure and instructional support systems would further enhance its impact on learners.

3.2.2 Emotional and Mental Well - Being

The findings on Emotional and Mental Well-Being indicate a generally positive perception among respondents, with teachers yielding an average mean of 4.18 (Agree) and department heads 4.54 (Strongly Agree). This suggests that MAPEH is viewed as a supportive learning area that contributes to learners' emotional stability, self-awareness, and interpersonal relationships. One of the strongest aspects identified is the promotion of positive teacher-student relationships and the recognition of emotional well-being as an essential part of holistic education. These results reflect how MAPEH classes often serve as safe and engaging spaces where learners can express themselves freely, participate in collaborative activities, and build confidence. However, the moderately rated indicator on resilience development among teachers suggests that while emotional support is present, structured programs for mental health and resilience-building may not yet be fully institutionalized in classroom practice. This aligns with Durlak et al. (2011), who found that social and emotional learning (SEL) programs are most effective when they are intentional, structured, and consistently implemented across learning areas. Likewise, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2020) emphasized that emotional competencies such as self-management and resilience require sustained reinforcement rather than occasional integration. In many cases, teachers' slightly lower ratings reflect their firsthand experiences dealing with diverse learner needs, including emotional stress, academic pressure, and behavioral concerns. Despite these challenges, the overall positive results suggest that MAPEH remains a meaningful platform for supporting students' emotional growth, even if further strengthening of mental health-focused strategies is still needed.

3.2.3 Creative and Artistic Expression

The results for Creative and Artistic Expression show a strong positive perception, particularly among department heads (4.54, Strongly Agree), while teachers rated it slightly lower at 4.20 (Agree). This difference suggests that while the promotion of creativity is well-recognized at the administrative level, teachers experience certain limitations in fully implementing creative activities in the classroom setting. Indicators such as artistic expression being valued and supported received higher ratings, indicating that MAPEH successfully provides learners with opportunities to engage in music, dance, visual arts, and performance-based activities. However, moderately rated indicators such as talent development opportunities and integration of creative activities suggest that time constraints, academic workload, and limited instructional resources may affect the consistency of creative engagement. This finding supports Eisner (2002), who emphasized that arts education plays a critical role in developing imagination, emotional expression, and cognitive flexibility, but only when it is meaningfully and consistently embedded in instruction. Similarly, Winner, Goldstein, and Vincent-Lancrin (2013) noted that while arts education enhances creativity and motivation, its effectiveness depends on sustained exposure and structured opportunities for skill development. In real classroom contexts, teachers often balance multiple responsibilities, which may limit the depth of creative exploration. Despite this, the results indicate that MAPEH still serves as a strong platform for nurturing learners' artistic abilities and self-expression, contributing to their overall holistic development.

3.2.4 Social and Ethical Growth

The results for Social and Ethical Growth reveal a consistently positive perception, with teachers rating it at 4.20 (Agree) and department heads at 4.66 (Strongly Agree). This indicates that MAPEH is widely recognized as an effective subject in promoting teamwork, respect, cultural awareness, and character development among learners. The highest-rated indicators involve ethical values integration and character development, suggesting that MAPEH lessons often go beyond physical and artistic activities and extend into values formation. However, the moderately rated indicator on social responsibility among teachers reflects the reality that such values may be taught implicitly rather than through structured and explicit activities. This supports Lickona (2011), who argued that character education is most effective when it is intentionally embedded in daily school life and reinforced through consistent modeling by teachers. Likewise, Berkowitz and Bier (2005) found that values education programs are more impactful when supported by a strong school culture and sustained reinforcement across subjects. The difference between teacher and department head ratings may reflect the gap between policy-level expectations and classroom-level realities. While administrators may observe school-wide initiatives and programs, teachers experience the direct challenges of implementing values education in diverse and dynamic classroom environments. Despite these challenges, the results clearly show that MAPEH contributes meaningfully to shaping socially responsible and ethically grounded learners, reinforcing its role as a holistic learning area.

3.3 Independent Samples T-Test on Teachers' and Department Heads' Perception of Holistic Education in MAPEH

The results of the independent samples t-test reveal a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of teachers and department heads regarding the implementation of holistic education in MAPEH across all domains. This means that the observed differences in mean scores are not due to chance, but rather reflect a real and meaningful gap in how both groups experience and evaluate program implementation. Although both groups generally agree that MAPEH promotes holistic education, the consistently higher ratings from department heads suggest that they view implementation from a broader institutional and policy perspective, while teachers assess it through the lens of daily classroom realities. This difference in standpoint is not a contradiction but rather a reflection of their distinct roles in the education system. The overall t-value of 4.10 confirms a significant difference in perception. This gap highlights a familiar dynamic in educational institutions: administrators often evaluate programs based on intended outcomes, compliance reports, and school-wide initiatives, while teachers base their judgments on actual instructional experiences, learner engagement, and resource availability. In real school settings, teachers are the ones who directly navigate classroom challenges—limited time, diverse learner needs, emotional demands, and resource constraints. Department heads, on the other hand, often see the successful outputs of programs during observations or reports, which may present a more positive picture. This finding resonates with the work of Fullan (2007), who emphasized that educational change is often perceived differently at the policy level versus the classroom level. He argued that the “implementation gap” is a common issue in education, where intended reforms appear successful on paper but are experienced differently in practice.

3.4 Pearson r Correlation Between Transformational Leadership Practices and Holistic Education Domains in MAPEH

The results of the Pearson r correlation reveal that all dimensions of transformational leadership have strong to very strong positive relationships with the different domains of holistic education in MAPEH. This indicates that effective leadership practices are closely associated with improved implementation of physical, emotional, creative, and social aspects of student development. Inspirational motivation obtained the highest overall correlation ($r = 0.85$), indicating that the ability of department heads to inspire and motivate teachers plays a major role in strengthening the implementation of holistic education. This suggests that when teachers are motivated and given a clear sense of direction, they are more likely to design learning experiences that develop learners' physical, emotional, creative, and social competencies. Individualized consideration also shows a very strong relationship ($r = 0.82$), emphasizing that personalized support and attention from

leaders significantly enhance teaching effectiveness and learner development. Idealized influence ($r = 0.81$) further highlights those teachers tend to promote holistic education more effectively when leaders demonstrate professionalism, integrity, and serve as role models in the workplace. On the other hand, intellectual stimulation obtained a slightly lower but still strong relationship ($r = 0.79$), suggesting that while encouraging creativity and innovation is important, its influence becomes more effective when combined with strong motivational and supportive leadership behaviors. Overall, the findings confirm that transformational leadership plays a crucial role in strengthening holistic education practices in MAPEH. This supports the views of Bass and Avolio (2004), Leithwood and Jantzi (2005), and Robinson et al. (2008), who emphasized that leadership significantly influences teacher practices and instructional quality when it is directly connected to motivation, support, and instructional guidance.

3.5. Challenges Encountered by MAPEH Department Heads in Implementing Leadership Strategies

3.5.1. Resource Limitations

The results indicate that resource limitations are a notable challenge in the implementation of MAPEH programs, with an average weighted mean of 3.63 (Agree). This suggests that while schools are able to deliver MAPEH instruction, limitations in facilities, budget, and technology continue to affect the quality and scope of program implementation. The indicator on limited budget allocation for programs promoting holistic education recorded a mean of 3.60, also interpreted as Agree. This reflects that while budgets are allocated, they are often distributed across various school priorities, leaving limited funding specifically for MAPEH programs. As a result, some planned activities such as competitions, training sessions, or equipment upgrades are either reduced or rescheduled. Meanwhile, insufficient access to technology and digital tools for innovative teaching obtained the lowest mean of 3.45, interpreted as Moderately Agree. This indicates that although technology is not fully abundant, schools are gradually improving access through shared devices and the use of mobile phones and online platforms. Teachers have also become more resourceful in integrating available digital tools into instruction. Overall, resource limitations remain a challenge; however, teachers demonstrate adaptability and creativity in addressing these constraints. This aligns with Kirk (2010), who emphasized that the effectiveness of physical education and related subjects is influenced by available resources but can still be sustained through teacher flexibility and innovation.

3.5.2 Time Constraints

The results indicate that time constraints are a significant challenge in the implementation of leadership practices among MAPEH department heads, with an average weighted mean of 3.78 (Agree). This suggests that competing responsibilities and limited time greatly affect their ability to effectively carry out leadership, mentoring, and instructional functions. The highest-rated indicator, heavy teaching loads limiting leadership and mentoring duties (3.88), highlights that department heads are often tasked with full teaching responsibilities alongside leadership roles. This dual function makes it difficult for them to focus on instructional supervision, coaching, and continuous support for teachers, as much of their time is devoted to classroom teaching. The indicator on limited time for planning and professional development (3.75) also reflects a major concern. While department heads recognize the importance of planning and teacher development, these activities are often constrained by overlapping tasks and urgent school demands. As a result, opportunities for improving instruction and mentoring teachers may not be maximized. Similarly, difficulty balancing administrative tasks with instructional leadership (3.70) indicates that department heads are challenged by the need to manage reports, coordination, and other administrative requirements while maintaining their instructional leadership roles. This often leads to divided attention and reduced focus on teaching and learning improvement. Overall, the findings suggest that time constraints significantly affect the consistency and depth of leadership practices. The multiple roles assigned to department heads limit their capacity to fully perform their leadership functions. Addressing workload distribution and providing dedicated time for leadership tasks can help improve the effectiveness of instructional leadership and support better teaching outcomes.

3.5.3 Teacher Motivation and Engagement

The results show that teacher motivation and engagement pose a moderate challenge, with an average weighted mean of 3.33 (Moderately Agree). This indicates that while teachers generally demonstrate participation in school initiatives, their level of enthusiasm, commitment, and engagement is not consistently sustained across all activities. The indicator resistance or low enthusiasm in adopting new teaching methods (3.25), interpreted as Moderately Agree, suggests that some teachers remain hesitant to embrace innovation. This may be attributed to factors such as heavy workload, limited preparation time, or reliance on familiar teaching practices. As a result, the adoption of new instructional strategies may be uneven across the department. The indicator difficulty in inspiring teachers to participate actively (3.40), rated as Agree, highlights that encouraging consistent teacher involvement in MAPEH initiatives remains a concern. Teachers may be less inclined to engage in additional tasks that require extra time and effort beyond their regular responsibilities, especially when competing demands are present. Similarly, lack of commitment or cooperation among some members (3.35), interpreted as Moderately Agree, indicates that while collaboration exists, it is not always consistent. Occasional gaps in participation and teamwork may affect the smooth implementation of programs and departmental activities. Overall, the findings suggest that teacher motivation is influenced by workload, support, and working conditions. While many teachers remain dedicated, there is a need to strengthen engagement strategies, provide meaningful support, and foster a more collaborative environment. Enhancing these areas can lead to more consistent participation and improved implementation of MAPEH programs.

3.5.4 Professional Development and Training

The results indicate that professional development and training present a moderate challenge, with an average weighted mean of 3.20 (Moderately Agree). This suggests that while opportunities for professional growth are available, they are not yet sufficient in terms of frequency, relevance, and sustained support needed for effective leadership and instructional improvement. This suggests that while trainings are being conducted, they may not always be fully aligned with the specific leadership needs of MAPEH department heads. Limited access to seminars and workshops recorded a mean of 3.15, also interpreted as Moderately Agree. This indicates that opportunities for professional development exist but are not always frequent or specialized enough to address emerging instructional and leadership demands. The need for ongoing support in leadership implementation obtained a mean of 3.25, interpreted as Moderately Agree. This reflects the need for continuous coaching, mentoring, and follow-up activities after training sessions to ensure proper application in the school setting. Overall, professional development is present in the school system but requires strengthening in terms of continuity, relevance, and practical application. Desimone (2009) emphasized that effective professional development must be sustained, content-focused, and directly connected to classroom practice to produce meaningful improvement.

3.5.5. Communication and Collaboration

The results indicate that communication and collaboration present a moderate challenge, with an average weighted mean of 3.30 (Moderately Agree). This suggests that while communication and collaborative practices are present within the MAPEH department, they are not yet consistently sustained or fully maximized. The indicator difficulty fostering effective communication among members (3.30), interpreted as Moderately Agree, shows that communication often occurs in formal settings such as meetings but may lack continuous and open interaction in day-to-day operations. This may limit timely coordination, feedback, and shared understanding among teachers. Similarly, limited collaboration with other departments (3.25), also rated as Moderately Agree, indicates that interdisciplinary efforts exist but are not fully developed. Opportunities for integrating MAPEH with other subject areas or participating in cross-departmental initiatives may not be consistently explored or implemented. The indicator challenges in engaging parents and the community (3.35), interpreted as Moderately Agree, suggests that involvement from stakeholders is often limited to specific events or activities rather than sustained partnerships. This may reduce the potential support and reinforcement that parents and the community can provide in promoting holistic education. Overall, the findings imply that while communication and collaboration are present, there is a need to strengthen continuous interaction, expand interdisciplinary partnerships, and enhance stakeholder engagement. Improving these areas can lead to more coordinated efforts, stronger school-community relationships, and more effective implementation of MAPEH programs.

3.5.6 Policy and Administrative Support

The results indicate that policy and administrative support present a moderate challenge, with an average weighted mean of 3.25 (Moderately Agree). This suggests that while administrative structures and policies are in place, they do not always fully support the effective implementation of MAPEH programs and leadership initiatives. The indicator inadequate support from administration or authorities (3.20), interpreted as Moderately Agree, implies that although support is available, it may not be sufficient to address the operational and instructional needs of the department. This may include limitations in decision-making support, resource allocation, or responsiveness to program requirements. Similarly, bureaucratic delays in implementing initiatives (3.25), also rated as Moderately Agree, reflect that administrative processes and approval systems can slow down the execution of planned activities. Such delays may affect the timeliness and effectiveness of programs, particularly those requiring immediate action or coordination. The indicator misalignment of policies with holistic education goals (3.30), interpreted as Moderately Agree, suggests that existing policies may not always be fully aligned with the practical and instructional needs of MAPEH. This can create gaps between policy expectations and actual classroom implementation, limiting the effectiveness of holistic education efforts. Overall, the findings indicate that while administrative support is present, there is a need for stronger alignment between policies and instructional goals, as well as more efficient processes in implementing school initiatives. Enhancing policy coherence and reducing bureaucratic barriers can significantly improve leadership effectiveness and program delivery in MAPEH.

3.5.7. Student-Related Challenges

The results indicate that student-related challenges are experienced at a moderate level, with an average weighted mean of 3.40 (Moderately Agree). This suggests that while teachers encounter difficulties in addressing student needs within MAPEH, these challenges are generally manageable and do not severely hinder the implementation of instruction. The highest-rated indicator, diverse learning needs requiring individual attention (3.65), interpreted as Agree, highlights those teachers consistently deal with varied student abilities, skills, and learning styles. This requires the use of differentiated instruction, flexible teaching strategies, and additional support to ensure that all learners are able to participate and benefit from MAPEH activities. On the other hand, limited student participation in MAPEH activities (3.30) and emotional and social issues affecting development (3.25), both interpreted as Moderately Agree, indicate that while these concerns are present, they are not strongly dominant in classroom practice. Instances of low participation or emotional challenges may occur, but they are not considered major barriers to teaching and learning. Overall, the findings suggest that teachers are able to manage student-related challenges, particularly through adapting instruction to meet diverse learner needs. However, there is still a need to strengthen inclusive teaching practices, enhance student engagement strategies, and provide

continuous support for learners' emotional and social development. These efforts will further improve participation and ensure a more holistic learning experience in MAPEH.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that MAPEH department heads demonstrate competent transformational leadership practices, particularly in modeling ethical behavior and providing encouragement to teachers. However, areas such as vision communication, consistent recognition, and instructional support require further strengthening, indicating that leadership influence is not yet fully maximized across all dimensions. MAPEH also serves as an effective platform for holistic learner development, successfully addressing physical, emotional, creative, and social domains. Despite this, limitations in resources, structured implementation, and consistency of activities slightly hinder the full realization of its potential. Furthermore, a significant perceptual gap exists between teachers and department heads, suggesting that while both groups recognize the effectiveness of MAPEH, they differ in how they experience and evaluate its implementation, reflecting a disconnect between policy-level expectations and classroom realities. The findings also confirm that transformational leadership has a significant and positive influence on the promotion of holistic education, as leadership behaviors such as motivation, support, ethical conduct, and intellectual stimulation encourage teachers to implement meaningful and comprehensive learning experiences. Lastly, MAPEH department heads face moderate but persistent challenges in implementing leadership strategies, which are largely attributed to structural and systemic constraints such as limited time, resources, and institutional support rather than a lack of leadership competence.

In light of these conclusions, it is recommended that schools institutionalize a structured leadership enhancement program for MAPEH department heads, focusing on improving vision communication, instructional support, and recognition systems to ensure that leadership practices are consistently translated into clear direction and sustained motivation. Schools should also strengthen resource allocation and implement a comprehensive and integrated MAPEH framework to ensure consistent delivery of holistic learning experiences across all grade levels. To address the perceptual gap between teachers and department heads, it is important to establish regular collaborative dialogue and participatory evaluation mechanisms that align expectations with actual classroom practices. Additionally, leadership development programs should be directly connected to classroom-based instructional practices to ensure that transformational leadership behaviors lead to learner-centered and holistic outcomes. Finally, the education system should reduce administrative and teaching workloads while providing targeted institutional support, including adequate resources, continuous professional development, and aligned policies, to enable department heads to perform their leadership roles more effectively and sustainably.

Compliance with ethical standards

The study was conducted in accordance with ethical standards in research. Permission was obtained from the concerned authorities before the conduct of the study, and participation of the respondents was voluntary. The confidentiality and privacy of the participants was properly observed, and all information gathered was used solely for academic purposes.

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