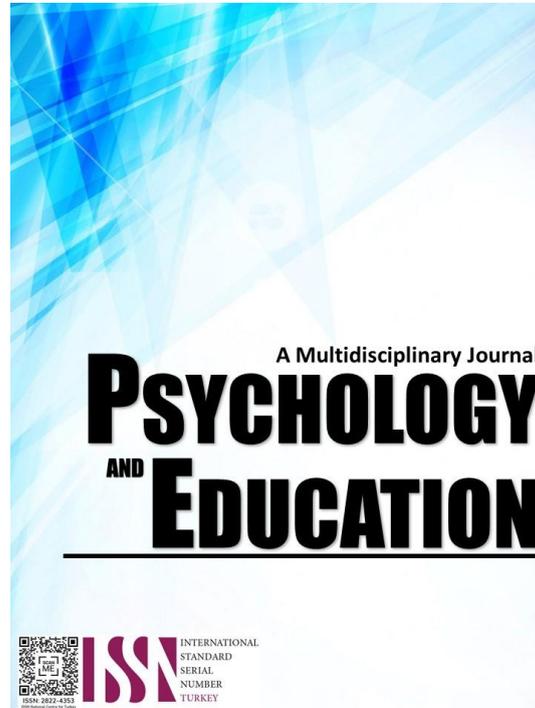


**MUSICAL COMPETENCIES AND CHALLENGES
EXPERIENCED BY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
TEACHERS IN TEACHING MUSIC**



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Musical Competencies and Challenges Experienced by Elementary School Teachers in Teaching Music

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Abstract

This descriptive correlational study focused on the teachers' competency in music and the challenges experienced in teaching music. Complete enumeration was the sampling design used in this investigation. The study was conducted in the Municipality of Alamada in the Province of Cotabato, composed of 306 elementary school teachers. Results revealed that majority of the respondents are 31-40 years old, female, Master's Degree holders, and 3-10 years in service. They consider themselves moderately competent in basic knowledge, musical ability, and pedagogy of teaching music. They experienced challenges in the areas of imparting knowledge, strategies, instructional materials, and assessment; however, engagement in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is one of their coping mechanisms utilized to address those challenges. It was revealed that there is no significant difference between the teacher's competency in teaching music by age group, sex, and length of service. Also, there is no significant difference between the teacher's competency in terms of musical ability and assessment when grouped according to the highest educational assessment. However, there is a significant difference between basic knowledge and assessment regarding teachers' highest educational attainment.

Keywords: *teachers' competency in music, challenges in teaching music, coping mechanism, elementary teachers*

Introduction

Music is considered the language of the soul (Racoma, 2013). However, how can this language be shared with young children if the teacher still needs the art? This is an ongoing challenge among primary school teachers in ensuring that elementary school-aged children go through high-quality music education. However, if teachers need the skills and abilities, these will hinder the pupils from experiencing them. Generalist primary teachers usually teach and are expected to prepare all curricular subjects, including Music (Welch & Henley, 2014).

In Turkey, various factors influence teachers' music teaching activities, producing negative results. These factors were encountered by the students in the curriculum, lack of teacher competencies, inadequate facilities and resources for music education, limited support from parents, and adverse effects of audio-visual media. Due to the need for more confidence and competence in primary teachers, music specialist teachers are assigned to the task of delivering the music curriculum (Altun, 2010).

Stunell (2010) of England stated that several generalist teachers believed they were not competent to teach Music to their classes since they perceived themselves as "non-musicians." They further said that they need more confidence in teaching Music. However, they felt able to teach other subjects where they need a

perception of having strong and subject-specific identities.

In the Philippines, the K to 12 Curriculum was adapted from the international perspective and was strengthened by the creation of Republic Act No. 10533 under Philippine Law, where Music is taught with 40-minute allocation in the elementary beginning in 1st Grade onwards as one of the components in MAPEH (Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health). However, many hesitated to accept change in the curricula, for they needed more competencies to teach Music and the knowledge to conduct an assessment in Music. Indeed, these teachers find difficulty, particularly in teaching reading notations. As a result, they conduct music lessons limited to rote singing (Atilano, 2018).

From the disclosures of MAPEH teachers in Alamada West District during a district meeting, they verbally expressed that they dislike teaching Music since most of them are generalist teachers. They tend to put little importance on teaching Music and often sacrifice the subject for other learning areas. With the realities experienced by teachers here and in some foreign countries, the researcher was prompted to study this problem.

Research Questions

The study aimed to determine the musical competencies of elementary school teachers and the

challenges experienced in teaching Music in the Municipality of Alamada. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the respondents' demographic profile regarding sex, age, length of service and highest educational attainment?
2. What are the musical competencies of teachers in terms of:
 - 2.1. basic knowledge in teaching Music;
 - 2.2. teachers' musical ability;
 - 2.3. pedagogies; and
 - 2.4. assessment practices?
3. What are the challenges experienced by teachers in teaching Music in terms of imparting knowledge, strategies, instructional materials and assessment?
4. What do teachers utilize the coping mechanisms to address the challenges encountered in Teaching Music?
5. Is there a significant difference between the musical competencies of teachers when grouped according to the selected demographic profile?
6. Is there a significant relationship between the level of teachers' competencies and the challenges experienced?

Literature Review

Music teachers provide lessons for learners of all ages. These lessons may include aspects of vocal training, instrumental training, and general music knowledge. Music teachers teach individuals of all abilities and are expected to be comfortable teaching individual students and large groups (Creech & Gaunt, 2018 & Helling, 2020).

According to Estrella (2018), teachers use various approaches when it comes to teaching Music. Each teaching method has a system and underlying philosophy with clearly defined objectives and goals. These methods have been used for a long time, so they are time-tested and proven successful. All these methods had in common that they teach children not just to be listeners but encourage them to be creators and producers of Music.

Bauer (2013) and Manila (2020) investigated the challenges faced by teachers in teaching music. Significant findings of the study revealed that the respondents need more knowledge of the content and pedagogy of Music at the elementary level. Data further divulged that teachers' lack of knowledge on the subject, the negative attitude of pupils towards the subject, lack of facilities, and lack of teaching

resources/materials were the main challenges faced by teachers in teaching music.

Methodology

This chapter presents the research design, locale and respondents of the study, research instrument, validity and reliability of the instrument, data gathering procedure, and statistical treatment of data for analysis and interpretation.

Research Design

The research design used is descriptive-correlational. It is descriptive since this study described the information about the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of sex, age, length of service, educational attainment, level of competence, challenges encountered, and coping strategies. It is also correlational, for it determines the significant difference between the musical competencies and the challenges of teachers in teaching music in terms of knowledge, strategies, instructional materials, assessment, and the significant relationship between the level of competencies of teachers and the challenges experienced by them.

Locale and Respondents of the Study

The study was conducted in the Municipality of Alamada in the Province of Cotabato. It is basically agricultural, as its land is cultivated for corn, upland rice, bananas, palm oil, rubber, and coconut tree. The respondents are from the three school districts composed of 306 teachers. The study was conducted during the first semester of the school year 2021-2022.

Sampling Design

The study utilized census or complete enumeration where all elementary school teachers of Alamada North, East, and West Districts were the respondents of the study.

Instrumentation

The study utilized a research-made questionnaire as the main source of data. Items included in the instrument are based on the related literature and research reading, particularly from books as well as from reliable websites. The questionnaire was designed to determine the musical competencies of elementary school teachers and the challenges encountered in teaching music.



Part I of the questionnaire includes the profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, length of service, and highest educational attainment. Part II is the level of teachers' competence in teaching music in terms of musical ability, basic knowledge in teaching music, pedagogy, and assessment practices. Part III is all about the challenges experienced by teachers in teaching music in terms of knowledge, strategies, instructional materials, and assessment, and Part IV is about the coping mechanisms utilized by teachers to address the challenges experiences in teaching music.

Validity and Reliability

The researcher developed the questionnaire and submitted it to the adviser and panel members for scrutiny. The adviser and panel members determined face and content validity. In terms of face validity, the adviser and panel members looked into the correctness of the instrument format, grammatical construction, and clarity of instruction. On content validity, the instrument was checked on the fitness of content with the objectives of the study.

The questionnaire was pilot-tested on 20 teachers of Pigcawaran Elementary School, Pigcawaran, Alamada, Cotabato. The Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the reliability of the items. The obtained r-value is .90, which is indicative of a reliable instrument.

Data Gathering Procedure

Permission was secured from the Dean of the Graduate School of Notre Dame of Midsayap College to conduct the study and also from the Schools Division Superintendent. After the approval, arrangement with the Principals, Head Teachers, and Teacher In-Charge of the elementary schools from Alamada North, East, and West Districts was made for the schedule of administration of the instruments. The researcher did the instruments' distribution and retrieval personally, and the data gathered were analyzed using a statistical program. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was also conducted personally by the researcher to supplement the data.

Results and Discussion

The data are presented in textual and tabular form and cover the demographic profile of the respondents, the musical competencies of teachers, challenges experienced in teaching music and the coping mechanisms utilized by teachers to address the challenges encountered.

Profile of the Respondents

The profile of the respondents includes their age, sex, length of service, and highest educational attainment. For the age, out of 306 respondents, 107, or 34.97 percent, are within the age bracket of 31-40; 78, or 25.49 percent, belong to 23-30 years old, and the last 44 or 14.38 percent fall under 51-60 age group. The youngest teacher is 23 years old, and the seasoned teacher is 60 years old. For the sex of the respondents, the majority are females, 259 or 84.60 percent. For the length of service, 164 or 53.59 percent are within the year bracket of 3-10 years in service. It is followed by 86 or 28.10 percent, which is within 11-20 years of service. The least is 12 or 3.93 percent under the bracket of 31 years old and above. In terms of the highest educational attainment, 132 or 43.14 percent are Master's Degree holders, and only two or .65 percent have Doctoral Degrees. It gives an indication that most of them are very young in their teaching career. It also implies that most teachers have developed professionally by engaging in and continuing higher education.

Teachers' Competency in Teaching Music

Table 1. *Teachers' Competency in Teaching Music*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Sd</i>
Basic Knowledge in Teaching Music	3.32	.76
Musical Ability	3.30	.85
Pedagogy in Music	3.31	.74
Assessment	3.68	.74
Grand Mean & Average Standard Deviation	3.40	.77

Challenges Experienced of Teachers in Teaching Music

The teachers' competency in teaching music revealed the assessment with the highest mean rating described as Agree and interpreted as Competent. The lowest mean is the teacher's competency in musical ability, interpreted as Moderately Competent. The grand mean yielded a description of Moderately Agree and interpreted as Moderately Competent among the teacher respondents. The result indicates that teachers Agreed that they are Competent in giving an assessment. It gives an implication that teachers are knowledgeable in terms of assessing their pupils learning in Music. While in basic knowledge, musical ability, and pedagogy, the respondents revealed a Moderate Agreement. It indicates that teachers are Moderately Competent in basic knowledge, musical ability, and pedagogy. It further implies that the respondents need more skills and competencies for a meaningful teaching-learning experience for the learners and to hone the innate musical ability of the pupils.

This result supports the statement of Atilano (2018), who elaborated that elementary pupil who are provided training at an early age have a wide opportunity to develop basic musical competencies in Basic Education. Incidentally, the instructional abilities of music teachers play a significant role in providing a quality learning experience for the learners. However, only some elementary and secondary teachers are adequately trained to teach Music. Unsurprisingly, the quality of the musical learning experience is jeopardized due to a lack of expertise in the field.

The challenges experienced by teachers in teaching music showed *Instructional Materials* and *Assessment* and they considered it A Problem. It means that teachers encountered challenges especially the unavailability of instructional materials in schools and issues in administering the assessment in Music to pupils. It implies that inadequate instructional materials and assessment tools are the factors why teachers cannot deliver instruction effectively and efficiently to the learners. This finding supports the result of the study of Manila (2020), who investigated the challenges faced by teachers in teaching Music and disclosed that the teachers have insufficient knowledge of the content and pedagogy of Music at the elementary level. Moreover, the teachers' lack of knowledge on the subject, the negative attitude of pupils towards the subject, the lack of facilities, and the lack of teaching resources/materials were the main challenges faced by teachers in teaching music.

Table 2. *Challenges Experienced by Teachers in Teaching Music*

<i>Items</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Knowledge	3.43	.94
Strategies	3.22	.96
Instructional Materials	4.07	.99
Assessment	3.55	.86
Grand Mean & Average Standard Deviation	3.57	.94

Coping Mechanisms Utilized by Teachers to Address the Challenges Experiences in Teaching Music



Table 3. *Coping Mechanisms Utilized by Teachers to Address the Challenges Experienced in Teaching Music*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Engage in Continuous Professional Development.	250	1
Download different apps with regards to music.	241	2
Use technology to facilitate music composition.	240	3
Sing with the aid of a CD/USB with children.	236	4
Ask assistance from MAPEH teachers who are experts in music.	226	5
Be innovative and resourceful.	218	6
Self-education through tutorial from you tube.	203	7
Mentor/Buddy teacher support.	201	8
Team Teaching.	195	9
Interpret music by clapping, snapping, tapping, whistling, humming and stomping.	166	10
Enhance knowledge in music by reading more books.	160	11

Rank from highest to lowest, the item which engaged in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) got the highest rank. It indicates that CPD is essential in addressing the challenges experienced by teachers in teaching music. It implies that the teachers' knowledge could be enhanced through CPD, and they can perform and teach Music better. The second coping mechanism utilized by the respondents is downloading *different apps with regard to Music*. It means that various apps could also be a big help for teachers in imparting knowledge to children. It implies that these suggestions should be considered and given attention to address the needs of the teachers. The least of the coping mechanism utilized by the teachers is *enhancing knowledge of Music by reading more books*. It means that teachers are not contented with reading books and want more activities that will develop and hone their skills in teaching Music. It implies that teachers need training and workshops to enhance and develop their competencies and skills in teaching Music.

This supports the statement of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation (2017) which states that there are crises of continuing professional development at all levels, where many teachers are not engaged in regular CPD, networks, professional conversations about Music, nor even keeping up their own musical skills and practice. Primary teacher confidence about teaching/supporting Music continues to be a major concern, and engagement in CPD, networks, and professional conversations about Music is low.

Difference Between the Level of Teachers' Competencies by Sex



Table 4. *Difference Between the Level of Teachers' Competencies by Sex*

Competencies	Sex	N	Mean Rank	F	p-value
Basic Knowledge in Teaching Music	Male	47	176.61	-1.967	0.49
	Female	259 306	149.31		
Total Musical Ability	Male	47	171.68	1.533	.125
	Female	259 306	150.20		
Total Pedagogy	Male	47	170.28	1.423	.155
	Female	259 306	150.46		
Total Assessment	Male	47	162.04	-.725	.468
	Female	259 306	151.95		
Total					

The findings revealed that male and female teachers do not differ in their musical competencies in teaching Music. It is presented that teachers' competencies obtained the p-value is greater than the level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis, which states no significant difference between the teachers' competencies when grouped according to sex, is not rejected. It means that regardless of the sex of the respondents, their competency in Music does not differ. It implies that male and female teachers have similar competencies, abilities, and skills in Music.

This finding is congruent with the study of Uzunboylu et al. (2011) on the evaluation of the professional special-field competencies of all the secondary school, lycee, and vocational school music teachers. It was revealed that the sex of the music teachers did not reveal significant differences with regard to special-field competencies. Furthermore, it has also been established that the professional special-field competency perceptions of music teachers are generally at an adequate level.

Difference Between the Level of Teachers' Competencies by Length of Service

The results disclosed that the p-values obtained in the teachers' competencies in teaching Music regarding the length of service are greater than the arbitrarily chosen significance level. Thus, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference between the musical competencies of teachers when grouped according to the length of service, is not rejected. It means there is no significant difference between the teachers' competencies when grouped according to the length of service. It implies that the number of years teaching Music does not guarantee the effectiveness of a teacher's teaching in Music and having a high level of competency. Further, whether a teacher has been teaching Music for a long time does not matter when evaluated in terms of their musical ability, knowledge, and pedagogy in Music. This finding is parallel to the study of Atilano (2018) which states that a teacher's level of competency in teaching music cannot be measured as to the elongated service of teachers in the educational institution compared to the idealistic and dynamic rookie.

Table 5. *Difference Between the Level of Teachers' Competencies by Length of Service*

Competencies	Length of Service	N	Mean Rank	F	DF	p-value
Basic Knowledge in Teaching Music	3-10	164	156.06	7.288	3	.063
	11-20	86	147.40			
	21-30	44	134.17			
	31 and above	11	208.14			
		306				
Total Musical Ability	3-10	164	162.00	7.495	3	.058
	11-20	86	143.64			
	21-30	44	130.70			
	31 and above	11	191.00			
		306				
Total Pedagogy	3-10	164	157.78	3.052	3	.384
	11-20	86	149.38			
	21-30	44	138.13			
	31 and above	11	181.59			
		306				
Total Assessment	3-10	164	157.57	1.996	3	.573

11-20	86	142.11
21-30	44	157.31
31 and above	11	163.45
Total	306	

Conclusion

Based on the research results, the following conclusions are formulated.

The teachers are competent in musical symbols, listening to and appreciating Music, and utilizing different types of assessment. They consider themselves moderately competent in basic knowledge, musical ability, and pedagogy of teaching music. They experienced challenges in the areas of knowledge, strategies, instructional materials, and assessment; however, engagement in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is one of their coping mechanisms utilized to address those challenges.

There is no significant difference between the teacher's competency in teaching Music when grouped according to age, sex, and length of service. Also, there is no significant difference between the teachers' competency in terms of musical ability and assessment when grouped according to the highest educational attainment. While there is a significant difference between basic knowledge and assessment when grouped according to the highest educational attainment of teachers.

There is a significant relationship between the level of teachers' competency in basic knowledge and musical ability and the challenges experienced by teachers in terms of knowledge, strategies, instructional materials, and assessment. In contrast, there is no significant relationship between the level of teachers' competency in pedagogy and assessment and the challenges experienced by teachers in terms of knowledge, strategies, instructional materials, and assessment.

In the light of the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are drawn:

For Possible Courses of Action:

1. The principal should make a Program Plan of

Action to address the lack of teachers to teach Music, including training and seminars for them to become better in their teaching of Music.

2. Administrators should also include in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) plans and programs to hone the knowledge and skills of teachers in teaching Music.

3. Teachers should be creative and innovative in utilizing the technology to impart an interesting, enjoyable, and meaningful music learning experience to pupils in Music.

4. The Department of Education administrators should provide regular and well-organized in-service training to enhance teachers' mastery of the content and application of different methods and strategies in teaching Music.

5. The Department of Education should allocate a budget to purchase instructional materials and facilities for practical aspects of the music subject in every school.

6. The Department of Education should revisit the tertiary curriculum and include music education to prepare teachers to teach Music.

7. The Secretary of Education should provide trainings to elementary school teachers to address their challenges in teaching Music.

8. School heads and teachers should initiate programs promoting Music, such as school chorale, instrument ensemble, and glee club, to develop learners' interest in the subject.

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