

## **Implementation of the Special Program in the Arts Curriculum in a Public Secondary School**

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### **Abstract**

This article summarizes the results of a qualitative descriptive research that examines how a public secondary school in Manila is implementing the curriculum of its Special Program in the Arts.

The findings of the research initially described the curriculum of the Special Program in the Arts based on its objectives, selection of content, organization of learning experiences, and evaluation. This provided a rich background for exploring the curriculum implementation process of the program.

Examining the various aspects of the program's curriculum implementation revealed that the Special Program in the Arts includes practices that are different from what is required in the program's implementing guidelines. Despite the program's success in implementing its admissions process, deficiencies in attaining the desired results were noted in the aspects of available resources and support systems. The study also indicated the challenges of implementing the curriculum of the Special Program in the Arts. Lack of funding, concerns over the administrative structure, and low enrollment rate have shown to hinder the program from achieving high levels of curriculum implementation. Findings from the class observations conducted also showed that there was a positive interaction resulting from the learning experiences provided to the

students of the Special Program in the Arts. It was evident that the students, despite their diverse characteristics, were responsive to instruction in varying levels of learning ability.

Throughout the study, valuable insights have been noted on how factors such as the teacher, learner, learning environment, resources, and pedagogy have influenced the curriculum implementation of the Special Program in the Arts.

### **Introduction**

Research on curriculum implementation is a relatively new phenomenon and has not been a major focus among curriculum experts until the late sixties and early seventies (Snyder, et. al., 1989). Hence, additional studies on the topic such as this research examining the curriculum implementation of the Special Program in the Arts are vital towards further improving the field of curriculum studies.

Art, in virtually all of its forms, is one of the most fascinating educational topics. However, the arts have never gained a major place in either public school curricula or educational research, even if specialists in art education have been active for many years and the fine arts are generally recognized as important aspects of past and present culture (Gehlback, 1990).

The same thing can be said about the Philippines. With the general practice of standardized education and its current national curriculum, Philippine public secondary schools have experienced reduced classroom time devoted to the arts in order to provide more attention to the basic competencies such as English, Math, and Science. This is despite emerging education programs centered in the arts being recognized for their contribution in realizing the full potential of learning. Research such as that of Catterall (1998), Heath (1998), and Burton et. al. (2000) found significant relationships between

engagement in the arts and academic achievements.

In 2000, the Department of Education launched in the Special Program in the Arts. This nationwide program aims to foster the potentials of artistically-inclined students. Public high schools that offer this program are selected based on the criteria established by the Department of Education. The Special Program in the Arts implements a secondary education curriculum with an additional subject that is centered in the arts. With the K-12 curriculum, the Special Program for the Arts remains as part of the Philippine Education System under "Programs for the Gifted and the Talented" according to the Implementing Guidelines for the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013. However, the said implementing guidelines did not include specific provisions on how the program is to be carried out.

This study examined how the curriculum is being implemented in a public secondary school that offers the Special Program in the Arts in the National Capital Region. The research tried to verify if the curriculum is being implemented as planned by describing the aspects of content, admissions, pedagogy, resources, and student performance as means of reviewing the implementation process of the curriculum.

Examining the implementation of the curriculum being used by the Special Program in the Arts is important since there is a lack of studies about it despite its more than a decade of existence. The curriculum of the Special Program in the Arts is unlikely to achieve its desired aims unless it is implemented as intended. This is even more crucial with the curricular change brought about by the K-12 program.

The study looked into how the curriculum of the Special Program in the Arts is being implemented by going over the content of the program, describing the program's objectives, selecting and organizing learning experiences, and evaluating student performance. The curriculum implementation practices of the Special Program in the Arts was outlined

according to the aspects of student admissions, teacher qualifications, pedagogy, support systems provided, and available resources. The study also highlighted the challenges being encountered in implementing the curriculum of the Special Program for the Arts as well as the performance of students under the program.

### *Understanding the curriculum implementation*

The implementation phase of a curriculum refers to its actual use. It is the stage when the educational program is put into effect. Since putting the curriculum into operation requires an implementing agent, Stenhouse (1979) emphasized that the teacher is a vital agent in the curriculum implementation process. Stenhouse further noted that implementation is the manner in which the teacher selects and mixes the various aspects of knowledge contained in a curriculum document or syllabus.

Implementation takes place when the teacher-constructed syllabus, the teacher's personality, the teaching materials, and the teaching environment interact with the learner (University of Zimbabwe, 1995). Curriculum implementation therefore refers to how the planned or officially designed course of study is translated by the teacher into syllabi, schemes of work, and lessons to be delivered to students.

Another point made by Stenhouse (1979) is the need for research and evaluation in order to achieve quality curriculum implementation. This includes teacher development in the implementation process. The process of implementation refers to specific local conditions and to process experiences of the persons involved.

However, Ornstein and Hunkins (1988) pointed out that curriculum implementation is often overlooked as a crucial stage. They also emphasized that in order for curriculum implementation to be successful, it is necessary to define the important stages of implementation even during early curriculum development.

There are various factors that influence curriculum implementation. According to the Centre for Distance Education, University of Zimbabwe (1995), such factors are as follows:

1. The Teacher – The role of teachers in curriculum implementation is autonomous. From the contents of the syllabus or curriculum, the teachers select and decide on what to teach. The process of curriculum implementation happens when the learners interact with the planned learning opportunities, in which the teachers play an important part. This being said, teachers must be involved in curriculum planning and development so that they can implement and modify the curriculum for the benefit of their learners.
2. The Learner – As an integral part of the curriculum implementation process, the learners serve as the recipients of what is transmitted from the intended curriculum. Since the intended curriculum might be different from what is being implemented, it is the learners that the teacher would take into consideration when choosing the learning experiences. This emphasizes the importance of understanding the diverse characteristics of learners such as family background and learning ability.
3. Resource Materials and Facilities – Curriculum implementation will be delivered as planned if there is an adequate supply of resources such as books, teaching aids, and other materials that will help both the teacher and the learner to function in the curriculum implementation process.
4. The School Environment – The specific circumstances of a school influence curriculum implementation. For example, schools that are located in a socio-economic environment that has sufficient resources will be able to implement the curriculum to a better extent compared to schools in a poor socio-economic location.

5. Culture and Ideology – Cultural and ideological differences within a society or country can also influence curriculum implementation. Some communities may resist a domineering culture or government.

Other literature strongly supports these factors. Burton, Horowitz and Abeles (1999) emphasized the need for well-educated teachers in order to make the most out of implementing an arts curriculum. They added that these teachers should be reflective thinkers and practitioners at the same time, with experience in teaching arts, and the willingness to learn other disciplines.

Meanwhile, according to Mahan and Gill (1972), insufficient resources such as equipment and facilities can lead to lack of energy and discouragement among teachers. The same claim was asserted by Cay in 1966, citing that the provision of professional resources encourages teachers to improve themselves and their teaching practices.

Synder, Bolin and Zumwalt (1989) enumerated more factors that affect curriculum implementation other than those related to the change process. According to them, curriculum implementation is also influenced by factors in the school level as well as the external environment:

#### School Level Factors

1. The Role of the Principal – The degree of curriculum implementation increases with the active support of the school principal.
2. Teacher to Teacher Relationship – A greater degree of curriculum implementation is achieved if collegiality, trust, support, interaction, and open communication among teachers are high.
3. Teacher Characteristics and Orientation – High level of curriculum implementation can be associated with good teacher efficacy.

Gross, Giacquinta, and Bernstein (1971) also included lack of knowledge and skills among teachers as inhibitor of curriculum implementation.

#### External Environment Factors

1. Government Agencies – Degree of implementation also depends on the needs of the locality as well as corresponding reforms.
2. External Assistance – Integration with the local school district depicts a high degree of implementation.

### **Methodology**

This study employed a qualitative research design to comprehensively describe the curriculum implementation of the Special Program in the Arts. This research ensured the coverage of the data gathered by studying the pioneer Special Program in the Arts school in the National Capital Region that offered a full scale of specialization majors. This study employed a qualitative research design to comprehensively describe the curriculum implementation of the Special Program in the Arts. This research ensured the coverage of the data gathered by studying the pioneer Special Program in the Arts school in the National Capital Region that offered a full scale of specialization majors.

The study commenced by analyzing of the curriculum documents obtained from the Department of Education and the proponent school in order to gather preliminary data. These curriculum documents included, but were not limited to, memorandums, implementing guidelines, school profile, and sample course guides.

The researcher proceeded with interviewing selected teachers of the Special Program in the Arts. Among the eight teachers in the program, five were interviewed. Three of the interviewees were pioneer teachers who have been part of the program since its pilot implementation.

Class observations were also conducted to monitor the performance of students.

Through class observations, the researcher gathered data on the learning experiences being provided to the students.

The data gathered from the proponent school became inputs to interpret the program's curriculum implementation practices. Results of the class observation and interview underwent validation, analysis, and interpretation using accepted methods in qualitative research.

For analyzing the notes from the class observations, and responses of the respondents to the interview questions, the researcher used constant comparison method developed by Anselm Strauss (1965). This method of analysis for qualitative research that is widely used in the 1960's entails finding categories from the data gathered to generate as codes. For this study, the researcher went over the field notes and interview transcripts and looked for indicators of categories.

In order to clarify commonalities or differences between major categories, the codes were compared. Consistencies between codes as revealed by having the same idea or pointing to the same idea indicated emerging categories. Categories were already saturated if no new codes were formed.

## **Discussion of results**

### *Content of the Special Program in the Arts Curriculum*

The first part of this study described the curriculum of the Special Program in the Arts. Based on the analysis of the curriculum documents gathered, the Special Program in the Arts can be considered a success when it comes to realizing the cultural component of Philippine education goals. The vision and accompanying objectives of the program are aligned towards nationalism and appreciation of heritage.

The vision of the Special Program in the Arts as defined by the Department of Education in Enclosure No. 1 to DepEd Memorandum No. 335, series of 2004 is to create young artists with aesthetic potentials that will contribute in preserving the Filipino culture and heritage. The researcher considers the emphasis of the program's vision as a realization to the cultural component that is lacking in Philippine education goals. According to a study referenced by Cortes in 1987, Philippine education is more focused on meeting social and economic aspects while the cultural component is left behind.

It is also evident that the vision of the Special Program in the Arts is aligned to national goals of education. The State shall ensure equal access to cultural opportunities through the educational system, public or private cultural entities, scholarships and other incentives (Constitutional Commission, 1986). Based on its vision, the Special Program in the Arts provides exposure to these cultural opportunities.

When it comes to the selection and organization of learning experiences, the findings offer that the Special Program in the Arts generally employs a subject-based curriculum design that is sequenced spirally. Learning experiences in the program are grouped according to traditional academic disciplines with an additional specialization subject. Table 1 lists these specialized subjects and their objectives.

Table 1  
*Objectives of Each Specialization Major in the Special Program in the Arts*

| <b>Specialization</b> | <b>Objectives</b>   | <b>Emphasis of Statement</b>                 |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Music                 | Offer a program designed for students with interest and talent in vocal or instrumental music.  | Intended students of the program             |
| Visual Arts           | Help students discover what they can produce through creativity with local arts such as painting, creative crafts and sculpting, etc. | Intended content and delivery of instruction |
| Theater Arts          | Emphasize group work and live performance on spoken text in a number of styles and genres in theater.                                 |  |
| Media Arts            | Teach students to use elements and tools of current emerging technologies to create works and express feelings.                       | Skills that the program intends to develop   |
| Dance                 | Develop techniques, movement, vocabulary, and a deeper understanding of dance as a form of communication and expression.              |  |

Table 2 compares the Special Program in the Arts with the regular secondary program. It would seem that the same competencies are being studied for every year level with a gradual increase in depth and difficulty (see Table 2). However, interviews with the teachers revealed that the prescribed learning experiences for the specialization subject, supposedly contained in a course guide, are not comprehensive and a mere list of topics. This resulted in teachers deviating from the course guide and deciding what to teach on their own.

When asked how they deviate, the teachers interviewed responded that they add topics and activities in order to address the vague content of the course guide. Such can be considered as a factor that affects the level of curriculum implementation as the learning experiences intended for the program should serve the objectives (Taba, 1962).

Table 2  
*Comparison of the Special Program in the Arts and Regular Secondary Education*

| Special Program for the Arts |  |                 |                 |                 |       | Secondary Education Curriculum<br>(Regular Program) |                     |                 |                 |                 |       |
|------------------------------|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------|---|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------|
| Subjects                     | Credit Units Earned                            |                 |                 |                 |       | Subjects  | Credit Units Earned |                 |                 |                 |       |
|                              | 1 <sup>st</sup>                                | 2 <sup>nd</sup> | 3 <sup>rd</sup> | 4 <sup>th</sup> | Total |   | 1 <sup>st</sup>     | 2 <sup>nd</sup> | 3 <sup>rd</sup> | 4 <sup>th</sup> | Total |
| English                      | 1.5  | 1.5             | 1.5             | 1.5             | 6.0   | English   | 1.5                 | 1.5             | 1.5             | 1.5             | 6.0   |
| Science                      | 1.8  | 1.8             | 1.8             | 1.8             | 7.2   | Science   | 1.8                 | 1.8             | 1.8             | 1.8             | 7.2   |
| Math                         | 1.5  | 1.5             | 1.5             | 1.5             | 6.0   | Math  | 1.5                 | 1.5             | 1.5             | 1.5             | 6.0   |
| Filipino                     | 1.2  | 1.2             | 1.2             | 1.2             | 4.8   | Filipino  | 1.2                 | 1.2             | 1.2             | 1.2             | 4.8   |
| Makabayan                    |  |                 |                 |                 |       | Makabayan   |                     |                 |                 |                 |       |
| Social Studies               |  |                 |                 |                 |       | Social Studies                                      |                     |                 |                 |                 |       |
| TLE/Journalism               | N/A  |                 |                 |                 |       | TLE/Journalism                                      |                     |                 |                 |                 |       |
| MAPEH                        |  |                 |                 |                 |       | MAPEH   |                     |                 |                 |                 |       |
| Values Education             | N/A (integrated in the specialization subject) |                 |                 |                 |       | Values Education                                    |                     |                 |                 |                 |       |
| Specialization               | 3.0  | 3.0             | 3.0             | 3.0             | 12.0  | Specialization                                      | N/A                 |                 |                 |                 |       |

The specialization subject is where the students interact with the learning experiences intended for the arts. It is structured following the qualities of a humanistic learner-centered design that requires the development of self as the ultimate objective of learning (Maslow, 1954). In order to master an art skill, students engage in repetitive drills such as rehearsals or output production. Teachers have been observed to put significant emphasis on individuality and subjectivity in class during instruction and assessment.

Meanwhile, to evaluate its students, the Special Program in the Arts uses the grading system of the current secondary education curriculum that requires standardized periodic examinations for academic subjects. In their specialization class, however, students of the Special Program in the Arts undergo output-based or performance-based assessments. Teachers have expressed their difficulty in measuring a performance or output due to the subjective nature of art activities in class. According to Mumford and Hendricks (1996), it is important to determine first what types of outcomes should be measured. It is evident in the Special Program in the Arts that evaluation of students is more inclined towards assessing skills, attitudes, and aspirations than measuring knowledge.

#### *Curriculum Implementation of the Special Program in the Arts*

The second part of this study is identifying how curriculum implementation takes place in the Special Program in the Arts. Guided by different aspects of implementation, the gathered data compared the intended and the actual practice.

An aspect of curriculum implementation is admission of students to the Special Program in the Arts. To qualify, a student should have passed the High School Readiness Test (HSRT) and should have garnered at least an 82% average in elementary school. As stipulated in the implementing guidelines of the Special Program in the Arts, the admissions process of the program is divided in two phases. The first phase is the High School Occupational Interest Inventory or HSOII. The HSOII is an inventory of what interest student may have about tasks and occupation, and their feelings about them. The second phase of the admissions process is the art test conducted by teachers in the Special Program in the Arts who act as examiners. The art test is a practical test which may be a performance, written output, artwork, or interview depending on the major aspired by the student. Students are allowed to have a first choice and second choice for their aspired specialization major. The assessment criteria used during the art test

depends on the aspired major which uses a uniform 5-point scale.

On the other hand, the qualification of teachers under the Special Program in the Arts of the public secondary school selected for this study was determined using a profile questionnaire. Only two out of the five teacher respondents have met the qualifications indicated in the implementing guidelines.

The implementing guidelines of the Special Program in the Arts have stipulated the following qualifications for teachers that will implement the program:

- BSE or BS graduate with major in the subject to be handled;
- LET passer or any government eligibility
- Trained in Teacher Arts or Literary Arts (for English and Filipino)
- Holder of Bachelor of Music degree or its equivalent or has undergone special training in Music (for Music)
- Practicing artist or art education (for Arts)
- Strongly interested in the arts
- Committed to implement the program

It can be noted that the teachers who did not meet the minimum qualifications were those who have been previously teaching regular academic subjects but were transferred to the program when it was launched in 2000. The interviewees narrated that they were only informed about having assigned to teach the program on the day of the training held in Baguio.

This adaptability shown by senior teachers of the Special Program in the Arts by attending relevant trainings in order to upgrade their knowledge and skills reflects the claim of Burton, Horowitz and Abeles in 1999 regarding the importance of having teachers in an art program who are willing to learn across disciplines.

Also, characteristics and orientation of teachers play an important role in curriculum implementation. Gross, Giacquinta and Bernsteine (1971) noted that curriculum implementation can be inhibited by the lack of skills and knowledge among teachers. This explains the attitudes of teachers, particularly those who did not meet the qualifications of the implementing guidelines, towards being receptive to attend more training. In the absence of an established educational background, teachers at the least should have attended a significant number of trainings as a mandated by the implementing guidelines of the Special Program in the Arts.

In terms of teaching strategies and instructional methods, the teachers do not have a prescribed way of teaching. They are also not required to submit lesson plans. From this, it can be noted that teachers of the Special Program in the Arts are given leeway as far as instruction is concerned. Since there is a possibility that the intended curriculum is different from what is being implemented, the teachers are tasked to choose learning experiences that will benefit the learners. High level of curriculum implementation can be associated with good teacher efficacy (Synder et al., 1989). Teachers in the Special Program in the Arts, despite lack of formal exposure in art pedagogy, are able to adapt by using their personal approaches to teaching.

For support systems, teachers interviewed cited that trainings are primarily what they receive. However, the lack of budget for the program hinders trainings to be completely provided. Sebastian (2012) on his research about the Special Program in the Arts in Region II already stated the importance of support systems that are provided to the schools. He emphasized that there is a need to conduct monitoring and assessment of the program particularly on the attainment of objectives, teacher competence,



methodology, learning resources, venue, and evaluation process in order to assess progress and provide intervention when necessary.

When it comes to available resources, the Special Program in the Arts of the public secondary school studied, is way behind the

facilities and equipment expected of the program (see Table 3).

Previous literature suggests that adequacy of resources such as facilities and instructional equipment is an important factor in ensuring that a curriculum is being implemented as planned as it helps both the teacher and learner to function in the process.

Table 3  
*Instructional Equipment of the Special Program in the Arts*

| Required Instructional Equipment | Quantity Available | Remarks  |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|--|
| 8 cassette tape recorders        | 0                  | For activities that require recording, the VCD player is used. |
| 2 VCD players                    | 1                  | Assigned to the Dance specialization.                          |
| 2 VHS players                    | 0                  |  |
| 2 television sets                | 0                  |  |
| 1 slide projector                | 1                  | Assigned to the MAPEH Department.                              |
| 1 moving camera                  | 1                  | Assigned to the Media Arts specialization.                     |
| 4 still cameras with accessories | 0                  |  |

The current condition of the Special Program in the Arts when it comes to available resources can affect teacher performance. Mahan and Gill (1972) pointed out that non-existence of facilities and equipment can discourage teachers and result to their lack of energy. Cay (1966) further cited that provision of professional resources motivates teachers to improve themselves as well as their teaching practices.

*Problems Encountered in the Implementation of the Special Program in the Arts*

The third part of this study is determining the significant challenges in implementing the curriculum.

Lack of funding was found to be a unanimous inhibitor in curriculum implementation according to teachers of the

Special Program in the Arts who participated in the interview. The lack of facilities, shortage in instructional equipment and materials, as well as missed training opportunities, were attributed by teachers to the lack of funding being experienced by the school's Special Program in the Arts.

The public secondary school which served as the venue for this research is one of the pilot schools to implement the Special Program in the Arts, hence entitling them to a PHP 500,000 fund allocation. This annual budget is primarily used by the program to upgrade facilities and purchase supplies. What remains of the amount is spent for sending Special Program in the Arts teachers to relevant trainings and conferences.

However, for the past two years since the said budget was given to a different school which recently opened its own Special

Program in the Arts (DepEd Order No. 56, series of 2012). The sudden budget cut resulted to difficulty of the school administration in addressing the needs for repairs and replenishing of instructional materials. It also largely affected the training of teachers as they failed to attend the *Sining Pambansa* to represent the National Capital Region.

This situation is where the external environment, as suggested by Synder, Bolin, and Zumwalt (1989), can be considered as a factor responsible for the insufficient funding of the Special Program in the Arts. According to the authors, government agencies and external assistance play a major role in determining the level of curriculum implementation. In the case of the Special Program in the Arts, the Department of Education through its Bureau of Secondary Education influences the degree of curriculum implementation by addressing the needs of the school and initiating reforms.

Another problem highlighted from the interviews is in line with the administration of the program. Teachers have expressed their concerns regarding the autonomy of the program when it comes to administration. These teachers feel that the current administrative setup is spreading itself too thinly in comparison to other specialized art schools with an independent administration. One of the teachers interviewed noted that an independent administration, headed by someone familiar to the program instead of a principal who they believe is more inclined towards academic achievements, is the ideal setup for the program.

Lastly, the interviews revealed that the Special Program in the Arts of the public secondary school studied is beset by low turnout of applicants that consequently lead to low enrollment. The program's implementing guidelines allow a maximum of 16 students for every specialization. However, data gathered on the student population of the Special Program in the Arts show that the average class size is only 9 students, with some specialization majors

experiencing zero enrollment in one year level.

Literature suggests that factors such as the school environment as well as culture and ideology (University of Zimbabwe, 1995) influence implementation. In the aspect of admissions, the socio-economic location of the public secondary school has considerable effects in the enrollment of its Special Program in the Arts. Situated in a non-residential area, its community offers low to no involvement in spreading awareness about the program.

#### *Performance of Students During Curriculum Implementation*

In order to describe the performance of students during the curriculum implementation process, the researcher gathered data through class observations. One class for every specialization was visited by the researcher. Through the themes that emerged from the field notes, the curriculum being implemented affects the students in two ways, namely; the level of independence provided to the students and the behavior students illicit towards instruction.

Students who are in the non-performing arts, which include the specializations Visual Arts, Creative Writing, and Media Arts, showed high level of independence. After being provided with the parameters of the activity, students are left to work on their own. The teacher periodically goes around and gives feedback and monitors progress. It is common during the class observations that students in the non-performing arts specializations approach the teachers for questions and clarifications.

On the other hand, performing arts students, or those who specialize in Music, Theater Arts and Dance, are dependent on the instructions of their teachers during the actual activity. Since their class activities are rehearsals, they are given comments, corrections, and feedback as the performance takes place.

The class observations conducted also show that students under the Special Program in the Arts display pleasant behavior in the

classroom. The teachers having to remind students to halt unnecessary actions such as talking loudly or loitering are kept at a minimum, if not at all.

The desirable traits of students in the classroom can be attributed to the nature of the activities provided in the specialization classes, which are experiential and output-based. As noted earlier in the discussion of the program's admissions process, the students decide on the specialization they want to major in based on their interests and skills. Since their respective specialization classes are geared towards activities that interest them, the students perform with a high level of concentration. This observation is supported by studies such as that of Chen (2001) that identifies interests and goals as two important motivational factors that influence engagement and achievement in learning.

## Conclusions

Despite claims that art is not taken as a serious field of study (De Vera, 1996), the establishment of the Special Program in the Arts can be considered as a sign of success when it comes to realizing the cultural component of Philippine education goals. The objectives of the program are aligned towards nationalism and appreciation of heritage.

However, the research reveals that the Special Program in the Arts curriculum in the public secondary school studied is not being implemented as planned. Discrepancies have been clearly noted between the implementing guidelines developed by the Department of Education's Bureau of Secondary Education for the Special Program in the Arts and the actual implementation that is taking place.

Problems that affect the program's level of curriculum implementation such as the inadequacy of facilities, equipment, and materials were identified in this study. Despite these hindrances, the adaptability and resources of teachers to maximize what

the learning environment provides are very evident.

The study also provided valuable insights on how the factors such as the teacher, learner, learning environment, resources, and pedagogy have influenced various aspects of curriculum implementation. While one factor influences a certain aspect of curriculum implementation of the Special Program in the Arts more than the other, it is evident that these factors affect the process in an interrelated manner.

## Recommendations

### 1. **There is a need to review the existing implementing guidelines of the Special Program in the Arts.**

Due to the differences noted between the intended practice and the actual implementation, the Special Program in the Arts could use an updated set of implementing guidelines to address the gap. A comprehensive curriculum evaluation of the program should be conducted to revisit various aspects of the implementing guidelines such as admissions, qualification of teachers, provision of resources, and classroom instruction.

### 2. **There is a need to address the lack of facilities, equipment, and materials through consistent funding.**

Allocation of a regular annual budget for the Special Program in the Arts will provide solutions to multiple issues that the program is experiencing, primarily when it comes to availability of resources such as facilities, equipment, and materials. The researcher recommends that the budget for the program remain intact and independent from other public secondary schools implementing a parallel program. It is also imperative to ensure that the current acquisitions for the program are still up to date and fully utilized.

**3. There is a need to provide continuous trainings and other forms of support systems for teachers.**

Skills and experience of teachers dictate the level of curriculum implementation. Hence, regularly sending teachers of the Special Program in the Arts to relevant trainings will translate to higher efficacy in classroom pedagogy as well as in being a general agent of the curriculum implementation process. This can come in a form of in-service trainings, legitimate certification programs, or graduate studies that will further improve the qualifications of Special Program in the Arts teachers. Other support systems such as exposure to new technology will help teachers expand their range of capabilities.

**4. There is a need to develop a clear and comprehensive course guide.**

To address the gap between the intended learning experiences and what is being delivered in the classroom, part of reviewing the implementing guidelines of the Special program in the Arts should include the development of an intensive course guide with the participation of teachers in the program. The development process should require the participation and involvement of teachers from the Special Program in the Arts.

A clear and comprehensive course guide for the Special Program in the Arts is significant in order to delineate and distinguish the program's content and learning experiences from that of the MAPEH and MAKABAYAN. The content of the Special Program in the Arts should be distinct to establish its identity as an exclusive program.

**5. There is a need to develop evaluation tools that will effectively assess and measure student performance**

Through the use of evaluation tools specifically developed for the program, teachers will be able to establish parameters that will serve as reference in grading students. Since activities in the program are dominantly outputs and performances that are subjective in nature, the use of specialized evaluation tools will provide basis for interpreting student outputs.

**6. There is a need to disseminate awareness about the program to generate more enrollees.**

In order to improve its student population rate, the Special Program in the Arts should spearhead initiatives to spread awareness about the program. Schools offering Special Program in the Arts can coordinate with elementary schools in their respective regions and conduct information campaigns to draw in qualified students.

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