

# Arnis in Physical Activities Towards Health and Fitness (Pathfit) 3 and 4 Courses: A Deep Dive into Faculty Experiences in Teaching Arnis

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## Abstract

Filipino Martial Arts (FMA), or Arnis, embodies the rich martial arts heritage of the Philippines, utilizing various weapons for combat and self-defense (Martin et al., 2018). Recognized as the national martial art and sport through Republic Act 9850 in 2009, Arnis has since gained a formal place in education. This study explores faculty experiences teaching Arnis in Physical Activities Towards Health and Fitness (PATHFit) 3 and 4 courses across colleges and universities in Central Luzon (Region III). Employing Colaizzi's 7-step phenomenological technique, with data gathered through interviews and audio-visual recordings, the study uncovers five key themes: (1) The Pedagogical and Cultural Significance of Including Arnis in the Curriculum (2) Enhancing Student Safety and Holistic Development through Arnis (3) Fostering Social Connections, Personal Growth, and Cultural Integration through Arnis (4) Addressing Challenges and Promoting Engagement in Arnis Education and, (5) Enhancing the Teaching and Promotion. Findings revealed that Arnis education transcends physical instruction, fostering cultural pride, resilience, and personal growth among educators and students. Faculty members experienced professional transformation, adopting innovative teaching methods to sustain cultural heritage while addressing modern educational demands. For students, integrating Arnis into PATHFit courses boosted confidence, discipline, and community involvement, strengthening their cultural identity. This study underscores the significance of Arnis as a culturally relevant educational tool that bridges traditional practices with contemporary fitness education. The findings advocate for the development of dynamic, culturally inclusive curricula and faculty training programs, ensuring the sustained relevance of Arnis in academic and societal contexts. By preserving this martial art, educators can inspire both personal development and community cohesion, reinforcing Arnis as a symbol of Filipino identity.

**Keywords:** Arnis, Filipino Martial Arts (FMA), PATHFit courses, transformative cultural preservation, transformative experiences, Arnis Education, Martial Arts



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## INTRODUCTION

Filipino Martial Arts (FMA), particularly Arnis, is a martial art unique to the Philippines, blending cultural significance, historical value, and practical self-defense techniques. Originating from indigenous Filipino communities, Arnis was originally developed as a means of warfare and self-protection, utilizing various weapons such as rattan sticks, swords, daggers, and spears (Martin et al., 2018). The martial art, also known by various names including Eskrima, Kali, and Kuntaw, reflects the diverse cultural and linguistic traditions across the Philippines (Republic Act No. 9850, 2009).

In recognition of its cultural and historical importance, the Philippine government officially declared Arnis as the National Martial Art and Sport through Republic Act No. 9850 in 2009.

This designation aimed to elevate Arnis to a national phenomenon, promoting its practice not only within the Philippines but also on a global stage (Lim, 2018). However, despite this national recognition, Filipino martial arts (FMA) have not achieved the same level of widespread recognition or institutionalization as other Asian martial arts, such as karate and kung fu (Elian, 2013). As reported by the Philippine Philippine Eskrima Kali Arnis Federation (2017), despite the Arnis Law, the growth of Arnis in the Philippines has remained limited, with only a small number of colleges and universities incorporating it into their physical education curricula.

The challenges of integrating Arnis into the educational curriculum stem from several factors. Students, as well as physical educators, are generally more familiar with

traditional sports such as volleyball, basketball, and badminton. Arnis is often perceived as a niche discipline with limited accessibility. In fact, many physical educators feel unprepared to teach martial arts due to a lack of formal training and concerns about safety, as noted by Fuller & Lloyd (2020).

The potential of Arnis to address broader educational and societal goals. For example, martial arts foster important values such as self-discipline, responsibility, and intercultural understanding (Tressie et al., 2019). These values are increasingly important in the context of modern challenges, such as mental health issues and the rise of non-communicable diseases, where physical activity is recognized as crucial for well-being by the World Health Organization (World Health Organization, 2018). However, for Arnis to truly thrive within the educational system, it must overcome the challenges of underrepresentation and limited resources. The study's exploration of faculty members' experiences aims to provide valuable insights into how Arnis instruction can be improved, making it a more integral part of the Filipino educational landscape. The findings could inform future recommendations for policy changes, curriculum development, and teacher training to ensure that Arnis receives the attention and recognition it deserves.

This study explored the experiences of faculty members who taught Arnis in Physical Activities Towards Health and Fitness (PATHFit) 3 or 4 courses at selected colleges and universities in Central Luzon. By conducting in-depth interviews with faculty members who teach Arnis, the research aimed to explore the challenges and benefits they experience in incorporating this martial art into physical education curricula. The study identified several key obstacles faced by instructors, such as varying student skill levels, limited resources, and the need for greater cultural sensitivity. Despite the recognized benefits of FMA, including its ability to foster resilience, cultural pride, and personal development, many institutions have been slow to adopt Arnis, largely due to the dominance of more familiar sports like volleyball, basketball, and

badminton in physical education programs. However, the study highlights the significant potential for Arnis to enrich physical and cultural education by offering an alternative that promotes both fitness and cultural awareness.

A central theme of the study is the adaptability of Arnis within modern educational frameworks. Traditionally, Arnis has been viewed as a historical or cultural practice rather than a dynamic, contemporary educational tool. This research challenges that perception by demonstrating how Arnis can be integrated into physical education courses to align with global health and fitness standards. The study also explored the various benefits faculty members experience in teaching Arnis, including fostering a sense of community among students, witnessing personal growth, and promoting Filipino culture. By triangulating data from interviews, observations, and audio-visual recordings, the research offers a comprehensive understanding of the transformative impact Arnis can have on both educators and students. This approach emphasizes how culturally sensitive teaching techniques can help sustain traditional arts while adhering to modern educational goals.

This study contributes to the expanding research on Arnis by shifting the focus from its traditional use as a martial art for self-defense to its potential as a pedagogical tool within formal education. Previous research, such as that by Martin and Santos (2018), has primarily focused on Arnis' historical and cultural significance, often neglecting its transformative potential in educational settings. By examining how Arnis promotes personal development, resilience, and cultural pride, this study bridges that gap and demonstrates how Arnis can be effectively incorporated into physical education curricula. The research also contests the view of Arnis as a fixed cultural artifact, instead illustrating its adaptability to modern fitness paradigms. This shift in perspective underscores the importance of integrating local traditions like Arnis into educational systems to create more culturally responsive and inclusive curricula.

The study also emphasizes the importance of rethinking physical education curricula, which often prioritize globalized, mainstream sports at the expense of indigenous practices. By incorporating traditional martial arts like Arnis, physical education programs can enrich students' experiences and foster a deeper connection to their cultural heritage. The findings advocate for a broader reconsideration of teaching methodologies, urging educators to blend cultural preservation with contemporary educational objectives. This culturally responsive approach could contribute to students' holistic development, enhancing their physical, mental, and cultural well-being.

The researcher's personal experiences played a significant role in shaping the study's focus. Having observed the absence of Arnis in her previous educational institution—where sports like badminton, volleyball, and basketball dominated the curriculum—the researcher sought to explore the benefits of introducing Arnis as a tool for physical exercise and self-defense. During the pandemic, the researcher took the initiative to learn Arnis, quickly grasping its fundamental principles and recognizing its potential as a means of both fitness and cultural identity-building. This personal exploration led her to conclude that many students could benefit from engaging in Arnis, as it provides not only a physical workout but also an opportunity to strengthen discipline and cultural awareness.

Ultimately, the study advocates for the inclusion of Arnis in educational institutions across the Philippines. By providing insights into the challenges and benefits of teaching Arnis, the research contributes to the broader conversation about how martial arts can be integrated into physical education curricula. This study reinforces the idea that Arnis is not just a physical activity but also a cultural tool capable of fostering national identity, personal development, and resilience. Through its findings, the study encourages the wider acceptance and incorporation of Arnis into the educational system, aiming to secure its place as a cornerstone of Filipino heritage and physical education. The hope is that this

research will inspire greater recognition of Arnis as a valuable addition to the education system, ultimately contributing to the holistic development of Filipino students.

**Statement of Purpose.** This qualitative research aimed to explore the experiences of faculty members who taught Arnis in the Physical Activities Towards Health and Fitness (PATHFit) 3 or 4 courses at selected colleges and universities in Central Luzon. Specifically, it sought to answer the question: What were the experiences of faculty members in teaching Arnis in the Physical Activities Towards Health and Fitness (PATHFit) 3 and 4 courses?

**Scope.** This qualitative research aimed to explore the experiences of faculty members who taught Arnis in Physical Activities Towards Health and Fitness (PATHFit) 3 and 4 courses within the chosen colleges and universities in Central Luzon.

The study was exclusively focused on specific colleges and universities in Central Luzon, and the results may not be applicable to other areas. The sample size was restricted due to the limited availability and willingness of people to partake in the study within a given timeframe, and the resulting findings may not be generalizable to other time periods. Furthermore, the study was dependent on self-reported data provided by the participants, which could be influenced by bias or inaccuracy. Lastly, the study had a limited geographic reach, focusing exclusively on educational institutions or schools that were willing to participate. This may result in the exclusion of a broader range of educational settings.

## METHODOLOGY

**Research Design.** Qualitative research design was selected for this study to provide an in-depth understanding of faculty experiences teaching Arnis within Physical Activity Towards Health and Fitness (PATHFit) 3 and 4 courses. Qualitative research focuses on exploring and understanding human experiences, social phenomena, and behaviors through detailed descriptions and interpretations. Unlike

quantitative research, it emphasizes the depth of participants' lived experiences, attitudes, and perceptions.

Drawing on Hugh (2023), qualitative research offers nuanced insights into individual behaviors, motivations, and interactions, which are critical for understanding the multidimensional role of Arnis in education. Using non-numerical data like interviews, focus groups, and observations, the goal is to uncover meaning, identify patterns, and gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon in its natural context.

**Study Setting.** The researcher selected 10 faculty members from selected universities and colleges in the Central Luzon region (Region III), including Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (Nueva Ecija), Bulacan State University (Bulacan), Tarlac University (Tarlac), and Angeles University Foundation (Pampanga).

**Sampling and Participants.** The study also employed a purposive sampling technique to identify the participants for the study. As stated by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012), purposive sampling is also called judgment sampling, which is based on the premise that seeking out the best cases for the study produces the best data, and research results are a direct result of the cases sampled. Saunders, this is a strategic approach to sampling in which "information-rich cases" are sought out to best address the research purpose and questions. Sampling is a central feature of research design when purposeful strategies are used because the better the participants are positioned in relation to the topic, the richer the data will be.

A cohort of ten faculty members from selected universities and colleges in the Central Luzon region (Region III), including Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (Nueva Ecija), Bulacan State University (Bulacan), Tarlac University (Tarlac), and Angeles University Foundation (Pampanga), were the participants of the study. The distribution of faculty across the universities in the region was

as follows: two faculty members were assigned to institutions in Bulacan, two in Nueva Ecija, three in Tarlac, and three in Pampanga. This allocation brought the total number of faculty members to ten.

The selection was based on specific criteria to ensure that the participants could provide valuable insights into the experiences of teaching Arnis within the Physical Activities Towards Health and Fitness (PATHFit) 3 and 4 courses. First, only faculty members who had taught Arnis as part of the PATHFit program were chosen, as they had direct, relevant experience with the subject matter. This criterion was essential to ensure that the participants had practical knowledge of how Arnis was incorporated into the curriculum and its effects on students.

**Phenomenological Method.** The study utilized Colaizzi's 7-step phenomenological technique, as mentioned. The steps have been meticulously followed to ensure fairness.

Colaizzi's phenomenological method was ideal for this research as it enabled a deep exploration of faculty members' lived experiences in teaching Arnis within PATHFit 3 and 4 courses. Its systematic seven-step approach allowed the study to identify key themes while ensuring interpretations authentically reflected participants' perspectives. By emphasizing personal narratives, the method effectively captured how educators navigate the dual goals of cultural preservation and modern fitness education. This approach provided rich insights into their challenges and transformations, aligning perfectly with the research's focus on understanding the essence and broader implications of teaching Arnis in a formal educational setting.

The subsequent procedures outline the Colaizzi process for analyzing phenomenological data, as referenced in Sanders (2003) and Speziale and Carpenter (2007).

1. It is necessary to carefully read and analyze each transcript multiple times to gain a

comprehensive understanding of the entire content.

2. Extract relevant statements from each transcript that are related to the topic being studied. These remarks should be documented on a separate sheet, indicating the corresponding page and line numbers.

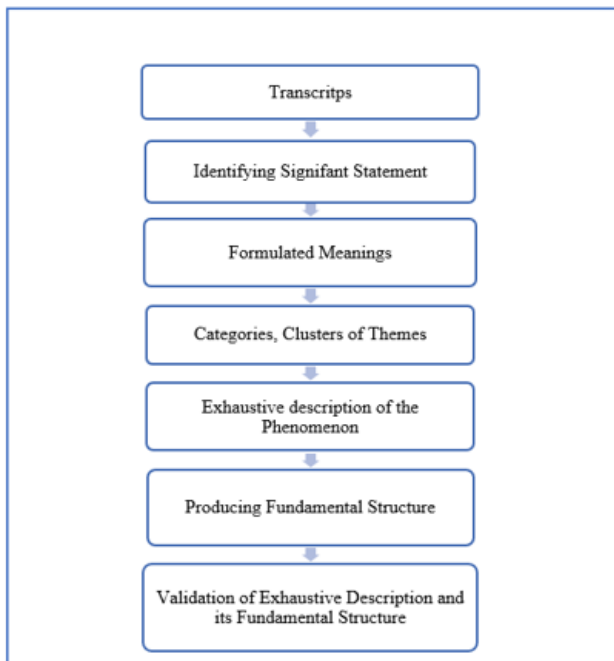


Figure 1  
Flowchart of Colaizzi's 7-step method

3. Meanings should be derived from these important remarks.
4. The derived significances should be organized into categories, clusters of themes, and individual themes.
5. The results of the study should be included in a comprehensive depiction of the phenomenon being investigated.
6. The underlying framework of the phenomenon should be delineated.
7. Ultimately, it is important to seek validation of the findings from the research participants to compare the researcher's descriptive results with their own experiences.

Research Instrument. The researcher used semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection instrument to explore the experiences of faculty members teaching Arnis in the Physical Activities Towards Health and Fitness (PATHFit) 3 and 4 courses. This method was chosen because it allows for flexibility in questioning while maintaining a focus on key research topics. The semi-structured format enabled the researcher to ask open-ended questions while allowing participants to elaborate on their personal experiences, challenges, and teaching strategies. The interviews were audio recorded with the consent of the participants to ensure accuracy in capturing their responses. Audio recordings provided a reliable means of transcribing and analyzing the data later, ensuring that the nuances of participants' responses were preserved. This method was particularly useful for exploring the depth and complexity of faculty members' lived experiences, enabling the researcher to identify key themes and patterns that contributed to their professional and personal identities as educators.

Data Gathering Procedures. The researcher ensured data confidentiality in compliance with the Data Privacy Act (RA 10173) and obtained informed consent prior to interviews. Data was collected through semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with Arnis practitioners and experts, lasting 40–50 minutes. Pseudonyms were used to protect participant identities, and all data was securely stored and later destroyed after analysis.

Formal requests were sent to institutional heads to identify participants, focusing on those in Education or Sports. Informed consent forms outlined the study's purpose, methodology, confidentiality measures, and voluntary participation. Participants reviewed and edited their interview transcriptions to ensure accuracy.

Data Analysis. The study utilized Colaizzi's 7-step phenomenological technique to explore faculty experiences in teaching Arnis in PATHFit 3 and 4 courses. Data collection began with semi-structured, face-to-face interviews that

were recorded and transcribed to capture the participants' experiences, emotions, and perspectives in detail. The researcher identified significant statements from the transcripts, selecting key phrases and passages relevant to the study's focus. These statements were then analyzed to construct deeper meanings, leading to the emergence of themes such as the pedagogical and cultural significance of teaching Arnis, student safety, and its role in fostering cultural integration and personal growth.

The researcher systematically organized and grouped these themes, uncovering patterns and overarching insights into the faculty's teaching experiences. A comprehensive description was then developed, addressing challenges such as limited resources, time constraints, and training needs while emphasizing the benefits of teaching Arnis, including its positive impact on students' physical and mental well-being and its role in preserving Filipino culture. The findings were synthesized into a structured framework, highlighting the relationships between pedagogical challenges, student engagement, and cultural significance.

Finally, member checking was conducted by presenting the findings to participants for review and validation. This step ensured the accuracy and credibility of the interpretations, reinforcing the trustworthiness of the research. Colaizzi's method provided a systematic and rigorous approach to analyzing the complexities of teaching Arnis in the PATHFit curriculum.

**Ethical Considerations.** The study adhered to strict ethical standards to ensure participant anonymity and data integrity. The protocol was reviewed and approved by an accredited Institutional Review Board (IRB) before data collection and again post-analysis, ensuring compliance with ethical guidelines.

1. **Anonymity.** Participant identities were protected through coding and the removal of personal identifiers. Pseudonyms and generalized descriptions were used in all

transcripts and reports, excluding any potentially identifying information.

2. **Data Security.** Data, including audio-visual recordings and transcripts, was stored in encrypted formats on password-protected devices, with physical documents secured in locked storage. Access was limited to the researcher, and data sharing adhered to confidentiality agreements.
3. **Informed Consent.** Participants were fully informed about the study's purpose, their rights, and the use of their data. They were assured of their right to withdraw at any time without consequences, ensuring voluntary participation.
4. **Methodological Rigor.** Triangulation of interviews, observations, and recordings ensured research reliability, while ethical safeguards upheld trustworthiness and participant autonomy.

These measures upheld the ethical integrity of the study, ensuring anonymity, data security, and respect for participants.

## RESULTS

Table I  
*Summary of Emerging Themes and Patterns*

THEME	CATEGORY
Theme I: The Pedagogical and Cultural Significance of Including Arnis in the Curriculum	Importance of Including Arnis in the Curriculum Fostering Cultural Pride and National Identity
Theme II: Enhancing Student Safety and Holistic Development through Arnis	Self-Defense and Situational Awareness Physical, Mental, and Cultural Development
Theme III: Fostering Social Connections, Personal Growth, and Cultural Integration through Arnis	Arnis as a Platform for Social Interaction and Community Building Arnis as a Tool for Personal Development and Confidence Building Arnis as a Vehicle for Cultural Appreciation and Networking
Theme IV: Addressing Challenges and Promoting Engagement in Arnis Education	Overcoming Initial Resistance and Generating Interest Addressing Logistical and Resource Constraints Enhancing Engagement in Arnis Maintaining Engagement and Promoting Real-World Application
Theme V: Enhancing Teaching and Promotion	Curriculum Development and Structure Teacher Training and Professional Development

**Table 2**  
*Emerging Categories from Significant Statements under Theme I.*

Theme I	Category	Significant Statement	Source	
Importance of Including Arnis in the Curriculum		"Arnis should be integrated into all levels of education, including high school. Arnis, as the national sport of the Philippines, carries significant cultural and historical significance beyond its athletic dimensions."	Joe	
		"Arnis should be incorporated into every school's curriculum. I believe that including Arnis as an FMA in a curriculum provides significant benefits. It combines physical education, cultural enrichment, personal development, and practical self-defense skills."	Cj	
		"I think it is important to include Arnis in the curriculum not only to develop physical fitness, teach discipline, boost self-confidence, and instill a sense of respect and humility but also to provide students with valuable self-defense skills and help develop their focus and concentration."	Rose	
		"I also strongly believe that schools should be at the forefront of promoting physical activities and subjects that are important to the whole country. I have seen a hole in the curriculum, though, when it comes to including sports that are very important to our Filipino history. One case like this is Arnis, who should be taught in schools in a big way."	Nicole	
		"Physical Education (PE) is included in my present curriculum. It is a sport that requires selectivity. Arnis is a component of it. Therefore, the responsibility lies with the physical education instructors at the universities where students are pursuing their bachelor's degrees."	Riz	
		"Regarding Arnis, I am a strong advocate for its inclusion in the curriculum at Tarlac University, as I mentioned earlier."	Gelo	
		"I believe that Arnis should be included in all schools, regardless of whether they are universities or not. This is because Arnis is the officially recognized national sport of the Philippines and is mandated by R.A. 9850, which requires the Department of Education to incorporate Arnis into the curriculum."	Ana	
		"The versatility I possess has played a crucial role in my approach to addressing the distinct demands of each student... reinforcement can be utilized to instruct newer abilities, establish an alternative conduct to counteract disruptive behavior."	Josh	
		"This Martial Arts that we're doing, we're really leading... not only in Asia, but also in the world."	Joe	
		"Martial arts can contribute to the holistic development of students, nurturing their physical, mental, and emotional well-being."	Rose	
Theme: The Pedagogical and Cultural Significance of Including Arnis in the Curriculum		"Teaching Arnis... protect and bring back Filipino martial arts... embrace an important part of our national culture."	Nicole	
		"Fostering reverence for Filipino heritage... incorporating Filipino customs and language into the teachings."	Riz	
	Fostering Cultural Pride and National Identity		"Embracing the traditions associated with Arnis... uphold the essence of Arnis and demonstrate the same level of respect and commitment."	Gelo
			"Filipinos are taught unique courses... teaching is not solely about the act of instructing... preserving our own acknowledgment."	Gm
			"Arnis, rooted in Filipino warrior traditions... combining mental and physical strength."	Ana
			"I fully support the inclusion of Arnis in the curriculum due to its cultural significance and relevance to our heritage."	Josh

**Table 3**  
*Emerging Categories from Significant Statements under Theme II.*

Theme II	Category	Significant Statement	Source	
Theme: Enhancing Student Safety and Holistic Development through Arnis		"FMA, particularly arnis, can serve as an effective means for our pupils to develop confidence in their personal safety."	CJ	
		"Learning Arnis at a young age can teach kids important self-defense skills that can help them protect themselves in tough conditions... using them wrong can be dangerous."	Joe	
		"Martial arts provide students with practical self-defense skills, enhancing their sense of confidence and security."	Rose	
	Self-Defense and Situational Awareness		"By acquiring a fundamental proficiency in Arnis, individuals might engage in self-development... taking preventive measures rather than encountering potential hazards."	Nicole
			"Arnis is mostly utilized for self-defense... Arnis can be applied to anything that can be held... a survival training course."	Riz
			"Ability to defend oneself... developing mental resilience... striking and blocking require physical and mental tenacity."	Gelo
			"Effective self-defense tactics boost confidence and situational awareness, ensuring personal safety."	Luke
			"Arnis can be applied to many objects such as a ballpen or a key... it is a combat weapon."	Gm
			"Arnis can help you improve your self-defense, fitness, or resilience and adaptability."	Ana
			"Arnis are particularly adept at teaching highly effective self-defense techniques... individuals acquire the ability to protect themselves from adversaries who are armed."	Josh
			"Arnis can serve as an effective means for our pupils to develop confidence in their personal safety."	CJ
			"Arnis training and exercises regularly can improve your strength, coordination, and cardiovascular health... teach them to be responsible and in charge of themselves."	Joe

Theme III	Category	Significant Statement	Source
Theme: Addressing Challenges and Promoting Engagement in Arnis Education	Physical, Mental, and Cultural Development	"It teaches discipline, focus, and self-control... instill important values such as respect, perseverance, and humility."	Rose
		"Cognitively, as you continuously contemplate the technique you will employ... From a sociocognitive perspective, your possession of martial arts expertise bestows upon you a certain level of value."	Nicole
		"Promote individual growth and acquisition of essential life skills through the prioritization of discipline, respect, goal setting, teamwork, and leadership within the training context."	Riz
		"Developing mental resilience... cultivate respect... emphasizes the value of respect... discipline and self-control."	Gelo
		"Arnis improves health, coordination, self-defense, mental discipline, strategic thinking... promotes mutual respect and identity."	Luke
		"Filipinos are taught unique courses... preserving our own acknowledgment... maintaining our own artistic endeavors."	Gm
		"Arnis can help you improve your self-defense, fitness, or resilience and adaptability... combining mental and physical strength."	Ana
		"Enhancing confidence and empowerment... instills a profound sense of confidence... improving health, self-discipline, and knowledge of Philippine history and culture."	Josh

**Table 4**  
*Emerging Categories from Significant Statements under Theme III.*

Theme III	Category	Significant Statement	Source	
Theme: Fostering Social Connections, Personal Growth, and Cultural Integration through Arnis	Arnis as a Platform for Social Interaction and Community Building	"From a social perspective, they are actively fostering teamwork, collaboration, and enhancing their social skills. This approach promotes teamwork and collaboration among students."	Cj	
		"Participation in extracurricular activities such as Arnis allows youngsters to connect with classmates who share similar interests, fostering friendships and support networks."	Riz	
		"Certain introverted pupils have exhibited a noticeable increase in sociability, enabling them to confidently engage in conversations with unfamiliar individuals."	Josh	
		"Teaching Arnis allows me to instill values such as respect, discipline, and empathy, which students can carry into their daily lives."	Rose	
		"Martial arts can have a positive impact on your social skills by enhancing your self-assurance and promoting a more comprehensive development."	Ana	
		"By teaching Arnis, I hope to bring people together and help them grow in these Filipino martial arts, promoting cultural practices and national identity."	Nicole	
		"This martial arts group is strong, and we work well together since we get to compete across the country often. Students feel safe and supported in this close-knit ARNIS network."	Joe	
		Arnis as a Vehicle for Cultural Appreciation and Networking	"Arnis can serve as a significant component of Philippine Art, Culture, and Tourism due to its inherent connection to our Filipino cultural heritage and artistic expression."	Gm
			"We have discovered shared interests and consistently enhance our skills and relationships via instruction and devotion to Arnis."	Luke

**Table 5**  
*Emerging Categories from Significant Statements under Theme IV.*

Theme IV	Category	Significant Statement	Source
Theme: Addressing Challenges and Promoting Engagement in Arnis Education	Overcoming Initial Resistance and Generating Interest	"Students may first dislike the new exercise, but as they proceed through the sessions, it becomes clear that they enjoy and value Arnis. The key problem is to introduce Arnis and generate interest in it."	CJ
		"When I first started learning Arnis, the first few weeks were hard for me because I wasn't dedicated to my work. Some students just don't get it."	Josh
		"Giving students the chance to get used to Arnis slowly and at their own pace is very important. It helps overcome their reluctance and anxiety."	Joe
		"One of the observable problems in teaching Arnis in schools is the availability of suitable space and equipment for Arnis classes."	Rose
		"Certain students face financial constraints, making it difficult for them to afford their own rattan sticks. The government no longer supplies paddle sticks."	Riz
		Ana: "Ensure that you do not compromise on the quality of your equipment. High-quality equipment also has a longer lifespan, resulting in long-term cost savings. As individuals acquire knowledge of each component, their self-assurance in their physical literacy abilities grows."	Ana
		"The key problem is to introduce Arnis and generate interest in it... faculty's patience and dedication are the keys to success."	CJ
		"An absence of aid and support is a prevalent problem... establishing collaborations with nearby community centers, schools, or martial arts organizations... Your objective is to achieve that... have objectives to inform them. It is important to have a clear objective each day to identify the specific skills that need to be focused on and ultimately achieved."	Joe
		"Managing a martial arts class of that magnitude is tough... I avoided the classical blows that take longer to execute. Differentiated instruction refers to the use of various teaching methods to cater to the individual needs and learning styles of pupils."	Nicole
		"The primary factor hindering my ability to overcome the problems I faced is undoubtedly the limitation of time."	Gelo

Theme V	Category	Significant Statement	Source
Enhancing Engagement in Arnis		<i>"While FMA has gained significant popularity, some lose interest over time. Making FMA applicable to their lives is crucial... Establish a method that is both enjoyable and captivating... Collaboration is necessary between the students themselves, as well as between the teacher and the students."</i>	Luke
		<i>"Discipline, particularly in relation to accident prevention, is crucial... Seminars are being conducted to assist the teacher... The decision to engage in that sport ultimately rests with the pupils... Children are not particularly receptive to the idea of engaging in Filipino martial arts... Filipinos are taught unique courses... offering a three-in-one experience"</i>	GM
		<i>"Some students just don't get it... Certain pupils have strong opinions about combat sports and martial arts... Arranging events, contests, and assemblies can enhance the connection among participants and cultivate a feeling of inclusion... Positive reinforcement has been shown to promote academic achievement by increasing students' motivation and self-esteem... motivating pupils to establish loftier objectives and pursue academic superiority"</i>	Josh
		<i>"Guide our students carefully based on their prior knowledge while developing a student-centered learning experience."</i>	Rose
		<i>"Promote individual growth and acquisition of essential life skills through the prioritization of discipline, respect, goal setting, teamwork, and leadership within the training context."</i>	Riz
		<i>"Cultivate respect... emphasizes the value of respect... discipline and self-control."</i>	Gelo

**Table 6**  
*Emerging Categories from Significant Statements under Theme III.*

Theme V	Category	Significant Statement	Source
Theme: Enhancing the Teaching and Promotion of Arnis in Physical Education Programs	Curriculum Development and Structure	<i>"By integrating these practice routines specifically designed for competitive Arnis, we may cultivate a stronger enthusiasm and dedication to the sport among students."</i>	CJ
		<i>"Developing a comprehensive curriculum in Arnis that outlines the progression of techniques, principles, and skills to be taught at each level."</i>	Rose
		<i>"A modular framework... will facilitate the creation of a sequence of fundamental modules that encompass essential FMA techniques, principles, and philosophies."</i>	Riz
		<i>"The module I created is derived from the textbook, which I then paraphrased... supplemented it with video recordings and hyperlinks that students can access at their convenience."</i>	Gelo
		<i>"Providing teachers with a complete framework and tools, including safety requirements, cultural education materials, and continuing training support."</i>	Luke
	Teacher Training and Professional Development	<i>"If you desire to engage in extensive instruction, there exist rankings that may be utilized... two types of arnis: sport arnis and combative arnis."</i>	GM
		<i>"Including Arnis into the educational curriculum of schools and universities can effectively expand its reach... promoting research on Arnis, encompassing its historical background, techniques, and cultural importance."</i>	Josh
		<i>"The university should also provide teachers with training and seminars about Arnis"</i>	Rose
		<i>"We can never really know everything about everything, so there is always room to learn and change... I will keep looking for ways to improve my career so that I can do this job well."</i>	Nicole
		<i>"It is highly beneficial to have an in-person training session on Arnis... supplement it with video recordings and hyperlinks."</i>	Gelo
		<i>"Providing teachers with... continuing training support."</i>	Luke
		<i>"Establishing an integrated and all-encompassing network of Arnis enthusiasts can facilitate the exchange of knowledge, experiences, and resources."</i>	Josh

## DISCUSSION

An exploration of narratives from participants reveals key themes about faculty experiences teaching Arnis in PATHFit courses, particularly at levels 3 and 4.

**Pedagogical and Cultural Significance of Including Arnis in the Curriculum.** Integrating Arnis into educational programs fosters essential life skills among students. The practice of Arnis instills discipline, self-confidence, and perseverance, which are critical for personal development. Students

learn to navigate challenges through rigorous training, enhancing their resilience and commitment to both academic and athletic pursuits (Sanchez et al., 2020).

Moreover, the structured environment of martial arts training encourages teamwork and camaraderie, which are vital for social development. Incorporating Arnis into school curricula is crucial for preserving Filipino cultural heritage. As the national martial art of the Philippines, Arnis embodies historical narratives and traditional practices integral to the nation's identity. Engaging students in Arnis not only teaches them about their cultural roots but also fosters a sense of pride and belonging (Pineda, Andal, & Hermosa, 2024). This cultural engagement is particularly important in an era where globalization often dilutes local tradition.

**Enhancing Student Safety and Holistic Development through Arnis.** Integrating Arnis into educational settings significantly enhances student safety and holistic development. As a traditional Filipino martial art, Arnis not only equips students with effective self-defense skills but also fosters personal growth and community engagement.

Arnis provides practical self-defense techniques that empower students to protect themselves in real-life situations. This is particularly crucial in today's world, where personal safety is a growing concern. By learning the principles of Arnis, students gain confidence in their ability to respond to threats, which can lead to a greater sense of security both on and off campus. The practice of Arnis occurs within a controlled environment that emphasizes safety protocols. Adhering to guidelines such as using protective gear and practicing controlled movements minimizes the risk of injury during training sessions. This structured approach not only safeguards students physically but also instill a culture of respect and responsibility among practitioners, reinforcing the importance of safety in all physical activities (Sanchez et al., 2020). Engaging in Arnis offers comprehensive physical benefits, including improved strength, agility, and cardiovascular health. The rigorous



training involved promotes overall fitness while enhancing coordination and reflexes. Furthermore, the mental discipline required to master Arnis techniques cultivates resilience and focus, skills that are transferable to academic and personal challenges (Sanchez et al., 2020).

**Fostering Social Connections, Personal Growth, and Cultural Integration through Arnis.** Fostering social connections, personal growth, and cultural integration through Arnis presents a compelling case for the inclusion of this traditional Filipino martial art in educational and community programs. As a multifaceted discipline, Arnis not only enhances physical capabilities but also serves as a platform for developing interpersonal relationships and cultural appreciation.

Training in Arnis fosters camaraderie and community through group practice, mentorship, and shared experiences, promoting collaboration and mutual respect. It develops personal qualities like self-discipline, resilience, and confidence, enhancing academic performance and social engagement. Beyond its local impact, Arnis serves as a global cultural bridge, encouraging intercultural dialogue and understanding through international competitions and seminars, enriching practitioners' perspectives, and highlighting universal martial arts values.

**Addressing Challenges and Promoting Engagement in Arnis Education.** Addressing challenges and promoting engagement in Arnis education is crucial for maximizing its benefits as both a physical activity and a cultural practice. While Arnis offers numerous advantages, including physical fitness, self-discipline, and cultural appreciation, various obstacles can hinder its effective implementation in educational settings.

One significant challenge in Arnis education is the scarcity of qualified instructors who specialize in teaching this martial art. Many physical education teachers may lack the necessary training to effectively teach Arnis, leading to inadequate instruction and potential

safety concerns during practice (Dresser & Potane, 2022). This situation underscores the need for collaboration between schools and established Arnis instructors to ensure that proper training techniques are conveyed.

To promote engagement, it is essential to create inclusive training environments that address safety concerns and representation, empowering all students, including women and marginalized groups. Implementing specialized programs can ensure equal opportunities for participation in Arnis.

In conclusion, while challenges exist in the realm of Arnis education, proactive measures such as training qualified instructors, standardizing techniques, and fostering inclusive environments can significantly enhance student engagement. By addressing these challenges head-on, educators can unlock the full potential of Arnis as a vehicle for personal growth, cultural integration, and social connection (Sanchez et al., 2020).

**Enhancing the Teaching and Promotion.** Enhancing the teaching and promotion of Arnis within educational frameworks is essential for maximizing its impact on students' physical fitness, cultural awareness, and personal development. As a traditional Filipino martial art, Arnis offers unique benefits, but effectively conveying its value requires strategic approaches.

According to FMA Pulse (2012), investing in the professional development of instructors is crucial. Training programs that focus on safe teaching practices and effective pedagogical strategies can empower Physical Education teachers to deliver high-quality Arnis instruction. Workshops and seminars can equip educators with the necessary skills to foster a safe and engaging learning environment, thereby enhancing student participation and enthusiasm.

Promoting Arnis through community events, demonstrations, and workshops can further enhance its visibility and relevance. Engaging families and local organizations in Arnis

activities creates a supportive network that encourages participation beyond the classroom. Such initiatives can help demystify martial arts for newcomers and foster a sense of community around this traditional practice. In conclusion, enhancing the teaching and promotion of Arnis requires a multifaceted approach that includes modern instructional methods, professional development for educators, cultural integration, and community engagement. By addressing these areas, educational institutions can cultivate an environment where Arnis thrives as a vital component of health and fitness education, enriching students' lives both physically and culturally.

**Conclusion.** The integration of Arnis into educational curricula represents a significant step toward promoting cultural appreciation, physical fitness, and personal development among students. As the national martial art of the Philippines, Arnis embodies rich cultural heritage and offers numerous benefits that extend beyond physical training. This conclusion synthesizes the key themes explored throughout the discussion, emphasizing the pedagogical significance, safety considerations, social connections, challenges faced, and the importance of effective teaching practices in enhancing Arnis education. Hence, the subsequent statements constitute the conclusions of the study:

1. **Pedagogical and Cultural Significance of Including Arnis in the Curriculum.** The inclusion of Arnis in the curriculum is not merely an addition to physical education; it is a profound acknowledgment of Filipino culture and identity. By integrating Arnis, educational institutions foster a deeper understanding of cultural heritage among students, promoting national pride and a sense of belonging. This martial art serves as a living testament to the resilience and history of the Filipino people, enriching students' educational experiences while instilling respect for their roots.
2. **Enhancing Student Safety and Holistic Development.** Arnis training emphasizes

safety and discipline, providing students with essential self-defense skills while promoting physical fitness. The structured environment of Arnis classes encourages holistic development—students learn not only physical techniques but also values such as respect, perseverance, and self-control. This comprehensive approach nurtures well-rounded individuals who are better equipped to navigate both personal and social challenges.

3. **Fostering Social Connections, Personal Growth, and Cultural Integration.** Engaging in Arnis cultivates strong social bonds among practitioners, fostering a sense of community that enhances personal growth. Through collaborative training and shared experiences, students develop teamwork skills and mutual respect. Furthermore, Arnis acts as a bridge for cultural integration, allowing students from diverse backgrounds to connect through a common interest, thereby enriching their social interactions and cultural understanding.
4. **Addressing Challenges and Promoting Engagement in Arnis Education.** While the integration of Arnis into educational settings presents challenges—such as resource constraints and varying levels of instructor expertise—addressing these issues is essential for promoting sustained engagement. By developing strategic partnerships with local organizations and investing in teacher training, schools can create an inclusive environment that encourages participation in Arnis. Innovative teaching methods and community involvement can further enhance student interest and commitment to this martial art.
5. **Enhancing the Teaching and Promotion of Arnis.** Continuous professional development for educators is crucial for effective teaching practices in Arnis. By equipping instructors with up-to-date knowledge and pedagogical strategies, schools can ensure high-quality instruction that inspires students. Additionally, promoting Arnis through community events and demonstrations can

increase visibility and appreciation for this martial art, attracting new practitioners while reinforcing its significance within the educational framework.

In summary, the integration of Arnis into educational curricula is a multifaceted endeavor that enriches students' physical education while preserving cultural heritage. By addressing challenges proactively and fostering an environment of safety, respect, and community, educators can cultivate a vibrant learning atmosphere that empowers students both on and off the mat. Through this holistic approach, Arnis not only becomes a tool for physical fitness but also a means of personal development and cultural appreciation that resonates deeply within the Filipino identity.

**Future Directions.** Based on the findings from the study, several strategies emerge to strengthen Arnis education, enhance instructor engagement, and ensure sustained student interest and community impact. These directions are aimed at supporting Arnis preservation, elevating student engagement, and promoting professional development for instructors.

1. **Cultural Integration.** Integrate cultural context into Arnis instruction to enhance students' comprehension of its historical and cultural importance.
2. **Cultural Celebrations.** Organize regular activities, including demonstrations or inter-campus tournaments, to honor Arnis as a Filipino martial art and enhance national pride and participation.
3. **Real-World Application.** Incorporate practical, real-world circumstances into Arnis training to enhance students' situational awareness and self-defense capabilities.
4. **Specialized Workshops.** Conduct workshops centered on the use of Arnis techniques in practical self-defense scenarios to enhance trainees' confidence and competence.
5. **Mind-Body Connection.** Highlight the physical, mental, and emotional advantages of Arnis practice by integrating mindfulness and wellness practices into the training regimen.
6. **Holistic Certification.** Motivate Arnis instructors to obtain supplementary certificates in holistic wellbeing, enabling them to deliver a comprehensive and integrated teaching methodology.
7. **Incentivized Engagement.** Establish a rewards-based scheme or recognition system to motivate students to maintain their engagement with Arnis throughout time.
8. **Flexible Training Options.** Provide adaptable training choices that cater to students' needs and interests by integrating aspects of fitness, sport, and cultural enrichment into Arnis courses.
9. **Continuous Learning.** Allocate resources for consistent workshops, certifications, and training programs for Arnis educators to enhance their instructional techniques and pedagogical strategies.
10. **Mentorship and Collaboration.** Implement mentorship programs wherein seasoned Arnis educators advise novice faculty members, hence improving knowledge transfer and instructional excellence.
11. **Standardized Curriculum.** Establish a standardized curriculum for Arnis that prioritizes explicit learning objectives, systematic skill progression, and culturally pertinent teaching methods.
12. **Diverse Instructional Methods.** Incorporate a variety of instructional approaches, including collaborative learning, critical thinking exercises, and problem-solving activities, to enhance engagement in Arnis training.
13. **Technology Integration.** Introduce technology, including instructional videos

and interactive applications, to enhance the dynamism and accessibility of Arnis training for students.

14. **Creative Projects.** Develop projects or assignments that enable students to investigate creative applications of Arnis, fostering connections between martial arts and their individual interests and academic goals.
15. **Longitudinal Studies on the Long-Term Impact of Arnis.** While this study highlights the immediate transformative effects of Arnis on faculty and students, future research could focus on longitudinal studies to explore the sustained impact of Arnis over time. This could include tracking changes in students' physical health, mental resilience, confidence, and community engagement over the course of several years.
16. **Broader Application Across Educational Levels.** This research focuses specifically on the experiences of faculty in the PATHFit courses. Future studies could examine the integration of Arnis in other educational settings, such as primary and secondary schools, to understand its effects on younger students and to assess the feasibility of its inclusion in broader curricula.
17. **Comparative Studies Across Institutions and Regions.** Given the cultural significance of Arnis in the Philippines, comparative studies across different educational institutions or even regions within the country could provide valuable insights into how the approach to teaching Arnis varies. Research could also look at how Arnis is taught in different cultural contexts, exploring its potential integration into curricula in other countries with Filipino diasporas, such as the United States or Canada.
18. **Expanding the Scope of Professional Development.** The findings underscore the importance of professional development for instructors in fostering an engaging and culturally relevant Arnis education. Future research could investigate specific professional development programs tailored for Arnis instructors, focusing on effective teaching strategies, cultural competency, and student engagement. Research could also explore how ongoing teacher training impacts instructor confidence and instructional effectiveness over time.
19. **Integration with Other Health and Wellness Disciplines.** Future studies could explore how Arnis might complement other health and wellness disciplines within Physical Activities Towards Health and Fitness (PATHFit) courses. Investigating interdisciplinary approaches could reveal how Arnis can be integrated with physical fitness, mental health, and wellness programs to promote holistic development in students.
20. **Student Perspectives on Arnis Education.** Further research could explore students' perspectives on learning Arnis in the PATHFit context. Qualitative interviews or focus groups could help understand how students perceive the impact of Arnis on their personal development, physical fitness, and sense of cultural identity, offering deeper insights into the student experience.
21. **Exploring Community Engagement Models.** Arnis is deeply tied to Filipino heritage and community building. Future research could investigate how Arnis can be used as a tool for community outreach and engagement, not only within academic settings but also in local communities. Studies examined the role of Arnis in community empowerment, social cohesion, and cross-generational learning.
22. **Measuring the Effectiveness of Culturally Responsive Teaching Methods.** Given the importance of integrating cultural pride in the curriculum, further research could examine how culturally responsive teaching methods specifically impact student outcomes in Arnis education. This would include exploring the effectiveness of creative teaching approaches, such as storytelling, history lessons, and hands-on

demonstrations, in enhancing both engagement and learning.

By addressing these future directions, researchers can build on the findings of this study to continue evolving the integration of Arnis in educational settings, ensuring its preservation as a vital Filipino cultural legacy while fostering the holistic development of students.

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