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A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON THE EXPERIENCES OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS IN FACILITATING THE PERFORMANCE TASKS OF THE DIFFERENTLY ABLED LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore and comprehend the lived experiences of physical education (PE) teachers in facilitating the performance tasks of the differently abled learners. This study employed a phenomenological approach to gather and understand the insights of physical education teachers towards the investigated phenomenon. The participants of the study were 14 PE teachers in Nabunturan West District, Division of Davao de Oro. There were seven teachers for in-depth interviews (IDI) and seven for focused group discussions (FGD). This study was limited to the perceptions of instructors and did not take into account the perspectives of the learners, administrators or other stakeholders in the education system. The data collected from the results of IDI and FGD were analyzed using thematic analysis. Regarding experiences, the findings brought out the following themes: instructional pitfalls, drive for inclusivity, emotional setbacks, facilitation of affective environment, implementation of tailor-fit activities. As to their means of coping with the challenges, the following themes surfaced: finding ways to make instructions work, conscious on teaching efficiency, data-based intervention, social engagement, and utilization of support mechanism. Finally, the following themes were the insights drawn from their experiences: adapting suitable scaffolding, practicing resourcefulness and innovativeness, establishing network and support, practicing positive and supportive behavior, and accommodating the unique needs of learners. Incorporating the findings into the teaching practices suggest for the provision of tangible support in terms of resources and immersion of the teachers with the actual practices of effective strategies. Future researchers may consider to delve deeper into the pitfalls of instruction despite of the drive for inclusivity.

KEYWORDS: *Physical Education. Differently abled learners, performance tasks, Physical Education, Phenomenological Study, Lived Experiences, Inclusive Education, Davao de Oro*

INTRODUCTION

Physical Education (PE) teachers facilitate the performance tasks of the students through establishing a conducive environment that promotes the acquisition of knowledge, enhancement of skills and active participation. PE teachers are expected to make their classes inclusive which means that they have to facilitate the conduct of performance tasks even among differently abled learners. In public secondary schools, PE teachers are challenged as they strive to make their classes inclusive considering the scarce resources for individualizing performance tasks based on the learners' capacity.

Teachers across many nations have faced the challenge of integrating differently abled learners into regular classrooms and ensuring they receive appropriate support for physical education classes (Bartoll et al., 2020). In Thailand, the lack of the necessary preparation or self-assurance among PE teachers to facilitate the performance task among differently abled learners has caused serious concerns in the academe (Jamsai, 2019). Although there has been a significant amount of study conducted, academics have underlined the necessity for further studies that might provide more insight into the factors that influence teachers' perspectives in their practices related to inclusion. On the other hand, the universal subject offering in gymnastics in the secondary education in Indonesia is accounted as challenging for the teachers handling learners with physical disabilities; making their performance restrictive (Kushartanti et al., 2021). Similarly, in Singapore, it was revealed that restrictive PE participation has negative impact among differently abled learners. Hence, the findings recommended the provision of personal support and pedagogical modifications (Wang, 2019).

On a national scale, Republic Act 7277 of the Philippines constitution ensures that learners with disabilities have the access to education. In line with this, the public elementary and secondary schools are open to receive students who are differently abled learners in mainstream classes. However, the pedagogical readiness, inclusivity, and an environment supportive for the diversity of learners have been found insufficient (Sumayang et al., 2022). Specifically, in the study of Pedroso et al. (2022) it was emphasized that teachers were facing difficulties in determining the suitable performance task for the differently abled learners being included in regular classes. In addition, the study of Verano (2019) found that there were a number of PE teachers who encountered difficulties in facilitating performance tasks primarily due to insufficient academic and professional preparations. When inappropriately addressed, these can cause both cognitive and emotional drawbacks to the learners who have earned the right to be in regular classes (Dianito et al., 2021).

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Locally, in the Nabunturan West District, Division of Davao de Oro, the pronouncement of the children's right to education across learners' capabilities is strongly enforced (Temprosa, 2023). However, similar with nearby school's division, providing meaningful experiences of the differently abled learners during PE classes remain to be challenging. Based on the available data in the Division Office of the Schools Division of Davao de Oro, PE teachers in the secondary level are not specialized in handling differently abled learners; making it difficult for them to facilitate the performance tasks for them.

With the review of the recent literature, studies were focused on the context of isolating those who are differently abled learners from those who are able; making them more privilege to perform less in a certain competency (Aasland et al., 2019). Similarly, effective participation among differently abled learners were inconclusive (Tanure et al., 2020). These studies were focused on the perspectives of the students only. The lived experiences of the PE teachers as the key players in facilitating the performance tasks of the differently abled leaners need to be brought to the surface to provide comprehensive view about how they work for the success of the differently abled learners, their means of coping the challenges, and the insights drawn from their experiences in facilitating the performance tasks of the differently abled learners. Further, allowing the success stories and loopholes of the PE teachers' facilitation of the performance tasks to emerge may be essential for the other teachers to reflect on their pedagogical strategies.

The study has social significance, since this may add to the pool of data which is necessary in establishing thorough understanding on facilitating the performance tasks in PE among differently abled learners. The students may benefit from the findings since this would mean that the instructional activities will be reviewed to find out their appropriateness for differently abled learners. The school administrators may make use of the data for policy brief, and program implementations that will support the various needs of the PE teachers in providing meaningful experiences for the children in inclusive classroom. Further, future researchers may work towards validating the findings of this study. The findings of the study will be disseminated through school-based learning action cells (LAC) session and on educational forum.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this qualitative study was to unveil and understand the Physical Education teachers' lived experiences, challenges, and their means of coping with the challenges in facilitating the performance tasks of the differently abled learners in Nabunturan West District, Division of Davao de Oro.

At this stage in the research, facilitating the performance tasks of the differently abled learners was confined to the teachers' experiences in promoting a learning environment which conducive for the differently abled learners to acquire the minimum cognitive competencies and skills.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the lived experiences of Physical Education teachers in facilitating the performance tasks of differently abled learners?
2. How do teachers cope with the challenges in facilitating the performance tasks of differently abled learners?
3. What insights can Physical Education teachers draw from their experiences in facilitating the performance tasks of differently abled learners?

METHODS

I used the qualitative research to examine the lived experiences of the PE teachers on the performance tasks of differently abled learners. I believe that this can pave way for the collection of rich data resource from the teachers who have experienced the phenomenon in this study. The data gathered were used to bring into the interpret, understand and analyze the phenomena of how the PE teachers facilitate the performance tasks of differently abled learners and to describe substantially the results of this study. In the context of this research, the use of phenomenology aided in comprehending the significance of people's lived experiences. As a researcher, I explored and investigated the experiences of public-school secondary PE teachers in facilitating the performance tasks of the differently abled learners in their classes. The use of qualitative phenomenological design added value to my research data which can serve as a bridge between the impulses that fuel the behavior and the feelings that precede decisions. I utilized this design to get a deeper understanding of the PE teachers' motivations, beliefs, and thoughts with regards to the performance tasks of the differently abled learners in PE classes.

This research considered the Physical Education teachers handling differently abled learners in public secondary schools of Nabunturan West District of Davao de Oro. A total of 14 participants were requested to take part of the study - seven PE teachers for the in-depth interview (IDI) and seven for the focus group discussion. This adheres to the concept of Creswell & Creswell (as cited in Elliott, 2018) which stipulated that having a minimum of 10 participants is already sufficient in making qualitative inquiry, and this number of participants is already enough to saturate the information needed in the study.

The participants of the study were chosen through the purposive sampling technique wherein the researcher deliberately chose the participant due to the qualities they possess (Arthur, 2019). This type of sampling involved the selection of participants that the researcher believe might contribute significantly to the analysis (khan et al., 2023). With this, the participants were selected based on the set purpose or criteria.

In this study, the following inclusion criteria were used to qualify a participant: (a) must be a public secondary PE teacher in Nabunturan West District, Division of Davao de Oro; (b) must be assigned as a PE teacher to classes with students who are differently abled on their physical aspect; (c) must be assigned to handle PE subject for at least 3 years. With these, the private school teachers, elementary and junior high school in both public and private schools, those stationed outside the

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research locale, and those who are public senior high school teachers in the research locale who have less than 3 years of experience will be excluded from this study. Further, those who handled learners who are differently abled other than the physical aspect was excluded from this study.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Experiences of PE Teachers in Facilitating the Performance Task of Differently Abled Learners

A standard general education setting typically includes physical education (PE). Nevertheless, the inclusion of differently abled learners in general physical education classrooms is a multifaceted process that demands a high level of expertise from physical education teachers. These educators must possess knowledge not just of the attributes of learners with diverse disabilities but also of the strategies for modifying their instructional approaches to accommodate the specific requirements of these learners. Studies have documented that physical education (PE) teachers perceive themselves as lacking sufficient preparation to instruct students with disabilities (Banville et al., 2020; Hutzler & Choresh, 2023; Nanayakkara, 2022).

Considering that more than 95% of students with disabilities get instruction in inclusive physical education classrooms, it is crucial for teachers to be adequately prepared for this unavoidable situation. In a study done with a total of seven faculty members, consisting of four males and three females, three distinct themes emerged: 'The possibility of failure is a part of the learning process', 'Our objective is to expose students to new ideas and experiences', and 'We provide a general overview rather than going into the details'. The findings emphasize that the PE teachers acknowledges that the completion of their course alone is insufficient in adequately equipping teachers to deliver a high-quality physical education experience to differently abled learners. In general, professors mostly focused on the practical aspects of the course and significantly relied on medicalized definitions of disability (Li et al., 2022)

On the other hand, scholars asserted that PE teachers who had prior experience in instructing learners with disabilities exhibited notably elevated levels of efficacy compared to those lacking such expertise. Additionally, it was discovered that female teachers were more strategic in dealing with these learners as compared to male teachers. This could be attributed to the fact that males tend to exhibit more conservative and authoritarian traits, and have a greater inclination towards coaching rather than teaching (Hutzler & Choresh, 2023).

On a similar note, the teachers had a strong perception of their own efficacy in teaching physical education. Nevertheless, they reported inadequate expertise and understanding in adequately accommodating students with diverse disabilities in their physical education programs, especially in challenging and demanding circumstances. These findings align with Bandura's efficacy expectations which suggest that demanding events provide valuable information about personal competence. The school districts should provide more support to instructors in order to fulfill their professional responsibilities and improve students' physical education experiences (Johnsson, 2022).

In a study PE teachers having students with disabilities in a mainstream educational setting perceive the setup as a triumph, rather than prioritizing the establishment of an environment that fosters the success and enjoyment of these students. There exists discriminatory aspect of physical education as emphasized in situations where teachers where they display resistance to change and are unwilling to modify or reconsider the nature of exercises in order to promote inclusivity in their classrooms (Banville et al. ,2020). For instance, physical education classes that focus on competitive sports and games without any modifications may convey certain ideals regarding desirable abilities and bodies within the context of physical education. This may result in the exclusion, restriction, or discouragement of individuals, including those with disabilities, who do not conform to these ideals (Petrie et al., 2023).

Concurrently, PE teachers have doubts about the feasibility of include students with disabilities in their classes due to conflicting values and practices. These educators campaigned for a novel comprehension of an inclusive process in physical education programs, incorporating thoughts on the curriculum (Pellerin et al., 2022). The study conducted by Alves et al. (2022) emphasized the necessity of enhancing the professional training of physical education (PE) teachers regarding the abilities of students with disabilities. This can be achieved by critical self-reflection on the curriculum, as well as their values and practices.

Definitely, teachers can only modify their strategies in their classes, but cannot change the curriculum. It was argued that that the physical education curricula should be redesigned in order to more effectively meet the requirements of students with disabilities (Haegele, 2019). A curriculum centered around sports and skill performance may not necessarily be advantageous for students with impairments. Recognizing diversity as an aspect of the curriculum necessitates conversations regarding standardized physical attributes and concepts (Petrie et al., 2019).

Subsequently, teachers who possess exceptional qualifications should impart sport values such as respect, fair play, and tolerance to students. They should also enhance students' skills, confidence, knowledge, and understanding to enable them to make informed decisions regarding physical activity throughout their lives. Additionally, these teachers should contribute to the personal well-being of students and promote a healthy and active lifestyle (Pulimeno et al., 2020). For instance, the Physical Education and Health (PEH) syllabus in Sweden follows a criterion-referenced approach and focuses on promoting health. The objective is to provide students with knowledge, competencies, and aptitudes to effectively adopt and maintain a wholesome way of life. The Swedish National Agency for Education emphasizes the importance of setting and assessing achievement goals in order to effectively plan, organize, and evaluate the impact of individual physical activity (Magnússon et al., 2019).

Other data-based research has demonstrated, albeit with mixed results, that student disability type may influence physical education teachers' perspectives toward students with specific

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disabling conditions. A study on the perspectives of physical educators regarding the instruction of students with disabilities in regular physical education programs found that physical educators displayed more positive attitudes towards instructing children with learning difficulties compared to teaching students with physical disabilities (Demchenko et al.,2021).

In addition, the researchers especially examined the correlation between certain characteristics of general physical education teachers who are currently employed and their views towards teaching learners who have been labeled as educable, mentally retarded, behaviorally disordered, or having a learning disability. Among the teacher characteristics analyzed, such as academic preparation, work experience, personal traits, attitudes, and perceived competence in teaching students with disabilities, teachers' perceived competency in teaching students with disabilities emerged as the most accurate predictor of attitudes (Leo et al., 2022). However, undergraduate physical educators had more positive attitudes about teaching children who were designated as educable mentally retarded compared to educating students with behavioral disorders (Brandon,2020).

Challenges of PE Teachers Handling Differently Abled Learners

To address the challenges, in addition to the commonly mentioned and general suggestion of "increased and improved preparation," a concrete measure could be strengthening the role expectations, particularly for physical education teachers, to take on the task of instructing children with severe disabilities. A research on occupational socialization found that certain physical education (PE) teachers may exhibit a "not-my-job" mindset when it comes to implementing inclusive practices (Wilson & Richards,2019).

Consequently, PE teachers, are faced with the responsibility of either strategically redefining the situation, strategically conforming, or resisting conditions that hinder inclusion (Haegele et al., 2020). Additionally, teacher educators have the responsibility to instruct APE instructors on the importance of advocating for the participation of physical education (PE) teachers in decision-making processes related to the integration and inclusion of students with disabilities. The research indicates that physical education (PE) is a situation where many children, particularly those with impairments, experience disadvantages (Holland & Haegele, 2021). Sharpe (2022) pointed out that although teachers desired to create inclusive classrooms, the level of student engagement remained restricted.

Specifically, in Brazil, teachers find it very challenging in facilitating the performance tasks of learners with visual impairments or physical disabilities since they often face exclusion in physical education (PE) classes. This exclusion is characterized by social isolation from their peers, neglect of their specific requirements by teachers, and feelings of inferiority (Decastro et al., 2020). Further, Aasland et al. (2019) teachers are greatly challenged with the knowledge that differently abled learners have limited involvement in their PE classes. Additionally, Rekaa (2019) found that these learners are six times less likely to have high self-efficacy in Physical Education (PE) compared to students with high grades in school-based PE. This is one of the barriers in the students' holistic development, considering the fact that engagement in physical activity is essential for maintaining good health and promoting personal well-being (Dishman et al., 2021).

In some instances, some teachers fail to provide special accommodations for learners who are differently abled. Hence, participation in PE activities is often limited because students have restricted access to class venues (Tanure et al., 2021). Although students with physical disabilities perceive inclusion as a feeling of belonging and positive social connections with their peers they rarely experience inclusion in physical education. In addition, PE teachers were highly challenged with the fact that differently abled learners often encounter limitations in their involvement in the performance tasks. Despite of the conducted instructional modifications, these learners are often segregated into separate activities (Dewaele & Li, 2021).

Similarly, Physical education teachers encountered challenges in ensuring suitable modifications for the inclusion of students with disabilities in the physical education curriculum. The training of physical education (PE) teachers may have included students with disabilities however, this remains problematic due to insufficient understanding of specific disabilities and inadequate knowledge on adapting the learning environment to promote students' participation (Alves et al., 2022). In line with prior research, the challenges of teachers are being acknowledged particularly in striving to offer inclusive experiences. However, teachers conceded that their classes were predominantly integrative rather than inclusive. This raises doubts about the inclusivity of integrated settings for those with impairments (Haegele, 2019).

To sum up, accommodating individual demands is highly challenging due to the distinct difficulties associated with each disability. Several educational institutions may have insufficient resources, including adaptive equipment and skilled personnel, to effectively cater to the requirements of students with disabilities in physical education programs. Developing and executing Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or 504 plans for children with disabilities necessitates a significant investment of time and exertion. Physical education instructors must be cognizant of these strategies and ensure the requisite adjustments are made.

Differently Abled Learners in Regular Classes

Students who possess unique needs, including but not limited to learning variations, mental health concerns, distinct physical or developmental disabilities, and exceptional intellectual ability are described as differently abled leaners (Kangas & Cook, 2020). The accessibility and quality of educational services for individuals with impairments or learning problems vary across different countries and states. The capacity of a student to gain entry into a specific educational environment is contingent upon factors such as the provision of services, geographical proximity, parental preference, and governmental regulations (Carnock & Silva, 2019).

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In addition, differently abled learners may also be used to described those learners whose cognitive development is within the range of sub-normal level of intellect. This definition is provided by the Persons with Disabilities Act of 1995. Learners who are differently abled may have significant challenges in their capacity to engage with society, exhibit attention, and adjust to various situations. Hence, the social aspect of life may not yield favorable outcomes (Symeonidou & Mavrou, 2020).

Subsequently, differently abled learners in junior and senior high school are being mainstreamed or placed in class with regular learners. In the context of conventional education, it is imperative to ensure that the diverse needs of all students are adequately addressed, whether regular of differently abled while simultaneously eliminating any barriers that may hinder their active engagement. According to the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP-UNESCO, 2019), educational institutions ought to ensure that their school infrastructure, instructional methodologies, pedagogies, and teaching and learning resources are readily available and easily accessible to all students.

The practice of integrating differently abled learners into regular classes is widespread in numerous countries (Balestra et al., 2020). Despite the growing prevalence of inclusive education, there remains a lack of comprehensive understanding on its impact on pupils. Advocates of inclusive education assert that every student, regardless of their disability status, possesses an equitable entitlement to obtain education inside conventional educational institutions. Conversely, detractors contend that the integration of differently abled learners into regular classes could potentially have negative consequences to them (Rangvid, 2019). Hence, the implementation of inclusion of differently abled learners in regular class is widely regarded as the most efficacious approach in guaranteeing equitable access to education, facilitating learning, and fostering the acquisition of essential competencies for student success (Symeonidou & Mavrou, 2020).

The term inclusive education is used to describe the practice of having all students, regardless of their abilities or disabilities, enrolled in the same classrooms and schools. This refers to the provision of valuable educational opportunities for historically marginalized groups, including children with disabilities and individuals who speak minority languages. Inclusive educational institutions acknowledge and value the distinct contributions that students from all backgrounds bring to the learning environment, fostering an environment where different groups can thrive in parallel, resulting in mutual benefits for all individuals involved (UNICEF, 2020).

Subsequently, research found out that the goal of the inclusion of differently abled learners in regular class is to ensures that all learners receive a high-quality education and help to change discriminatory attitudes. Schools provide an environment for a child's initial interactions with the world outside of their families, allowing social ties and interactions to emerge. When students of various skills and backgrounds play, socialize, and learn together, respect and understanding grow. Discrimination against traditionally marginalized groups is perpetuated by education that excludes and segregates them. Civic involvement, employment, and communal life become more inclusive as education becomes more inclusive (Amor et al., 2019).

Creating an inclusive educational environment for students with disability is a priority in governance. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities defines education for all in Article 24. This assures equitable access to the regular education system for all pupils, regardless of their specific qualities. However, educational stakeholders must address both ‘equal opportunity' and ‘educational justice'. Thus, teachers must develop educational environments that stimulate teaching and learning for all pupils. In compulsory schools, creating an inclusive educational environment for kids with disabilities is a priority. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities defines education for all in Article 24 (Bellmann &. Merkens. 2019).

Looking at how our schools, classes, programs, and courses are designed so that all students may participate and learn is what inclusive education is all about. Inclusion also entails experimenting with different teaching methods to ensure that all students are actively involved in the classroom. It also entails figuring out how to foster friendships, relationships, and mutual respect among all students, as well as between students and teachers at the school (Walton, 2018).

Access to education for all is not a cost-saving solution. Teachers and staff training, infrastructure, instructional materials and equipment, and curriculum change are all required to properly execute inclusive education. However, by eliminating redundancy and the high costs of running parallel systems, such expenditures can potentially improve education for all children (Johnstone et al., 2019).

Finally, differently abled learners range from moderate to severe, which require substantial assistance from the broader society. Educators have a crucial role in facilitating the realization of children's maximum capabilities. Efforts should be made to provide comprehensive support to individuals with disabilities in order to maximize their functional capabilities. By doing so, they can transition from being perceived as societal burdens to becoming valuable assets and significant contributors to the development of our nation. It is worth noting that many individuals with disabilities possess exceptional intelligence and abilities. Individuals possess significant untapped potential, which can be fully realized via the active involvement of educators and society at large, particularly through the implementation of inclusive education (Santiago, 2020).

Performance Task in Physical Education Class for Differently Abled Learners

The inclusion of differently abled learner’s physical education has gained widespread acceptance globally; nonetheless, certain reservations persist. In line with previous research in educational settings scholars in the field of physical education have expressed apprehension regarding the potential discriminatory aspects of inclusive physical education classes. These classes may not effectively support equal access to the

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curriculum or necessary resources for individuals with disabilities (Haegele et al., 2020).

Evidently, one of the critical concerns is that a number of physical education teachers perceive the inclusion of differently abled learners in a mainstream educational setting as an accomplishment, rather than prioritizing the creation of an inclusive environment that fosters the academic achievement and overall satisfaction of these students. The discriminatory aspects of physical education can be further emphasized in situations where teachers, exhibit resistance to change and are unwilling to modify or reconsider the nature of exercises in order to promote inclusivity in their classrooms (Maher et al., 2023).

Specifically, certain differently abled learners face increased vulnerability when the physical aspect of learning takes precedence, as is frequently the case, given that their abilities and resources in physical education (PE) are not always aligned with physical expectations. According to the existing policies, it is mandated that effective instruction that is tailored and customized will adequately address the specific requirements of the majority of children and adolescents (LeRoy et al., 2019). Authors argue that the inclusion of contextualized evaluations is of utmost importance in tailoring the educational experience for differently abled learners. However, there is a lack of knowledge on the evaluation of differently abled learners in Physical Education (PE) settings, despite the requirement outlined in the SEND code of practice (Department for Education/Department of Health, 2015) for schools to monitor their development (Vickerman & Maher, 2018).

In order to ensure inclusivity in physical education (PE) assessments, it is imperative that teachers are provided with the autonomy and flexibility to modify the assignment, environment, and instructional strategies they employ (Penney, 2019). Similarly, the utilization of standardized methods for evaluating learning in physical education (PE) presents a potential drawback in that it may place certain differently ables learners at a disadvantage. This is due to the fact that their unique needs and abilities, which are indicative of their strengths, are often overlooked and undervalued (Lynch et al., 2020). However, it should be noted that the modification of physical education (PE) activities has faced resistance from certain differently abled learners. This is due to the fact that such modifications can inadvertently accentuate differences, leading to the marginalization of these students by their peers (Haegele et al., 2020).

Teachers do tailor-fitting of activities to meet the needs of the learners (Meijers et al., 2024). Other interventions were also implemented. Few of them includes data-based intervention. The intervention implemented was a modified version of the Burn 2 Learn (B2L) program, which is a school-based intervention that involves high-intensity interval training (HIIT). The current study implemented a modified version of the B2L software, which will be referred to as B2L adapted (B2La). Prior to the intervention, classroom teachers participated in a half-day professional development course facilitated by members of the research team (Leahy et al., 2021).

Another is a need-supportive instruction had a detrimental impact on the levels of need frustration, amotivation, and poor affect. The intervention that provided assistance boosted the satisfaction of students' needs and reduced their irritation, lack of desire, and negative emotions. In the control condition throughout a semester, there was an increase in annoyance and negative affect, whereas positive affect dropped (Behzadnia et al., 2022).
Another is Park et al.'s (2021) assistive prompting procedure. The research was conducted in an inclusive environment for physical education. The study's results revealed a clear connection between the participants' enhanced motor skills in basketball shooting and the intervention. Meanwhile, interprofessional collaboration was also utilized by teachers. The findings suggest that even a short training session provided by speech-language pathologists (SLPs) to adapted physical education (APE) preservice teachers can enhance their ability to identify and facilitate opportunities for social interaction among children with impairments, while focusing on activities relevant to their field of study. Further investigation is necessary using a more extensive sample size to clarify chances for collaboration that enhance the best possible results for children with diverse requirements in several fields (Daughrity et al.,2020) alongside with social collaboration (An, 2021).

On the other hand, results indicate that parents played an active role in their children's education in different settings, including the home, school, and community. They were engaged through ongoing communication and active participation, both within and outside of the school (Widyawan et al., 2020). Collaboration with other social entities and teachers greatly enhances Physical Education and fosters the development of student learning through scaffolding (Thoren et al., 2021; Trsitani et al., 2021), multimodalities (Crowe, 2021), and adapted sports (Cornwall, 2021).

Teachers also demonstrate favorable behavior such as resourcefulness and innovativeness (Meier et al., 2023). They also practice innovativeness to improve their craft (Cai, 2022; Ugsang et al., 2023). Seeking support from other entities were found advantageous (Alfrey & Jeanes , 2023; Maher & Fitzgerald, 2020; Widyawan et al., 2020).

Other than the technicalities, teachers are also recommended to demonstrate positive behavior. Antala et al. (2022), Beyazoğlu (2022), and Grenier et al. (2023) concluded that PE teachers who have practical experience working with children with disabilities, and have teaching experience with kids with disabilities, demonstrate a greater level of self-efficacy. Additionally, a moderate positive correlation was discovered between the level of self-efficacy and attitudes.

Expending beyond limits was also found to be advantage for instructional improvement (Holland et al., 2023). This may include but not limited to curriculum review (Mihajlovic & Meier, 2022). High-quality physical education is essential for enabling kids to increase their level of physical activity, develop a deep understanding of physical fitness, and cultivate the necessary skills and passions to maintain an active lifestyle for the rest of their lives. Physically fit and active students are

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more prone to being academically driven, attentive, and triumphant in their academic pursuits. Regrettably, the results of various studies that have interviewed students with disabilities indicate that these students tend to be less physically active and experience a greater sense of social isolation in comparison to their peers without disabilities in the context of general physical education (Block et al., 2021; Morley et al., 2021).

In summary, teachers must recognize the unique needs and abilities of differently abled. Standardized methods are insufficient to ensure student success. Education has also stressed the importance of adaptation in addressing performance issues. Alternate assessment formats, additional time, and assistive technologies can help disabled students demonstrate their talents. However, some schools lack the resources, including adaptive equipment and experienced staff, to meet the needs of disabled physical education pupils. It takes time and effort to create and implement Individualized Education Plans for each differently abled learner. Hence, PE teachers must be able to explore instructional strategies that work. With these, there is a need for PE teachers to be reoriented, recalibrated on the preparation of performance tasks that is oriented towards inclusion. A significant factor that must be considered on the performance tasks of differently abled learners is overcoming attitudinal barriers. PE teachers may need to address misconceptions, biases, and stereotypes to foster an inclusive environment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1
Major Themes and Core Ideas on the Lived Experiences of Physical Education Teachers in Facilitating the Performance Tasks of Differently Abled Learners

Themes	Core Ideas
Instructional Pitfalls	• facing challenges in profiling students with special needs and monitoring their history • experiencing unique challenges due to curriculum, learning styles and strategies that are not suited to their needs. • having struggles in addressing individual needs due to the large class size. • having a hard time convincing student to perform during the activity
Drive for Inclusivity	• implementing individualized and modified tasks • creating and ensuring inclusive environment inside the classroom • utilizing appropriate equipment in conducting the activities • adapting effective mechanisms that suits learner's needs • providing due assistance and fitting tasks
Emotional Setbacks	• feeling frustrated with non-performance of the learners • feeling emotionally drained during the conduct of activities • having experienced undue stress • feeling challenged on how to deal with the students feeling anxious on the performances
Facilitation of Affective Environment	• empathizing with the students' disability • protecting students from harassment and bullying • having recognized the differences and uniqueness of the learners • making personal adjustments in facilitating the lessons • having them work with peers who understands them
Implementation of Tailor-fit Activities	• aligning teaching methods with learning needs • considering the diverse needs of students during class performances and activities • adapting suitable activities and modifying performances • considering the capacity of the learners through providing due accommodations

Instructional Pitfalls

It surfaced from the responses that the participants were struggling with the class size considering that they have regular students along with those who were tagged as differently abled learners. There were also instructional concerns such as having a hard time in facilitating the students' performances. This was even worsened with their inability to determine the needs of the students due to their difficulties in profiling them. Further, as a perennial concern, public schools lack the necessary facilities which hampers the instructional process.

The experienced pitfalls in the implementation of the instruction can be traced back on the teachers' efficiency in the performance of their functions. Antala et al. (2022) pointed out that those who were not able to effectively facilitate the instruction lacks self-efficiency. In addition, Li et al. (2022) reasoned that the common pitfalls were due to the teachers'

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theoretical assessment of the needs of the students who are differently abled.

This is supported in the assertion of Johnsson (2022) that teachers who were not self-sufficient in the facilitation of their PE classes encounter significant instructional problems. Specifically, the findings of Johnsson pointed out that teachers who fail to implement the right instruction when dealing with differently abled learners failed to fulfill their professional duties and responsibilities.

Drive for Inclusivity

From the responses of the participants, it was a common notion that they were fulfilled the required provisions for inclusive classes. Regular and differently abled learners should be able to learn the required competencies in their PE classes. With that in mind, the teachers provided an inclusive learning environment where there was no unfair treatment nor intentional allowance of nonconformance of the performance tasks. They made use of the available resources and adapt mechanisms that promoted instructional inclusivity.

The drive of the teachers for inclusivity parallels with the assertion of Bartoll et al. (2020) that there should be an effort towards inclusivity on the part of the teachers. For instance, teachers should expend efforts that differently abled learners receive the needed support during their PE classes. In support, Opoku et al. (2021) stressed on the teachers' desire to provide inclusive instruction is based on their innate intention to make learning in PE classes more meaningful.

The desire for inclusivity may also emanate from the teachers' educational background. Teachers who have undergone sufficient trainings demonstrate high degree of self-efficacy (Xu et al., 2021). As emphasized in the findings of Li et al. (2022) that only those who are adequately trained for inclusive physical education classroom setup would be able to provide the needed support of the learners with disability.

Emotional Setbacks

Along the way, PE teachers experienced emotional baggage as they facilitate the performance tasks of differently abled learners. The teachers experienced frustrations and stressful situations. Though they felt challenged, however, it was inevitable that they felt anxious on the performance outputs of the differently abled learners.

The emotional setbacks were not because of the student's disabilities, but on the context that PE curriculum was designed to be self-contained. Pellerin et al. (2022) underscored that PE teachers experience undue stress as they attempt to make classes inclusive which was originally framed to be self-contained. The emotional setbacks may also be brought by the feeling of inefficiency as discussed in Johnsson (2022).

The felt frustrations of the PE teachers are in cognizance with the findings of Behzadnia et al. (2022) that teachers felt more frustrated when they failed to provide the needs of the learners. This is particularly situated in the context of learners who are differently abled. On the other hand, the differently abled learners' nonperformance to the tasks was also found to have caused stress among the PE teachers.

Ruin et al. (2021) emphasized that the stressful experiences of the teachers handling differently abled learners were mostly due to the learners' nonperformance of the assigned tasks. Though a number of factors may be associated to their nonperformance, the teachers recognized that this may also be due to the unfit learning environment that that have set for the learners (Huhtiniemi et al., 2022). Meanwhile, it is also undeniable that some differently abled learners demonstrate unacceptable behavior in their PE performances which added to the stress of the teachers (Anastasia,2022).

Facilitation of Affective Environment

One of the themes that emerged is that the PE teachers facilitated the actualization of an affective environment for the differently abled learners. In this context, the teachers showed empathy to the differently abled learners; making them protective to the learners. They made adjustments which are fitting for the needs of these learners. Setting the affective environment right also entails the provision that the differently abled learners can work with their peers who understands them.

The teachers' facilitation of an affective learning environment for the differently abled learners is in cognizance with the findings of Leo et al. (2022) on the teachers' provision of appropriate environment for learning. According to the authors, the teachers' manner of setting up the learning environment contributed to the success or failure of the instructional process. Pulimeno et al. (2020) posited that one of the considerations in facilitating a conducive learning environment is the consideration of the learners' well-being.

On the other hand, the teachers' shared experiences on the adjustments that they implemented for the differently abled learners parallel to what Alves et al. (2022) claimed about the need to understand the learners. Further, the authors argued that effective accommodations can only be achieved when the teachers fully understand their learners. On a similar stance, Haegele et al. (2020) showed that adjustments made for differently abled learners should not lead to marginalization but towards inclusion.

Implementation of Tailor-fit Activities

The teachers experienced implementing tailor-fit activities for the differently abled learners. As such, they aligned their instruction based on the needs and capacity of the learners. The diverse needs of the learners were given due considerations in adapting activities and performance tasks to be implemented.

The concept of tailor-fitting the activities based on the needs of the learners is in cognizance with Meijers et al. (2024) who revealed in their findings that successful instruction is attributed by the implementation of needs-based activities. In addition, the authors consider the learners' strength and weaknesses in making adjustments with the activities or tasks.

In support, Opoku et al. (2021) argued that teachers modify the programmed performances in PE classes after assessing the capacity of the learners in their class. Kangas and Cook (2020)

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emphasized that tailor-fitting of activities are special considerations for students with unique needs such as mental, and physical disabilities. Lynch et al. (2020) showed evidence that the learners disabilities should be considered in modifying instructions to ensure that their strengths are not overlooked and undervalued.

Table 2
Major Themes and Core Ideas on the Coping Mechanisms of Teachers in Facilitating the Performance Tasks of Differently Abled Learners

Themes	Core Ideas
Finding Ways to Make Instructions Work	• having utilized various strategies • being adaptive to change and differences • being considerate of the students' abilities • having individualized instruction in facilitating the lessons • promoting research-based approaches
Conscious on Teaching Efficiency	• being cautious on strategies • being persistent in teaching • extending beyond minimum requirements • being mindful on the methods used • being self-sufficient as a teacher or facilitator in the classroom
Data-based Intervention	• fostering deeper understanding with the learners • immersing learners in mainstream activities • testing instructional strategies that works best • considering the learners' preferences • establishing genuine connections
Social Engagement	• having established collaborations with peers • being able to establish professional connections • being consultative with the parents and maintain communication with them • having benchmarked with better practices from others
Utilization of Support Mechanism	• having received necessary equipment and facilities from the school • being immersed with relevant trainings • having quality administrative support • welcoming available support from the institution

Finding Ways to Make Instructions Work

The participants shared that they have successfully surpassed the challenges with the utilization on various strategies. These strategies were deemed fitting for the differences in the behavior, response level and capacity of the differently abled learners. They were considerate of what their students were capable of performing. In general, the approaches that utilized were adaptive of the current situation and flexible to the capacity of the differently abled learners.

The participants' shared means of coping parallel to the findings of Banville et al. (2020) that PE teachers who are handling differently abled learners must adapt strategies that are suited for the diverse needs of these learners. Other than being knowledgeable of the content of instruction, Nanayakkara (2022) noted in their findings that PE teachers should be flexible in the implementation level to ensure that this is within the capacity of the learners with disability.

On a similar stance, Lynch et al. (2020) emphasized that PE teachers should consider the strengths of the differently abled learners in crafting modified performance tasks. This is necessary for the learners to achieve quality outcomes. Moreover, Symeonidou and Mavrou (2020) pinpointed that teachers should be sensitive with the situation of the differently abled learners. In doing so, teachers can expect that favorable learning outcomes are yielded despite of the students' disabilities.

Conscious on Teaching Efficiency

It emerged from the sharing that PE teachers rise above the circumstance with their practices. Their responses indicated that being conscious on their teaching efficiency works. This entailed being cautious or mindful with the strategies that they used. Being efficient entailed being self-sufficient as a teacher.

The finding is in cognizance with that of Symeonidou and Mavrou (2020) that teaching efficiency is essential when facilitating the performance tasks of differently abled learners. Accordingly, learners with disabilities should be provided with equitable access to education. Effective instruction in cases like this lies on the efficiency of the teachers. Similarly, Xu et al. (2021) posited that teachers who continuously work on becoming self-sufficient are efficient in the facilitation of their classes. Further, their findings extend on the utilization of inclusive strategies that works well for students with disabilities in a regular PE class.

Hutzler and Choresh (2023) accentuated that efficient PE teachers are more successful in providing effective instruction to students who are differently abled as compared to those who are still grappling on the choice of strategies. In addition, the authors made it clear that those who demonstrated teaching

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efficiency adapt the coaching strategies which provides venue for the learners to work on their strengths rather than focus on their disabilities.

Data-based Intervention

The participants shared that one of their means of coping with the challenges was through implementing interventions. Such interventions were considered applicable since these were based on actual data. From the data gathered, the participants shared that they were able to understand the learners, mainstream the activities, and even determined which strategies work. They also considered the preferences of the learners, and in the process, they were able to connect with them.

The findings parallel with Leahy et al. (2021) that interventions for differently abled learners are effective when these are based on research. This includes the provision of assistive equipment to cater the differentiated needs of the learners. In the same manner, Behzadnia et al. (2022) posited that teachers can efficiently facilitate the performance of differently abled learners through implementing needs-based plan. Accordingly, the needs-based plan can be achieved through establishing in-depth understanding of the learners' conditions.

Subsequently, Park et al. (2021) strengthened the findings of this study with their conclusion that the effectivity of interventions is gauged through actual data analysis. For instance, the use of assistive prompting behavior for students with disability worked well during PE classes since this found to smoothly go along with instructional inclusion.

Social Engagement

The challenges were surpassed with the teachers' means of tapping the professionals whom they can exchange information with, or whom they can tap for help in facilitating the performance tasks of the differently abled learners. Collaborations with peers, professionals, the parents, and maintaining communications with them were among their means of engagement with people who can provide the necessary support.

The finding parallel to the assertion of Daughrity et al. (2020) on interprofessional collaboration when handling differently abled learners. According to the findings of the authors, the practice of collaborating with professionals was essential in skills and knowledge sharing for the PE teachers in the field. This can equip them with cognition on the needs and skills in creating interventions designed for the special needs of the learners. In support, An (2021) suggested that teachers should be engaged in socially situated teaching practices. This can provide them with thorough understanding and upskill them in handling differently abled learners in their PE classes.

Meanwhile, Widyawan et al. (2020) conjectured that involving the parents is significant in the producing quality educational outcomes for the learners. It was found in their study that the active involvement of the parents in school and in the community create a supportive environment. This allowed the teachers to be more confident in their instruction since they have the support of the parents.

Utilization of Support Mechanism

Given the immense challenges brought by facilitating performance tasks in PE classes, the teachers' have to anchor themselves with reliable support. Their shared means of coping came up with a common notion that they made use of the support provided to them. Starting from the support they get from the school, they also received institution-initiated trainings and the ones from the agency – the Department of Education (DepEd).

The finding supports the claim of Opoku et al. (2021) that supporting the PE teachers through sending them to trainings can help them carry out their instructional functions. This is specifically crucial due to the weight of needs of the differently abled learners. In addition, the authors affirmed that sufficient trainings and experience of the PE teachers significantly contribute to successful PE instruction. In support, Antala et al. (2022) emphasized that the provision of sufficient support such as resources and trainings significantly aid the PE teachers to facilitate the performance tasks without undue biases. Further, Alves et al. (2022) argued that sufficient provisions from the authorized institutions assisted the teachers to understand the disabilities of the learners in their classes. With this, they can prepare better activities that would meet the needs and capacity of the differently abled learners.

Table 3
Major Themes and Core Ideas on the Insights Drawn from the Experiences of the Physical Education Teachers in Facilitating the Performance Tasks of Differently Abled Learners

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Accommodating the Unique Needs of the Learners	• having better understanding of the learning situation • creating inclusive learning environment that supports learning • creating and preparing activities for the students • fostering inclusive and supportive classroom atmosphere • establishing peer mentoring and buddy system
Practicing Resourcefulness and Innovativeness	• giving full attention to this group of learners while identifying suitable activities or competencies that fits them • doing research on what strategies best used in accommodating the learners • equipping the teachers with knowledge and skills on how to handle this kind of learners • planning to pursue further training and certifications • conducting research for effective strategies

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Establishing Network and Support	• working with those who have experienced the situation • establishing social collaborations • involving parents in their children's education • seeking help from experts if the situation is challenging
Practicing Positive and Supportive Behavior	• reinforcing peer support • being patient with the learners • showing positive behavior to the learners • empathizing and building relationship with the learners

Accommodating the Unique Needs of Learners

Another insight drawn from the participants' experiences is that they should accommodate the unique needs of learners. These limitations should not be a reason to stop exhorting efforts to facilitate the differently abled learners to be engaged in the tasks during their PE classes. They perceived that it would help if they create modules when needed. The implementation of creative activities is also one of the considerations. These are taxing on the part of the teachers, however, the benefits that the learners can get outweigh the expended resources of the teachers.

Holland et al. (2023) challenged the educators to implement instructions surpassing the current limitations. Teachers should have a reflexive look at the learners with disabilities. Review of the applicability of the PE curricula according to Mihajlovic and Meier (2022) are means of surpassing the limits of the teachers.

Similarly, Block et al. (2021) pointed out that consistent review of the instructional practices and patronizing those that are effective may mean additional load for the teachers. However, according to the findings, this is among the many things that teachers do over and above the required working hours.

Practicing Resourcefulness and Innovativeness

Given the meager resources in public schools and the high demand for inclusive education, the PE teachers perceived that there is a need a need to be resourceful and innovative. In this way, they can provide the needed accommodations for the differently abled learners. The teachers' resourcefulness and innovativeness drive the teachers to think beyond the situation and maximize the use of available resources. This also entails improvising when necessary; being self-reliant to perform the expected functions as a teacher.

Cornwall (2020) noted that the teachers' resourcefulness is critical in the development of different accommodations for the differently abled learners. This may come in the form of adapted sports where both able-bodied and learners with disabilities engage and interact with the same physical activity.

On the other hand, Meier et al. (2023) contended that the teachers' exercise of their innovativeness can lead them to the development of more advanced mechanisms for PE instruction inclusivity. The use digital materials, simulations and other software can be useful in facilitating the performance tasks of the differently abled learners. In support, Ugsang et al. (2023) purported that practicing innovativeness in teaching is one of the foregrounds that support effective facilitation of learning among learners with disabilities.

Establishing Network and Support

The current challenges in providing inclusive instruction for the differently abled learners is not a "one-man show". This requires resources and support from various groups. With these in mind, the participants accentuated the need to establish networking and support. They deem it imperative that they associate with the right professionals in the field. They also consider it necessary to build a support group from their colleagues, parents, and significant others.

The finding is in cognizance with Maher and Fitzgerald (2020) who claimed that strengthening social network with professionals can be favorable for teachers handling differently abled learners. This is anchored on the fact that networking with professionals not only provide venue for structured development programs but also informal exchange of significant information.

Meanwhile, Alfrey and Jeanes (2023) affirmed that establishing social partnership with agencies or institutions boost the capacity of teachers to facilitate inclusive instruction. Similarly, parents also take part as social partners of teachers in facilitating the performance tasks of the differently abled learners. Widyawan et al. (2020) avowed that the establishment of linkage with parents of the learners with disabilities provide significant support for the teachers. This may come in the form of reassurance that the strategies used are vital and functional within the level of the learners.

Practicing Positive and Supportive Behavior

The participants perceived that the practice of positive and supportive behavior is one of the key elements for successful facilitation of the differently abled learners' performance tasks. They understood that complaining for what are missing and insufficient cannot provide them with the tool to help the learners. The participants came up with ideas that there should be reliable support from the class. Teachers should also be patient and stay in focus with the situation. Further, being positive means rejoicing on the accomplishments of the learners, and take everything with a positive mind and heart.

Antala et al. (2022) showed in their findings that positive and supportive behavior of teachers facilitated the adaption of programs and activities suited for differently abled learners. This is of essence since being positive and

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supportive means conducting through assessment on how a certain instructional strategy fit with the needs of the learners; always putting the learners needs on the top priority. In support, Grenier et al. (2023) posited that the teachers' intentional instructional behavior is critical in the teachers' choice of teaching methodologies and accommodations for the learners with disabilities.

Beyazoglu (2021) argued that the teacher's favorable attitude in accommodating the differently abled learners impact the latter's performance. In support to this, Tarantino et al. (2022) revealed that the teachers' attitudes in facilitating the performance of differently abled learners are associated with the quality of the outcomes. Hence, it is assumed that positive attitudes can lead to the production of quality instructional outcomes.

Implications for Teaching Practice

It is indeed a challenge to successfully facilitate an inclusive performance tasks for the differently abled learners. Teachers have to ensure that they are being fair in rating the performance. Above all, they have to ensure that learners with disabilities perform based on their strengths and capacity.

On the experiences of the teachers, it was noted that teachers have the innate drive for inclusivity. This is indicative that PE teachers have already an underlying knowledge on handling differently abled learners. The facilitation of affective environment and the implementation of tailor-fit activities suggest that educational institutions should support the initiatives of the teachers. It has to be acknowledge that as the Department of Education demand for excellence, it is imperative that the teachers' initiative for inclusivity is sustained. This may come in the form of assistive programs, funding support for teachers' initiatives and similar provisions.

On the teachers' means of coping with the experienced challenges, the findings showed that the PE teachers were resilient. However, this does not suggest that the academic institution would no longer pay attention to them because they were able to surpass the challenges. The individual difference of the learners and the current characterization of the differently able learners should be properly communicated to the teachers. Hence, this is suggestive that the Department of Education provide appropriate provisions for the teachers to be immersed on the wide array of instructional strategies that they may utilize. Sufficient funding mechanism that promotes instructional efficiency should be given due considerations.

On the insights drawn from the PE teachers handling differently abled learners, it is indicative that long-term programs for the provision of appropriate accommodations should be in place. Consistent monitoring on how the teachers promote quality outcomes can be considered by the school administration.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study was limited to the PE teachers handling differently abled learners in the identified research locale. The interviews and discussions provided rich data resource for the teachers and other interested parties.

Future research may focus on the pitfalls of instruction considering that trainings on inclusive instruction already exists. Impact assessment may also be conducted to establish the strengths and weaknesses of the implemented strategies in facilitating the performance tasks of the learners with disability.

The result of this qualitative investigation was limited to 14 participants— seven for IDI and seven for FGD—who were purposively chosen among the PE instructors who experienced handling differently abled learners in their PE classes. This is indicative that the findings cannot be held conclusive outside of the identified participants. To gain more insights on the phenomenon, it is recommended that further study involving more participants be explored.

Concluding Remarks

This phenomenological study focused the experiences of the of the Physical Education teachers in facilitating the performance tasks of differently abled learners. Through this study, I was able to delve deeper into the experiences of the PE teachers and brought into the surface their challenges, means of coping, and the insights drawn from their experiences. To ensure that the participants provided rich data resource, they were purposively picked based on the set inclusion criteria.

The participants' openness in sharing their experiences engrossed me to look deeper into the phenomenon being investigated. I held my biases as a teacher to capture the themes that the participants intended to verbalize. Their experiences made me realized the passion and dedication of the PE teachers to provide inclusive classroom environment despite of the scarce resources.

The PE teachers' resilience overshadowed the experienced challenges in facilitating the performance tasks of the differently abled learners. They made use of varied strategies that were found effective by experts and by their colleagues. They widened their horizons by being adaptive to the needs, and conscious with the way they handle the learners. Acknowledging the scarcity, the teachers expound their professional and stakeholder circle to provide the learners with the resources needed for them to learn.

Finally, the PE teachers worked even beyond their limits for the differently abled learners not to feel disadvantaged in their PE class. They provided the learners with what they need, from modified learning materials to emotional support. All of these were done to make PE classes inclusive and performance-based for the learners.

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