

The Experiences of Junior High School Physical Education Teachers in Transitioning from Face-to-Face to Online Classes During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Jan Michael Vincent F. Hiloma¹, Kristian Karl N. Valbuena², Teresita Ignacio, PhD³

Saint Louis University Baguio, Philippines

Abstract

This study explored the experiences of junior high school Physical Education (PE) education teachers in the Philippines when they transitioned from face-to-face to online modality due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Using a qualitative research design, this study identified the strategies they use for face-to-face classes and online classes, the challenges they experienced, and how they coped and overcome these difficulties. The researchers conducted an in-depth interview with PE teachers (n=5) from private schools in Metro Manila and in Baguio City. The interviews were transcribed, coded, and analyzed. Upon analysis of the data, the 4 main themes emerged. Under the themes of face-to-face and of online strategies, 2 sub-themes were identified namely instructional delivery and assessments. For the theme on challenges in online mode of delivery, 4 sub-themes emerged namely a) technological challenges; b) lesson preparation; c) student engagement and participation; and, d) class performance and output submission. For coping strategies, there are 2 sub-themes i.e. being flexible and adaptable, and upskilling and training. Given these findings, the researchers concluded that despite their use of technology, PE teachers still heavily employed traditional pedagogies for their online classes during the pandemic. The challenges they experienced applies to every aspect of their online classes; yet, their coping strategies only accounted for some of these challenges. It is recommended then that teachers explore new technologically-mediated pedagogical approaches and that school administrators and policymakers be more proactive in providing PE teachers with needed technological and pedagogical support.

Keywords: online physical education, Philippines, COVID-19 pandemic, qualitative research
On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization's Director-General Tedros

Introduction:

Adhanom Ghebreyesus declared the coronavirus outbreak a pandemic. During this point, 114 countries across the globe have already reported approximately 118,000 cases and 4,300 deaths (Branswell & Joseph, 2020). Various countries across the globe have implemented their own ways of controlling the spread of the virus such as mass testing and lockdowns. It has been reported that by the end of March 2020, a total of 100 countries have entered either into partial or total lockdown (Dunford et al., 2020). As a result of this lockdown, travels and flights have been cancelled, business have been shut down, and schools have been closed (Dunford et al., 2020). This lockdown and closure of academic institutions which has affected “94% of the world’s student population” (Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021) has forced schools to transition from the traditional face-to-face set up to remote online mode of teaching and learning. According to Ferri et al. (2020), this shift to a fully online mode of teaching and learning has been supported by UNESCO as this would prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

Online teaching and learning has been defined by Ferri et al. (2020) as the utilization of digital devices in order to support teachers in their instruction and students in their learning. Past studies have identified various benefits to online mode of learning. This includes transcending borders as anyone can study from anywhere in the world and flexibility in terms of choosing one’s school, classes, or in doing one’s tasks (Ferri et al., 2020). Likewise, online classes are known to save costs and expenditures both for the school as they no longer need to spend money on daily maintenance costs and for students as they no longer need to spend money for food outside their homes, for lodging, or for travel fares (Ferri et al., 2020). Lastly, online classes save school staff and students time as they no longer need to commute in crowded public transportation (Ferri et al., 2020).

However, despite these benefits of shifting to online class, problems and concerns for both teachers and students have been identified. For instance, vulnerable populations and economically challenged individuals experience struggles in “meeting the basic conditions required by online learning” (Ferri et al., 2020). Additionally, both students and teachers experience their own set of physical and mental stress brought about not just by the online setup but by the pandemic in general (Ozamiz-Etxebarria et al., 2021; Schwartz et al., 2021). This has led researchers and scholars to examine the experiences and challenges faced by both teachers and students during the pandemic.

There have been several studies published which investigated the experiences and the challenges encountered by teachers. For instance, Van der Spoel et al. (2020) examined the expectations and the experiences of 200 Dutch teachers with respect to online teaching during the onset of the pandemic using quantitative methods. The researchers found that teachers with more experiences in using and integrating technology into their classes have more positive perceptions towards online education. Van der Spoel et al. (2020) also found that for teachers, online education resulted in an urgency for the teachers to professionalize. This is because the unprecedented situation forced them to immediately learn and implement how to integrate technology into their classes and lessons. Results of the study show that the participants regard this urgency for professionalization as a positive aspect. Furthermore, the study found that the immediate transition to online teaching has allowed teachers to re-evaluate “their methods of teaching and made them focus on the core elements of their curriculum” (Van der Spoel et al., 2020, p. 10). However, results also showed that during the transition, the participants experienced a significant increase in time pressure and in their teaching workload.

In the field of Physical Education (PE), there has been a considerable amount of literature which studied the experiences and challenges of PE teachers in conducting online classes. This research interest likely comes from the fact that the goal of PE is evidently different from that of academic subjects such as Science, Math, and English, to name a few. While the subject matter of the latter primarily focuses on theories and theoretical knowledge, PE primarily centers around physical activity. Hence, the preparation, the experiences, and the challenges of PE teachers are not necessarily the same as those experienced by teachers handling academic subjects.

For instance, the study of Jeong and So (2020) centered on the analysis of the difficulties experienced by PE teachers in South Korea as they transitioned to online mode of delivery. Using qualitative methods, they found that the challenges their participants experienced included three factors. Firstly, the participants shared that there is a certain “monotony” in the classes they handle especially given the students’ “limited environmental conditions” (Jeong & So, 2020, p. 1). In addition to this, the participants expressed that their “limited educational content” does not really capture the value of PE (Jeong & So, 2020, p. 1). Secondly, Jeong and So (2020) found that teachers engaged in trial-and-error when it comes to instructional approaches. The participants cited that this is due to a lack of expertise or of experience in handling PE classes online pre-pandemic (Jeong & So, 2020, p. 1). Lastly, the participants shared that there were “very limited evaluation guidelines” released by their government, particularly the Korea Ministry of Education. As a result, the participants believe that this made “systematic evaluation with online methods impossible” (Jeong & So, 2020, p. 1).

Such challenges have also been noted in the study of Varea et al. (2020) where they investigated the changes in the approaches of PE teachers in Spain also using qualitative methods. In this particular study, it was shown that the way PE is taught indeed changed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Results show that the traditional way of teaching PE is currently at risk because the pandemic has caused people to have more individual activities rather than social ones (Varea et al., 2020). In particular, the pandemic has increased the students' personal spaces and has consequently decreased physical contact with others (Varea et al., 2020). Furthermore, findings of the study show that PE teachers felt that their roles shifted from being educators to having a typical office or administrative job because they were forced to be in front of their computers all day (Varea et al., 2020). Those who are PE teachers pre-pandemic also expressed a sense of longing for the traditional way of instruction of the subject matter (Varea et al., 2020). Because the learning environment is extremely different from before, the participants shared that there seems to be a lack of guidance for the students which is something they are able to effectively give before (Varea et al., 2020). They expressed feeling various negative emotions such as insecurity, fear, doubt, and anxiety as a result of the pandemic and the new learning set-up (Varea et al., 2020).

Lastly, in the study of Mercier et al. (2021), they also investigated the experiences of PE teachers in terms of remote learning during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Using a quantitative methodology, they surveyed PE teachers (n=4,362) from all the states in the US. Their sample includes elementary (52%), secondary (25%), and multilevel educators (23%) (Mercier et al., 2021).

In developing countries like the Philippines, there are very few studies yet which explore the experiences and the perceptions of teachers with respect to remote learning. In the

quantitative study of Moralista and Oducado (2020) involving state college instructors and faculty members, it was found that a significant percentage had “intermediate computer competency” and only a few had stable Internet connectivity. However, a significant percentage is found to have no training at all when it comes to remote online instruction.

Moralista and Oducado’s (2020) study also show that while teachers still feel uncertain when it comes to being in favor of remote learning, they were more concerned with how it would lead to “more academic dishonesty”, to more “impersonal” and disengaged class interaction and experiences, and to more difficulties in managing classes “in terms of technology”.

In the phenomenological study of Robosa et al. (2021) involving public school teachers, three themes emerged i.e. lived experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms. For the theme of lived experiences, the participants shared that their source of motivation was primarily their students and “finding interest in their students' eyes and the smile on their faces whenever they were teaching” (Robosa et al., 2021, p. 1350). They also shared that their relationship with their students was vital and that when they have positive relationships with their students, the latter will most likely be motivated to attend classes and to excel. Lastly, they feel a certain sense of fulfillment of duty when they see their students excel outside the classroom setup such as when they enter and win competitions.

In terms of challenges, three sub-themes emerged namely the lack of resources for teachers, concerns in handling students, and concerns in their submission and overall workload. Robosa et al. (2021) found that the primary challenge for both public school teachers and students were lack of resources such as gadgets. The teachers shared that this limits the kind of activities they can administer in class. Additionally, getting their students to trust them and making them realize how important education is for them is also a difficulty identified by the

participants. In particular, the teachers found it extremely difficult to motivate students to accomplish their respective modules and submit required outputs for their subjects. Lastly, the participants shared that they experienced difficulties in accomplishing and submitting their workload because it was overwhelming and the communication with colleagues was limited.

Lastly, findings of Robosa et al. (2021) also included some of the coping mechanisms which participants did to overcome these challenges. Four subthemes emerged namely utilizing proper communication and understanding, being strategic, being flexible and welcome to adjustments and being considerate, and not being afraid to ask for assistance from others.

As established above, there have been studies which examined the experiences of college and public school teachers in the Philippines but not particularly those who handle Physical Education subjects. Additionally, there are studies which investigated the experiences and challenges experienced by PE teachers on online teaching during the onset of the COVID19 pandemic. However, the norms of these studies primarily involve developed countries such as Spain, South Korea, and the United States, to name a few. Hence, upon review of related literature, the researchers found that there are no studies yet which investigated or explored the experiences and the challenges encountered by PE teachers in the Philippines when it comes to remote online teaching during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The aim of this study then is to resolve this existing research gap. This study explored and examined the experiences of PE teachers, particularly Junior High School teachers who are employed in private institutions, when they transitioned from face-to-face to remote online mode instruction during the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic. In particular, the study answered the following research questions: 1) What are the strategies used by PE teachers during face-to-face classes pre-pandemic?; 2) What are the strategies used by PE teachers for

online classes during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic?; 3) What are the difficulties and challenges faced by PE teachers when they transitioned from face-to-face to remote online mode of delivery?; and, 4) How did PE teachers cope with the difficulties and challenges of teaching PE online?

The results of this study pose various implications both for the profession and for educational administrators and policymakers. On the one hand, this study would give other PE teachers a sense of relief as they may find the results of the study relatable. They would also be able to learn from the strategies and approaches shared by the respondents of the study. On the other hand, this study would enable school administrators and policymakers to be aware of the challenges and struggles of PE teachers when it comes to remote learning. This would then enable them to create and enact a more informed set of rules and guidelines along with a more empathic and teacher-centered support system.

Methods

Research Design

This research study employed a qualitative methodology particularly a phenomenological research design. According to Neubauer et al. (2019), this kind of research design pays particular attention to “the study of an individual’s lived experiences within the world”. Furthermore, according to Welman and Kruger (1999, p. 189), “phenomenologists are concerned with understanding social and psychological phenomena from the perspectives of people involved”. Phenomenology then distinguishes itself from other qualitative research designs by its focus on experienced meaning rather than on descriptions of overt actions and behaviors

(Polkinghorne,1989). Lastly, phenomenology follows the human science approach in that it “respects the essential characteristics of humanness throughout the research process” (Giorgi, 2009).

The phenomenological research design employed in this study is similar to the methodology employed in the study of Jeong and So (2020) where they used phenomenological methods to collect and analyze the qualitative data from the experiences of PE teachers in South Korea in terms of online distance learning. Additionally, as established in the literature review, several studies have looked at the perspectives and experiences of PE teachers in remote online mode instruction using qualitative methodologies. This study would likewise collect and analyze in-depth qualitative data about the experiences of PE teachers in the Philippines when they transitioned to distance learning during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Participants and Setting

The researchers utilized a purposive sampling technique for this study. According to Etikan et al. (2015), this is a kind of non-probability sampling technique wherein participants of a study are chosen based on certain criteria set by the researchers. Purposive samples include participants who can and who are “willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience” (Etikan et al., 2015, p. 2). According to Etikan et al. (2015, p. 2), purposive sampling is “typically used in qualitative research to identify and select the information-rich cases for the most proper utilization of available resources” because it “involves identification and selection of individuals or groups of individuals that are proficient and well-informed with a phenomenon of interest”.

According to Boyd (2001), in qualitative research, it is sufficient to have 2 to 10 participants to reach saturation. The number of participants (n=5) for this study satisfies this

qualification. The chosen locale of the study are private schools in Metro Manila and Baguio City, Philippines.

The criteria set for participants are as follows: 1) that they should be junior high school PE teachers from private schools in the Philippines; 2) that they should have taught PE prior to and during the COVID-19 pandemic; and, 3) that they should have taught using online remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The participants of this research are 5 junior high school PE teachers from private schools in Metro Manila and Baguio City. The sample is comprised of both males (n=4) and females (n=1). All the participants (n=5) possess a teaching experience of four to twenty five years as PE teachers. All the participants (n=5) experienced teaching in an online setting during the COVID-19 pandemic. Table 1 presents the profiles of the participants.

Table 1

Profile of Respondents

Respondents	School	Years of Experience Teaching PE
R1	San Beda College Alabang, Muntinlupa City	25 years
R2	Niño Jesus House of Studies, Pasig City	6 years
R3	San Beda College Alabang, Muntinlupa City	4 years
R4	Saint Louis School of Pacdal, Baguio City	8 years
R5	Saint Louis School of Pacdal, Baguio City	9 years

Data Gathering Tools and Procedures

The researchers employed a semi-structured interview as the method of data gathering for this study. According to Magaldi and Berler (2020), this is a qualitative research method which

is “exploratory”. Additionally, according to Adams (2015), it utilizes a mix of both “closed- and

open-ended questions, often accompanied by follow-up why or how questions”.

There are three phases to the data gathering procedure conducted in the study. The first phase is the preparation phase. This involves looking for participants for the study who meet the criteria set above. Upon identification of target participants, the researchers approached them through private message using Facebook Messenger. Upon agreement, arrangements were made with the PE teachers in terms of the date and time and the Google Meet or Zoom invites were sent out afterwards. In the first phase, the researchers also prepared the data gathering tool used which is the interview guide. Table 2 presents the interview guide.

Questions 1 and 2 are demographic questions. Questions 3, 4, and 5 are based on the first research question of the study. Questions 6 and 7, questions 8 to 10, and questions 12 to 15 correspond to research questions 2, 3, and 4 respectively.

The second phase of the data gathering procedure involves the interview proper. On the day of the interview, the respondents were informed that they may not pursue any time they want. Prior to the interview proper, a brief orientation about the background of the study being conducted was given. Afterwards, the respondents were informed that the interview will be recorded for the purpose of the transcribing and that the study may be published in the future. Upon providing their consent, the researchers proceeded with the interview. As the method

employed in the study is a semi-structured interview, follow-up questions were asked along with the questions in the interview guide until the saturation of the information. At the end of the interview, the researchers stopped the recording and warmly thanked the respondents for their participation in the study. The interviews were conducted from July 16 to 19, 2021.

The third and last phase of the data gathering process is the transcription of the interview recording. According to Halcomb and Davidson (2006), transcription is the “process of reproducing spoken words, such as those from an audiotaped interview, into written text”. For this study, orthographic or verbatim transcription is employed. This means that in the transcript, the researchers reproduced word-for-word the “verbal data, where the written words are an exact replication of the audio-recorded words” (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006). To confirm that the audio data was correctly transcribed, the video and/or audio recording were watched and listened to repeatedly. From the data transcribed, the researchers isolated and extracted noteworthy statements for the data analysis.

Data Analysis

The researchers utilized axial coding and thematic analysis for the study’s data analysis. According to Allen (2017), axial coding involves “relating data together in order to reveal codes, categories, and subcategories ground within participants’ voices within one’s collected data”. The relevant responses of the participants were highlighted by the researchers in order to extract the statements. The researchers then utilized a word table isolating and categorizing the participants’ transcribed interview responses.

The data gathered underwent two coding cycles. The first coding cycle determined the main themes while the second only determined each theme’s sub-theme. After coding the responses and clustering them respectively, the researchers conducted a thematic analysis.

According to Nowell et al. (2017), this is a “method for identifying, analyzing, organizing, describing, and reporting themes found within a data set”.

Ethics of Research

Informed consent was verbally sought from the participants. They were advised that they are allowed to withdraw from the study at any time or refuse to participate altogether even after they initially expressed their consent. All interviewees were given information about 1) the study's context; 2) how their data would be used, and 3) the objectives of the study. Permission to record their responses was sought and it was only upon their approval that the researchers started to record.

Additionally, to protect the privacy of the participants, their names were not included in the study. They are simply referred to as Respondents 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 respectively. No other personal and private information aside from their name, their affiliation, and years of experience were asked.

Findings and Discussion

Upon analyzing the data from the respondents, 4 themes emerged which correspond to the research questions of the study. These themes are as follows: 1) face-to-face strategies; 2) online strategies; 3) challenges in online mode of delivery; and 4) coping strategies. Consequently, various sub-themes have been identified for each theme.

Table 2

Summary of Themes and Sub-themes

Theme	Subtheme
Face-to-face Strategies	Instructional Assessments Delivery
Online Strategies	Instructional Assessments Delivery
Challenges in online mode of delivery	Technological Challenges Lesson Preparation Student Engagement and Participation Class Performance and Output Submission
Coping Strategies	Being Flexible and Adaptable Upskilling and Trainings

Face-to-face Strategies

Instructional Delivery

According to the respondents, in terms of instructional delivery prior to the pandemic, they usually utilize demonstration in class or hands-on teaching. This goes for all subject matters taught in PE such as fitness, recreation, individual sports, and team sports.

R3: We usually teach them how we do the task, and then we usually demonstrate it to them face-to-face.

R5: When it comes to skills-based topics, before the pandemic me and my students usually do our activities on the court or in the gymnasium since I usually like to do hands-on teaching, like demonstrating to them a certain lesson, for example gymnastics, we as a teacher usually need to be hands-on specially when they are executing basic moves like forward roll, cartwheel.

After demonstration, they would usually ask the students to perform the skill or the task that they have demonstrated. In cases wherein the students make mistakes, they would usually point out the mistake immediately and show to the students the proper manner of execution.

R1: I usually do some exercises which I can show the student while they are listening to my discussion and after that there some instructions that I will give them, they will do the activities according to my instructions... So tinuturo ko muna yung mga theories, then application kung paano i-apply yung skills, and then I'll be going to demonstrate, and then yung mga bata naman after that they will also do the same.

R4: So prior to the pandemic, it's a usual routine—we teach students in the highest standard face to face. Kumbaga nakikita natin ng live yung performance nila. Kaya natin ma-correct mga mistakes nila on the spot.

In the study of Varea et al. (2020), it was found that teachers who teach PE classes prior to the COVID-19 pandemic certainly prefer direct instruction and demonstration as a mode of delivery. PE is regarded as a “practical and ‘hands-on’ subject in schools” which entails “close proximity and physical contact” among students and between students and teachers (Varea et al., 2020).

Additionally, this finding coincides with the results of the study of Gumbo et al. (2017) where they found that PE teachers often use the strategies of task teaching, active teaching, and interactive teaching as ways to teach their subject matter. Task teaching is defined as a strategy wherein students are asked to practice tasks and monitor their learning activities (Gumbo et al., 2017). Active teaching, on the other hand, involve “hands-on teaching and learning activities” where students learn skills by “practicing them rather merely being a spectator to the skill” (Gumbo et al., 2017). Lastly, interactive teaching employs a “two-way communication” between the teaches and their students whereby the former “continuously monitors and responds” to the latter’s “thinking by adjusting the flow and focus of the lesson”.

Assessments

In terms of delivering assessments to their students prior to the pandemic, the respondents state that they focus primarily on assessing the students’ understanding of the

lesson by checking if the students are able to properly and correctly execute the skills and tasks which they are asked to do.

R1: Kapag nagtuturo tayo ng skills syempre number one kung naiintindihan ba nila yung concept ng skills na tinuturo natin, titignan natin yun. Pangalawa, kung tama ba yung ginagawa nilang skills na sinabi natin. Doon tayo nagba-base.

R2 The performance and if they execute the drills properly

In order to properly grade the students' performances, all of the respondents stated that they use rubrics or scoring guides to help them.

R4: When it comes to assessing my students or assessing the performance I usually use rubrics in grading their activities.

R5: I usually use scoring guides in assessing my students. This is the one that I used to know if the students master this skill or at least we know what they need to do in order for them to progress.

According to Shaw (2013), the use of rubrics in assessments allow the teachers to inform the students about "what is expected of them". This consequently enables them to "scaffold learning", and to employ a feedback mechanism to their students (Shaw, 2013).

Online Strategies

Instructional Delivery

Prior to the pandemic, all the respondents did not have any experience teaching PE online. However, they have been forced to transition from face-to-face instruction to online mode of delivery during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, they had to employ new instructional delivery approaches. One of these new approaches is the preparation of video lectures or pre-recorded video demonstrations in lieu of the demonstrations they do in face-to-face classes.

R3: In the online mode on the new normal setup we usually do our video recordings, and then we let them watch the video, we let them ask questions, we let them practice the task, and then we let them perform

R4: 'Yong usually ginagawa namin is gumagawa kami ng pre-recording and at the same time may mga naka ready na din kami ng mga modules para sa kanila (students).

This strategy complements the results of the study of Islam et al. (2020) wherein they found that students prefer pre-recorded video lessons over live lectures via Zoom. The reason they have cited include “flexibility, convenience, and educational effectiveness” (Islam et. al, 2020). Likewise, even prior to the pandemic, it has been found by Weir and Connor (2009) that using digital videos can be “worthwhile aid to the education process”.

In addition to asking students to watch pre-recorded videos, the teachers stated that they also repeat or discuss some of the concepts to their students when they hold their synchronous classes.

R1: 'Yong ginawa kong strategy yung pre-recorded video. I find it very okay kasi, number one, prior to the lesson nakikita ng bata 'yong ipe-present mo sa klase. Napanood na ng mga bata yung lesson na gagawin mo. More or less meron na siyang idea after no'n. Habang nagkaklase kami, inuulit ko pa rin 'yong video; parang instructional video siya.

R5: For example gymnastics, since hindi ko naman maa-apply ang gymnastic move through synchronous session, I usually send videos to our Google class in which kailangan nila itong panoorin and at the same time I also teach the fundamentals in our synchronous class.

This complements the conclusion of the study of Weir and Connor (2009) that “technology should support the underlying instructional approaches and that the effective use of ICT should not mean the absence of organised structure” (Weir & Connor, 2009).

Assessments

In terms of the delivery of assessments for online classes, the respondents usually ask students to send video recordings of their required tasks. Just like in the face-to-face setup, they utilize score guides and rubrics to help them grade the students. These rubrics are also based on how the students ought to correctly execute their tasks; however, they add components to it that perfectly fits the online environment of the class. Additional online assessments include online quizzes and homeworks.

R3: In terms of assessing them now, since we usually watch the videos that they prepared, we still have our checklist but I think it is not that long unlike in the face-to-face setup.

R4: For example, gumagamit pa rin tayo ng rubric when they are going to perform through online. Tulad na lang ng online dance or on how to properly do these movements in Philippine Folk Dance. And also it's a good thing na kahit pandemic is pwede silang mag-send ng kanilang mga recording na activities. For example, pwedeng mag record ng dance and peperform lang nila ito in the comfort of their home and they will send it to us teachers.

R5: Meron pa rin akong ginagamit na scoring guide and also a rubric when it comes to assessing them in their activities. Let's say yung scoring guide na ginagamit ko is my konting pagbabago which is naka-design talaga siya for online class. So may mga tinanggal ako at may mga idinagdag in our scoring guide. Kasi may mga nakalagay na they need to do it as a pair or as a group, so may mga binago lang tayo ng konti doon. But usually, in assessing them they need to pass a requirements like videos of them doing this kind of activities regarding our subject, and also assessing them through quizzes and homework which are already in the module.

Challenges in Online Mode of Delivery

Technological Challenges

One of the primary challenges which the respondents experienced when they transitioned to online mode of delivery are those which are technological in nature. An example they have cited is poor and unstable Internet connection which is experienced not just by the teachers but by the students as well. As a result, students are absent in their online classes.

R3: In terms of internet connection, a lot of students can't go to the online class because of the internet connection.

R4: 'Yong isyu ng ating poor internet service connection. Since sa Pilipinas tayo nakatira na talagang mabagal ang Internet, given naman na nahihirapan talaga tayo sa signal since island or pulo-pulo ang Pilipinas. To that given situation, may mga estudyante din ako na umuwi sa kanilang probinsya na may poor internet connection kaya during lecture hindi maiiwasan na may mga nagla-lag or hindi maka-attend sa klase dahil mahina ang internet connection, and also nahihirapan mag-send ng kanilang activities.

R5: One of the problem talaga is yung may mga estudyante na napapadalas ang pag absent sa klase, sometimes internet connection yung problema and sometimes may mga estudyante na walang paramdam talaga so kailangan natin mag reach out sa kanila.

This finding supports the previous study conducted by Moralista and Oducado (2020) and Robosa et al. (2021). Both studies cited the problems of teachers in managing classes due to technology concerns like poor Internet connection and lack of technological resources.

Lesson Preparation

According to the respondents, they also found lesson preparation to be particularly challenging. This is likely because they have not yet had any experience teaching PE online prior to the pandemic. Concerns such as figuring out how to write modules, how to use and navigate their school's Learning Management Systems (LMS), what strategies to employ for online instruction, and how to make topic manageable for students have been identified.

R1: As a Physical Education teacher, ang problema sa adjustment ng difficulties ay, number 1, preparation sa klase. They're going to do modules—gagawa ka ng modules per quarter. You will try to learn also. Bago para sa ating lahat ang LMS na ginagamit namin sa school....Kumbaga paano mo ilalagay ang face-to-face class shifting to online class. Especially in PE, kasi alam naman natin na medyo mas madali yung ibang subject kaysa sa PE. 'Di ba kasi, lagi naman talaga silang nagtuturo sa classroom eh, pang classroom setup sila. Pero sa atin as a PE is movements ang kailangan natin eh. Paano natin ilalagay yun sa screen? 'Yon ang number one difficulty or question sa akin noong una. Paano ko siya gagawin sa online class? Kasi alam naman natin na hindi lahat ng lesson or skill is kayang gawin online.

R2 In terms of the preparation. For me, the challenge is to make the task. 'Yong gagawin mo yung task na hindi mahirap for them. 'Yong madali siyang intindihin. Kumbaga sa pagkain is madali siyang nguyain. Madaling i-digest for them to learn and also to make it more meaningful for them.

R5: Isa pa sa mga naging challenges sa atin is kung paano natin ituturo yung Physical Education through online setup. Kaya ang kadalasang nangyari is through theory ang ginagawa natin sa lesson. Minsan nawawala yung essence ng hands-on application. Kumbaga nahihirapan tayong ibigay ng 100% ang tinuturo natin.

This difficulty in lesson preparation has also been discussed in the study of Jeong and So (2020). According to their findings, because the shift from face-to-face to online is so sudden, teachers are left “unprepared and struggling with unfamiliar teaching methods, forcing them to resort to trial-and-error approaches” (Jeong & So, 2020). Likewise, Jeong and So (2020) found that their participants had “concerns about how to convey physical activities in online physical education classes and how to make the online physical education class a meaningful educational activity”.

Student Engagement and Participation

The respondents also found it challenging when students do not turn their cameras on during synchronous sessions. This leads them to speculate whether or not the students are

indeed listening to them or whether or not it is actually their students who are behind the computer.

R1: How can you engage the students na talagang nandiyan yan from the start hanggang matapos yung klase mo— ‘yon ang medyo questionable para sa akin. Doon kasi hindi naman lahat natin sila nakikita eh. Although kahit naka-dual screen ka, makikita mo minsan yung iba is nagpapatay pa ng camera, kaya di mo sigurado kung yung iba is nakikinig ba or hindi.

R2 The administering of my class, medyo mahirap siya kasi even though our policy in online class must the students always turn on their cameras, or sometimes if we ask them to answer questions minsan hindi sila nagre-respond ang kanilang reason is may malfunction ang kanilang microphone

R3: The other one is the camera that they use, the camera sometimes is a bit dark, not so clear that we can't see what they are doing in their homes.

R4: For example, since online, may mga students na naka turn off yung camera when we are supposed to do an activity together through online so hindi natin alam kung ginagawa ba nila yung activity or nakikinoood lang sila, and also when you're giving lectures minsan mapapatanong ka na lang kung talaga bang nakikinig yung iba or tinutulugan ka nalang sa klase.

R5: ‘Yong iba is hindi nago-on ng camera, which is we cannot guarantee kung sila ba yung uma-attend sa class or tinutulugan ka na nila.

This also coincides with the study of Moralista and Oducado (2020) wherein they found that teachers feel that the online learning setup would lead to “more academic dishonesty” and to a more “impersonal” and disengaged class interaction. Moreover, in the study of Yu and Jee (2021) where they investigated the effectiveness of online physical education classes during the COVID-19 pandemic, the results show that educators found students to be unenthusiastic in class. According to the, it seems that students “practiced their physical exercises only for submission of assignment, not for improvement” (Yu & Jee, 2021). Results also showed that while the students indeed practice their exercise assignments, they “did not do them enthusiastically” (Yu & Jee, 2021).

Class Performance and Output Submission

Lastly, the respondents expressed concern on their student's class performance and the quality of their submissions. For instance, there seems to be a difficulty online when conveying task instructions to their students. R2 expressed that he feels that the students do not really understand the instructions he gives in class for their performance tasks. Likewise, R3 also mentioned that because the performance tasks happen and are submitted asynchronously, they also check the performances asynchronously. As a result, a problem arises in terms of standardizing the assessments despite their use of rubrics.

R3: That's one of the problem that I see in term of assessing them so I don't know who's performance is better than, or who's performance did very well, or who among them understand or understood the lesson.

This supports the findings of Varea et al. (2020) that PE teachers feel that they are unable to give proper guidance to their students because of the limitations of the current online setup. As a result, they feel insecurity and anxiety as they explore and employ "unfamiliar pedagogies". Likewise, in the study of Jeong and So (2020), one of the challenges that PE teachers cited is having "very limited evaluation guidelines" which makes a "systematic evaluation of online methods" extremely difficult.

Furthermore, there also seems to be an obvious increase in the workload of teachers as they need to wait for submissions first before being able to actually check the students' output. They find this more overwhelming as the evaluation of the performances do not happen on the spot just like in the face-to-face setup.

R1: Ang daming challenges doon kasi Isa-isa mo talagang che-check-in yung mga output ng bata... Kasi meron ding tinatawag na performance task, meron ding tinatawag na Stay Afloat Activities na kasama nung grades. So sa output ngayon syempre kung ilan or gaano karami ang estudyante mong ganoon then ganoon din

karami iche-check mo. Kaya the more na mas marami kang ibibigay na activities, the more na mas marami din yung iche-check mo... Ganun din naman sa face to face pero mas mahirap dito sa online class, maghihintay ka talaga ng output ng bata.

This coincides with the study of Aperribai et al. (2020) as they found that teachers, in general, “experienced higher levels of distress” due to the evident increase of workload during the pandemic.

Lastly, the respondents shared their sentiments about the seemingly compromised quality in the performance and outputs of some students. For instance, there are students who do not accomplish tasks and must be constantly reminded and compelled to submit their outputs. In addition, those who do submit their tasks appear as if they did not take the task seriously. The respondents found this more challenging unlike in the face-to-face learning setup where students are more proactive in class. Teachers will no longer need to “compel” students to perform since they are already present in class.

R4: May mga estudyante na nag sesend ng recording na malabo ang pagkakarecord or madilim. Hindi ba natin alam kung sira lang ba talaga yung camera or sinasadya ba ng iba? Since alam naman natin na recording ito is akala nila mukhang katawa-tawa sila sa recording. May ibang students din na kailangan mo pang pilitin para mag-participate sa ganitong activities para may grade naman sila sa kanilang rubric. Hindi katulad ng sa face to face na ayaw man nila o hindi kailangan nilang mag-perform since nandun na din sila.

R5: It is much easier to assess students through face-to-face or sabihin na nating actual performance—interactive performance nila. it's easier to correct the mistakes or to tell them exactly what they need to improve in the activity or in the subject. Kumbaga nabibigyan mo na agad sila ng scores and advices which is less hassle. Not like in online setup where you as a teacher should adjust on assessing your student in their activities. We need to be flexible enough dahil kung hindi tayo magiging flexible is kawawa ang mga estudyante natin. There are also times na yung mga students is hindi nagpa-pass ng requirements and activities. Minsan kailangan mo pa silang pilitin magpass or reminder every time para hindi naman sila mapag iwanan sa lesson. Kaya we need to give extra effort talaga.

This complements the study of Verea et al. (2020) that PE teachers prefer conducting PE classes and assessments face-to-face. They stated that they “need to have ‘real’ students to interact with, rather than just having them ‘on screen’, so they can better plan and assess the activities according to the immediate feedback and responses that they obtain from student” (Verea et al., 2020). Participants in the study of Verea et al. (2020) liken their students to “virtual ghosts” as they are unable to physically see and interact with the students. According to them, this makes their work with their students “dehumanized” (Verea et al., 2020).

In the study of Baticulon et al. (2021), however, they found that in the Philippines, a lot of barriers exist which lead to poorer academic performance for students during the COVID-19 pandemic. On the one hand, there are technological barriers. According to Baticulon et al. (2020), 1 out of 5 “students did not have a computer, and an identical proportion had to rely on prepaid mobile data for connectivity. Roughly one out of twenty used only a smartphone. Power interruptions, weak infrastructure, and internet costs restricted the students’ access to online content.” On the other hand, there are challenges which involve the students’ “personal study habits, situation at home, and interaction with educators” (Baticulon et al., 2020).

Coping Strategies

Being Flexible and Adaptable

All of the participants shared that, to overcome the challenges they had encountered in handling PE classes online, they had to be flexible for the students. This is despite of all the doubts and anxiety they have on whether or not the students are listening to their lessons, or whether or not the students actually attend their classes in the first place. The participants cited that such flexibility is also important despite of the fact that students are often absent in their classes and that students often fail to submit their tasks on time.

This is because, despite having doubts about the students' honesty, the teachers are uncertain about the real condition of their students at home. Because the problem of poor and unstable Internet connectivity is experienced both by the teachers and the students, the participants stated that it is vital to be understanding, considerate, and flexible. Such flexibility can come in the form of giving students multiple chances to submit their requirements or reaching a compromise or a sort of agreement with the students.

R2 Actually, the online class talaga is so difficult to us... Kailangan talaga natin mag-adapt kahit mahirap. And also, kailangan talaga natin ibigay sa estudyante lahat ng pwede nating ibigay na chance. Kasi sometimes, hindi natin talaga alam. Sometimes I've experience in the class na ako talaga yung nawala during discussion. Nag-down yung internet connection namin.

R3: As much as possible, I tried to learn and to understand where some of them are coming from. For example, there's a lot of students that are not able to attend online class because they are saying they having difficulties in the internet. As much as possible I tried to learn and understand the behavior that they show me, and I try to assess the task that they do... I tried to talk to them, as much as possible. I tried to ask what's the problem that they encounter, and then we tried our compromise. Some of them do send a video of them practicing the task, some of them they are not on their place or they don't have the resources. So I tried to tell them to participate the next time, but most of them do send a video of them practicing the task or attending the lesson.

R4: We need to be flexible. Humanap tayo ng paraan kung paano natin mae-evaluate yung students or let say if hindi ka na satisfied sa ganitong video, dahil talagang malabo or talagang maski na anong intindi mo eh hindi nagpe-play yung video. So mostly pinapaulit ko lang yung activity sa kanila when it comes to technical problems but when it comes to their performance I always give consideration naman.

R5: So what I usually do is I didn't give minus points or deduction sa mga late magpapasa. I always give consideration because hindi naman na nila kasalanan kung mabagal talaga yung internet... We as a teacher should be flexible enough in adapting to every situation. Just like what happened to use when pandemic hits. Hindi natin alam ang gagawin natin no'ng una. Ang daming doubts but there's nothing wrong in trying. The only mistake that we can do is if we didn't try other options and we didn't think outside the box in order to adapt to our new normal.

This supports the result of the study of Robosa et al. (2020) whereby their participants also employed being strategic as a way to overcome the challenges they experienced when they shifted to online instruction. According to Collie and Martin (2016), being adaptable i.e. being able to “respond effectively” to the changes in education makes for an effective teacher. Such adaptability involves being responsive to the students’ learning needs and “modification of classroom management strategies to respond to the fluctuating classroom environment”. Because the COVID-19 pandemic changed the learning environments of PE classes, teachers needed to modify their pedagogical approaches in order to respond to the learning limitations that students experience.

Upskilling and Training

Another strategy that the participants have identified which helped them overcome their challenges was their willingness to undergo trainings, to attend webinars, and to watch videos on educational technology. Some of these include how to navigate their LMS, how to edit videos for their pre-recorded lectures, and how to overall manage their classes online. This aided them in identifying strategies which they can use for the improvement of their online classes especially since they lack experience conducting PE online.

R1: Sa online class natin kailangan may alam ka on how to navigate lahat. Pati kung how to use your LMS, on how would you able to use the technology para maging maganda yung klase... As much as possible may pumapasok na knowledge pa rin eh, lalo na sa editing ng videos tapos pre-recorded lesson pag-aralan mo talaga para atleast mapaganda ang iyong pagtuturo, para maging maayos.

R2: The technique that I do was to undergo in the several trainings before the online class we go to several training like the different kinds of application in the internet, so that we as a teacher, we can reach out to student kahit saang application.

R5: To overcome those challenges it is very important ‘yong pag-attend ko ng mga webinars before conducting online classes or before we start online classes. It is

very helpful especially in managing online classes. Aminin man natin pero hindi naman kasi natin nakasanayan yung ganoong setup. So in order to adapt, we need to learn first. That's why if there's an opportunity for you to attend or study on how to conduct online teaching just grab it. It's very useful especially in our field as a Physical Education teacher.

In the study of Jeong and So (2020), they have identified that lack of experience in handling PE online is one of the challenges faced by their participants. They did not have any “extensive experience in information and communication technology coming into the pandemic and the advent of online education” (Jeong & So, 2020). While there are those who were already familiar with online content making it easier for them to adapt, there are still those who experience trouble creating and uploading vide lectures either because they do not have the access to equipment or video editing programs, or they have not had experience using these before (Jeong & So, 2020). Like the respondents in this study, the participants in the study of Jeong and So (2020) proactively sought professional improvement in these areas by learning how to produce and actually being able to produce their online class videos and materials.

Conclusion

The results of this study has various implications. Firstly, it can be concluded that during the pandemic, PE teachers still heavily employed traditional pedagogies. The only difference is that during online classes, they utilized technology to compensate for the absence of physical classes. This is shown in the teachers’ use of pre-recorded lectures in lieu of class demonstration and their use of video submission in lieu of actual performance in class. There was no mention of unique or novel approaches and strategies both for online instruction and assessment. This is certainly due to their lack of experience in handling online PE prior to the pandemic.

Moreover, it can be concluded that the teachers certainly experienced significant challenges in almost all aspects of the online class—from technology use, lesson preparation, student engagement, and class performance. It can be said that these challenges mirror the difficulties experienced by their students as well. Both teachers and students experience technological difficulties such as poor and unstable Internet connection. Likewise, while teachers lack experience in handling online PE classes prior to the pandemic, it can be said that students also lack experience in attending and participating in online PE classes. As a result, the students, like the teachers, have also been experiencing difficulties engaging in an online learning environment as this is something new to them as well. This consequently leads to the compromised quality of outputs and academic performance, and disengaged class participation.

The results also showed that the coping strategies of the participants only accounted for some of the challenges that they have encountered. For instance, they sought webinars and looked for video materials that could aid them primarily with how they can employ technology in their lecture delivery and assessment. This includes webinar on how to navigate their LMS and how to use video editing software for the production of their video lectures. However, there was no mention of their exploration or participation in webinars which discuss new pedagogical approaches or instructional design techniques. Their strategy of being adaptable and flexible as well only accounted for an aspect of their challenges. The participants, unfortunately, did not mention how such adaptability and flexibility resolved their challenges in lesson preparation, poor student engagement, and compromised class performance. This entails then that such challenges still remain for PE teachers.

Lastly, while it is noteworthy that the participants exerted significant effort in trying to overcome such challenges, it is also interesting to point out that they did not mention the

participation of the school administrators and of concerned government agencies in such efforts.

This is demonstrated by the participants' individual efforts to seek webinars and video materials that could help them.

Given the findings of this study, the researchers recommend that educators explore new pedagogical techniques that do not simply use technology as a substitute for face-to-face strategies. Due to the limitations faced both by the educators and the learners, a technologymediated pedagogy that is created exactly for the online learning environment has immense potentials. The researchers also call for the proactive participation of school administrators, government agencies, and policymakers to provide PE teachers with the needed technological and pedagogical support. In addressing this, teachers would be able to convey more effectively a holistic and an authentic physical education for Filipino learners.

References

- Adams, W. (2015). Conducting Semi-Structured Interviews. In J. Wholey, H. Hatry, & K. Newcomer, *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation* (pp. 492-505). Jossey-Bass.
- Allen, M. (2017). *The SAGE encyclopedia of communication research methods*. SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Aperribai, L., Cortabarría, L., Aguirre, T., Verche, E., & Borges, Æ. (. (2020). Teacher's physical activity and mental health during lockdown due to the COVID-2019 pandemic. *Frontiers in Psychology, 11*, 1-14. 10.3389/fpsyg.2020.577886.
- Baticulon, R. E., Sy, J. J., Alberto, N. R., Baron, M. B., Mabula, R. E., Rizada, L. G., . . . Reyes, J. C. (2021). Barriers to online learning in the time of COVID-19: A national survey of medical students in the philippines. *Medical Science Educator, 31*, 615–626.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s40670-021-01231-z>.
- Beard, J., & Konukman, F. (2020). Teaching online Physical Education: The art of connection in the digital classroom. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance, 91*(7), 49–51.
10.1080/07303084.2020.1785772.
- Branswell, H., & Joseph, A. (2020, March 11). *WHO declares the coronavirus outbreak a pandemic*. Retrieved from STAT: <https://www.statnews.com/2020/03/11/who-declaresthe-coronavirus-outbreak-a-pandemic/>
- Collie, R., & Martin, A. (2016). Adaptability: An important capacity for effective teachers. *Educational Practice and Theory, 38*(1), 27-39. 10.7459/ept/38.1.03.
- Dunford, D., Dale, B., Stylianou, N., Lowther, E., Ahmed, M., & de la Torre Arenas, I. (2020, April 7). *Coronavirus: The world in lockdown in maps and charts*. BBC News.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-52103747>

Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1-4. 10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11.

Ferri, F., Grifoni, P., & Guzzo, T. (2020). Online learning and emergency remote teaching: Opportunities and challenges in emergency situations. *Societies*, 10(86), 1-18. 10.3390/soc10040086.

Filiz, B., & Konukman, F. (2020). Teaching strategies for physical education during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 91(9), 48–50. doi:10.1080/07303084.2020.1816099.

Groenewald, T. (2004). A phenomenological research design illustrated. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 3(1), 42-55. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690400300104>.

Gumbo, S., Magonde, S., & Nhamo, E. (2017). teaching strategies employed by physical education teachers in Gokwe North primary schools. *International Journal of Sport, Exercise and Health Research*, 1(2), 61-65.

Halcomb, E. J., & Davidson, P. M. (2006). Is verbatim transcription of interview data always necessary? *Applied Nursing Research*, 19(1), 38–42. doi:10.1016/j.apnr.2005.06.001.

Islam, M., Kim, D.-A., & Kwon, M. (2020). A comparison of two forms of instruction: prerecorded video lectures vs. live ZOOM lectures for education in the business management field. *Sustainability*, 12(8149), 1-11. 10.3390/su12198149.

- Jeong, H.-C., & So, W.-Y. (2020). Difficulties of online physical education classes in middle and high school and an efficient operation plan to address them. *International Journal of Public Health*, 17, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17197279>.
- Magaldi, D., & Berler, M. (2020). Semi-structured Interviews. In V. Zeigler-Hill, & T. Shackelford (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Personality and Individual Differences*. SpringerLink.
- Mercier, K., Centeio, E., Garn, A., Erwin, H., Marttinen, R., & Foley, J. (2021). Physical Education teachers' experiences with remote instruction during the initial phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 40(2), 337–342. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jtpe.2020-0272>.
- Moralista, R. B., & Oducado, R. M. (2020). Faculty Perception toward online education in a state college in the philippines during the Coronavirus Disease 19 (COVID-19) pandemic. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 8(10), 4736-4742. [10.13189/ujer.2020.081044](https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2020.081044) .
- Neubauer, B. E., Witkop, C. T., & Varpio, L. (2019). How phenomenology can help us learn from the experiences of others. *Perspectives on Medical Education*, 8, 90–97. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40037-019-0509-2>.
- Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16(1), <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847>.
- Ozamiz-Etxebarria, N., Berasategi Santxo, N., Idoiaga Mondragon, N., & Dosil Santamaría, M. (2021). The psychological state of teachers during the COVID-19 crisis: The

- challenge of returning to face-to-face teaching. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10.3389/fpsyg.2020.620718.
- Robosa, J., Paras, N. E., Perante, L., Alvez, T., & Tus, J. (2021). The experiences and challenges faced of the public school teachers amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic: A phenomenological study in the philippines. *International Journal Of Advance Research And Innovative Ideas In Education*, 7(1), 1342-1361.
- Schwartz, K. D., Exner-Cortens, D., McMorris, C. A., Makarenko, E., Arnold, P., Van Bavel, M., . . . Canfield, R. (2021). COVID-19 and student well-being: stress and mental health during return-to-school. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology*, 36(2), 166–185. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08295735211001653>.
- Shaw, G. F. (2014). Introducing rubrics to Physical Education teacher candidates. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 85(6), 31-37. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07303084.2014.926846>.
- Van der Spoel, I., Noroozi, O., Schuurink, E., & van Ginkel, S. (2020). Teachers online teaching expectations and experiences during the Covid19-pandemic in the Netherlands. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1821185>.
- Varea, V., González-Calvo, G., & García-Monge, A. (2020). Exploring the changes of physical education in the age of Covid-19. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17408989.2020.1861233>.
- Weir, T., & Connor, S. (2009). The use of digital video in physical education. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, 18(2), 155-171.

4th International Conference on Research in
TEACHING and EDUCATION

RTECONF

27-29 August, 2021
London, UK

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14759390902992642>.

Yu, J., & Jee, Y. (2021). Analysis of online classes in Physical Education during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Education Sciences*, *11*(3), 1-14.

<https://dx.doi.org/10.3390/educsci11010003>.