ONLINE TEACHING EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION COLLEGE TEACHERS AMIDST THE NEW NORMAL: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

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Abstract

Strategies are crucial in the learning process. This is an important tool for teachers to use in order to make learning more efficient and effective. However, these strategies have been tested in the last two years due to a pandemic that has altered the school structure. Distance learning is now used for teaching, and the presence of technology is significant. This prompted the researcher to conduct this study with the goal of determining the efficacy of existing strategies in the New Normal System. This study determined the difference and effectiveness of the Mathematics Teaching Strategies in Statistics and Probability, School Year 2021-2022. It sought to answer the following questions: (1) what is the level of Mathematics Teaching Strategies in terms of cooperative learning, discovery learning and discovery learning; (2) what is the level of students' performance using Mathematics Teaching Strategy with regards to pre-test and post-test?; (3) Is there a significant difference before and after using the Mathematics Teaching Strategies in Statistics and Probability and (4) Do the Mathematics Teaching Strategies have significant effect to the Learner's performance in Statistics and Probability? The study's research design was quasi-experimental. The MELC was used to identify the topics. Under online distance learning, the study has fifty (50) student-respondents. The majority of those who completed the questionnaire believed that the Mathematics Teaching Strategies of Cooperative Learning, Discovery Learning, and Problem-based Learning were helpful in classroom setup.

As a result, Mathematics Teaching Strategies in terms of Cooperative Learning, Discovery Learning, and problem-based learning as a learning tool have improved their performance and provided the requisite knowledge and abilities in Statistics and Probability. Before adopting the Mathematics Teaching Strategies, the respondents' pre-test level with some of the topics in Statistics and Probability was average. The post-test level then rose to Above Average. This indicates that they have a deeper comprehension of concepts and theories than the minimum criteria and can apply their knowledge to solve more mathematical problems. It was also discovered that some of the pupils scored below average in Statistics and Probability. This suggests that, despite the lack of a traditional face-to-face classroom approach, students were able to follow the proper information provided, leading to correct responses.

The findings revealed that the level of mathematics teaching strategy in terms of cooperative learning, discovery learning, and problem-based learning was noteworthy. Students' pretest performance was average, but their posttest performance was higher in terms. There is a significant difference between the pretest and post-test scores because the gained score increased after the mathematics teaching strategy was used. Except for problem-based learning, which has an impact on learner performance, the level of mathematics teaching strategy has no significant effect on students' academic performance.

Keywords: Strategies, Performance, Cooperative learning, Discovery learning, and Problem-based.

1. Main Text

Introduction

Given that distance education has been based on digital technologies like email, online courses, and document-sharing platforms, the crisis has highlighted the need to develop teachers' digital literacy. While the utilization of digital tools is an integral a part of the professional skills expected of teachers and lots of teachers have already been using these tools (e.g., video), many teachers still lack the specified knowledge, skills and tools to style quality online learning material. Similarly, many students cannot

independently use technologies. As a result, teachers during the crisis have had to play the twin role of coaching students about technologies with technologies.

As a consequence of the global disruption that the COVID-19 pandemic has produced, many Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) were compelled to close their doors to students and staff. The situation likewise forced academic communities to explore new strategies of instruction and learning. This has proven challenging for both students and educators, who must deal with the emotional, physical and economic difficulties brought by the pandemic while doing their part to help combat the spread of the virus. While initially there have been apprehensions and trepidations for remote set-up not only in the sector of education but also among workers in other fields, the continuing pandemic situation leaves people with no other option but to accept the change towards the so-called "New Normal".

Although most contemporary studies focus on the implications of the transition from face-to-face learning to online learning on students' learning experiences and performance, the impacts of this radical shift are also extremely felt by the educators. In the face of a crisis, the prevailing conditions require an immediate action to the emerging demands of the new standards in instruction and learning. However, teachers also face various challenges related to this transition to the new normal that they have to contend with. For instance, the shift towards online learning happened too abruptly. This prompted academic institutions and educators to recalibrate and impose new teaching pedagogies. But the question of whether educational institutions are capable and prepared in terms of the necessary technological infrastructure and teaching pedagogies remains unanswered.
This shift to online learning becomes particularly challenging in the delivery of Physical Education (PE) courses. PE instruction has never been more important than today due to the pressing need to keep the students fit and healthy in face of a health crisis. The prolonged quarantine and lockdown measures imposed in various communities have been found to cause a range of physical and mental health concerns. Thus, enhancing the physical health and well-being of the students should be of utmost importance in this time of the pandemic (University of Michigan, 2021). However, many educators argue that PE practical classes, in comparison with other academic courses, are difficult to teach and deliver in a virtual setting. Owing to its nature which centers on physical performances and activities, PE courses are conventionally delivered in the traditional, face-to-face classes since it is clearly distinct from general theoretical-based subjects. Also, various research have shown that student-teacher interaction on online PE courses is substantially inadequate in contrast to the traditional classroom setting due to spatial and physical limitations, making student engagement and learning difficult and challenging (Yu and Jee, 2020).

This research is driven by the interest to understand the lived experiences of college teachers in transitioning to and their utilization of the online learning approach in delivering PE courses. Using the phenomenological approach, this study attempts to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how to address the needs of PE educators in order to further improve the pedagogical delivery of PE courses amidst the new normal in education.

Background of the Study

Despite the clamor for an academic freeze amidst the uncertainties brought by the pandemic crisis, the Education department insists that student learning should not be compromised (Montemayor, 2020). Thus, in order to cope and deal with the challenges brought by the pandemic crisis to learning continuation, most HEIs in the Philippines have shifted to alternative modalities of instruction and learning. In most tertiary educational institutions, online learning is the most preferred distant learning modalities (Abad, 2020). This type of distant learning modality enables students to have access to education despite the physical limitations imposed by the current social conditions. Essentially, online learning involves the use of technology, particularly the internet, in the delivery of education to students. But in a country like the Philippines that continuously confronts a lot of problems related to the use of technology such as lack of access to devices and poor internet connectivity, online learning poses certain challenges especially to underprivileged students (European Union, 2020).

If there is a substantial shift in the traditional standards and process models, it is therefore relevant to ascertain the experiences of the teachers regarding online instruction to ensure that academic institutions are heading in the right direction. For educators and students to succeed in distance learning, they must feel comfortable and satisfied while utilizing these platforms. HEIs must also provide support to their stakeholders in situations where they need assistance in order for them to thrive and excel in this new learning environment.

Statement of the Problem

Because of the exigencies brought by the pandemic crisis, educators and academic institutions had to adapt very quickly to ensure the continuity of learning despite the limitations imposed by the current situation. They had to deal with the available alternative which is to transition to a virtual, online learning approach. However, new learning modality presents various challenges and concerns that educators had to deal with. In particular, practical-based and performance-centered courses like PE subjects had to be delivered virtually. As a result, PE college teachers have to redesign their teaching pedagogies and learn to navigate this new learning scheme in order to respond to the needs of their students. This, however, could lead to various obstacles that they need to address which may ultimately influence the way they view their profession and education as a whole. Given this

predicament, this study seeks to describe the essence of online PE instruction through the examination of the perspectives and experiences of college PE teachers. Ultimately, the goal of this research is to describe the meaning of online PE instruction in terms of how it was experienced by the participants of this study. To be more specific, this study asks the following research questions:

R1: What are the experiences of Physical Education college teachers with regards to the transition to online distance teaching?

R2: How do Physical Education college teachers deal with the challenges that arise from online distance teaching?

R3: How do these experiences influence their perspective towards teaching and their meaning of being a teacher?

Research Methodology

This chapter presents the research design used, participants of the study, research instrument, data collection, data analysis as well as the ethical consideration.

Research Design

Since this study is primarily focused on understanding the, qualitative research is employed in this research. In particular, phenomenological research design will be adopted in this study. A phenomenological, according to Creswell (2007), "describes the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon". Essentially, this type of qualitative study wherein a researcher attempts to gain insight into a universal feeling or experience, also known as phenomenon. Moreover, it provides a deeper

understanding of the phenomenon under study as experienced by various individuals. To be more specific, the primary purpose of phenomenology is to "reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence". In this study, the researcher aims to examine the phenomenon of the transition to online learning as experienced by the PE college teachers amidst the pandemic crisis. Ultimately, the researcher wanted to know the meaning of online delivery of instruction from the point of view and lived experiences of PE college teachers.

There are two types of phenomenological study: the hermeneutic and the transcendental. Hermeneutic phenomenology centers on the interpretation of the kind of experience by relating it to a relevant context, whereas transcendental phenomenology is focused less on the interpretations of the researcher and more on a description of the experiences of the participants. Since this study seeks to explore the conditions related to online delivery of PE courses by underscoring the perspectives and experiences of the PE college teachers themselves, the transcendental phenomenology approach will be utilized in this research. A unique feature of transcendental phenomenology is the process called epoche or "bracketing", in which all the preconceived notions of the researcher about the phenomenon under study will be suspended and set aside; focusing only on the exploration of the lived experiences of the participants in order to have a fresh perspective and understanding of the phenomenon. Creswell (2007) likewise noted that the main outcome of a transcendental phenomenological research is the "essence" of the phenomenon, or the ultimate meaning of the experience for all the individuals which cannot be easily revealed through ordinary observation.

Participants of the Study:

Participants of the study were purposively selected based on the following considerations. First, the participants should be college teachers who are currently engaged in online teaching modality. Second, they should be presently teaching Physical Education courses using the online approach (both synchronous and asynchronous). The researcher believes that focusing on the experiences of teachers with regard to the online delivery of PE courses is relevant since many studies have pointed out that there are a lot of challenges related to teaching physical education via online distance learning approach in contrast to other academic subjects. Lastly, the participants should be teaching for at least three years already. The researcher believes that it is important that the participants had prior experience in traditional face-to-face instruction so that they will be able to make relevant observations about the changes associated with the transition to the online teaching scheme.

Research Procedure

To address the research questions, this study utilized the transcendental phenomenological research method. A total of seven Physical Education college teachers, who have been teaching for at least three years already, and are currently teaching via online distance learning (both synchronous and asynchronous) were purposely selected for this study. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews and were analyzed through traditional phenomenological analysis methods of bracketing, horizonalization, clustering into themes, textural descriptions, structural descriptions, and textural-structural synthesis proposed by Moustakas (1994).

Research Instrument:

In-depth interviews were used to gather data. The participants of this study were interviewed using an interview guide that contained open-ended questions. Through the use of a semi-structured interview, the PE college teachers were able to further elaborate and expound on their answers and even contribute their own personal insights. It also allowed greater flexibility on the part of the researcher which will ultimately lead to a deeper understanding of the teachers' realities and experiences related to online distance teaching.

The interview guide was divided into four general topics: (1) PE college teachers transition to online teaching - this section will focus on questions that will examine the experiences of the PE college teachers with regard to the transition to online distance learning due to the pandemic crisis; (2) Challenges encountered by PE college teachers related to online teaching - this segment will contain questions that will explore the problems and issues faced by the teachers as they deliver their PE courses via the online modality; (3) Ways in dealing with the challenges posed by online teaching - in this section, the questions will revolve around the different strategies taken by the PE college teachers in order to address the problems related to online teaching that they are dealing with; and lastly (4) The meaning of being an online PE teacher amidst the uncertainties of the pandemic - this section will include questions that will shed light on how their experiences of online teaching influence their perspective towards teaching and the meaning of being a teacher.

Data Collection:

To deeply understand the phenomenon of online teaching from the lived experiences of the PE college teachers, this phenomenological study made use of in-depth interviews as its primary method of data collection. As suggested by Creswell (2007), the ideal number of participants for phenomenological research is around three to ten individuals to ensure that rich and detailed information will be obtained from the participants. Thus, a total of seven PE college teachers were interviewed for this research. However, since direct physical interaction is still largely discouraged due to safety and health reasons, the participants were interviewed virtually via Zoom. The individual interviews lasted approximately around one hour each, on average. The interviews were recorded upon the consent of the participants. The recorded interviews were then transcribed verbatim for analysis. The recorded interviews were subsequently deleted after the transcriptions were finished.

Data Analysis:

The transcribed interviews underwent phenomenological analysis. This study followed the transcendental phenomenological analysis proposed by Moustakas (1994). After identifying the phenomenon that will be the focus of the study (in this case, the online teaching experiences of PE college teachers), the researcher has to "bracket out" his own experiences. Bracketing pertains to the suspension of the researcher of all judgments, personal biases, viewpoints, and assumptions about the phenomenon under study to have a fresh and unadulterated interpretation of the participants' experiences and responses (Marciaga, 2019). Since the researcher is a PE teacher himself who also engages in online teaching, he will write a separate section that will explore and narrate his own personal experiences as an online PE instructor. According to (Marciaga, 2019), although this kind of bracketing does not completely take away the researcher from the study, this demonstrates transparency towards the phenomenon and helps reduce researcher bias.

The next step is to analyze the data by reducing the information to significant statements or quotes and combine the statements into themes. This process is also known as horizonalization. Afterwards, a textural description of how the phenomenon was experienced by the participants will be constructed. Using the statements identified for each of the themes, the researcher will describe in a narrative way how the participants experienced the phenomenon based on each of the themes. As much as possible, direct quotes from the participants' interviews will be used so that the description would be in their own words and more precisely capture their experiences. Not all statements will be used, since many were similar, so only statements that best described the phenomenon were included in the textural description.

Following the textural descriptions, the researcher will construct an overall description of the meaning that emerged. This process, called structural description, involves the analysis of the researcher of the participants' experiences by explaining them in terms of the conditions, situations, or context. At this point, though direct quotations will still be utilized to illustrate the analysis, the researcher's own interpretation of the meaning will also be included. After performing these steps for each of the participants, the researcher will synthesize the textural and structural descriptions to identify the meaning and essence of the experiences of all the participants.

Ethical Considerations:

Informed consent was given and discussed to the participants prior to the virtual interviews. The informed consent form included the research questions of the study and the expected extent of participation of the teachers. The researcher also assured the confidentiality among the teachers and pseudonyms were used to maintain their anonymity. Aside from securing informed

consent, the researcher likewise observed sensitivity in asking the interview questions. There was an acknowledgement that the participants reserved the right to terminate their participation in the study should any part of the interview make them feel uncomfortable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study produced a synthesis of the experiences of teaching physical education course subjects through online modality from the perspectives of seven PE educators. The resulting composite textural-structural description reveals the essence of the experience of the phenomenon for this group of participants and consists of four major themes: transition from traditional to online distance teaching, struggles in online teaching, overcoming the problems, and perspectives towards teaching.

As discussed in the methodology, seven PE educators participated in the study and were interviewed virtually. The purpose of the in-depth interview was to have participants describe their experiences in relation to the transition to online distance learning due to the pandemic. For each participant, the researcher followed Moustakas' (1994) steps for data analysis and reduction by checking each statement to be sure it was necessary to understand the phenomenon and was labeled accurately. From the seven interview transcripts, the researcher identified various horizonalized statements relevant to the phenomenon of this study. The researcher then clustered the statements for each participant into core textural themes and subthemes that represented *what* was experienced. The researcher ensured that the themes were explicitly expressed and compatible representations of each participant's experience.

After organizing the related individual textural themes, the researcher then created a composite structural description of the core essential structure of the experience of the phenomenon for all of the participants as a group. In total, three structural themes and ten textural themes were identified as the core essence of how the participants experienced teaching PE course subjects using online distance approach The individual textural themes were explained comprehensively by including examples from the transcripts. In the final step of the data analysis, the researcher synthesized and integrated all the findings in order to identify the *core essence* of what and how the participants perceived and experienced the delivery of PE course subjects through online teaching modality. In order to validate the findings, the researcher sent each participant his or her respective structural description and textural-structural description and asked them to ascertain whether the descriptions accurately represented their experience and welcomed suggestions for additions or corrections. All participants responded that the descriptions were accurate.

In the following composite textural-structural description, the researcher uses the structural and textural themes to describe how and what the participants experienced and include direct quotations that best illustrate the theme. Moreover, in order to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the participants, the researcher likewise used pseudonyms provided by the participants themselves.

Structural Theme 1: Struggles in Online Teaching

The participants identified several issues and challenges related to the transition to online teaching. The themes that emerged from the narratives of the PE teachers include the following: personal issues, pedagogical challenges, technological issues, and lack of institutional support.

Textural Theme 1a: Personal issues

The transition to online distance teaching brought certain personal problems to the participants. These personal problems range from physical to psychological concerns. The most common physical concern that the PE teachers encountered is the apparent weight gain due to the lack of physical exercise. They mentioned that because of the nature of online teaching which entails prolonged exposure to digital devices, usually their computers, they tend to stay seated only at one place the entire day. As Sir A related, *"Isa talagang malaking epekto lalo na sa katawan. Dati the teacher is always moving but now we are just sitting, so parang nananaba narin tayo"* (One of the greatest impacts is in terms of fitness. In the past, the teacher was always on the move, but now we are just sitting so we really gained some weight).

Furthermore, some of the PE teachers lamented that despite their lack of engagement in strenuous physical activities as compared to when they were teaching face-to-face classes, they are still experiencing mental and physical weariness. Sir N shared his experience, "*Mas pagod ako yung parang mentally and physically parang ganun, nakaharap lang ng matagalan ng nakababad sa screen*" (I feel more tired now, like mentally and physically tired, because of too much exposure to digital devices). In addition, some PE teachers experienced worsening of their eye conditions, which according to them is another adverse implication of prolonged screen exposure. "*Malabo na yung mata ko mas lumala pa yung labo ng mata ko, gawa ng long screen time*" (My poor eyesight even worsened because of prolonged screen exposure), Ma'am K shared in her interview.

The narratives of the participants also revealed that many of them experienced sleep deprivation due to the numerous workloads associated with online teaching, particularly checking the output submission of the students. Unlike face-to-face classes wherein they can immediately assess and record the performances of their students, the teachers claimed that they had to require their students to submit video recordings of their performances which they have to watch and record one by one. This process,

unfortunately, takes considerable time and effort on the part of the teachers. As Sir A pointed out, *"Nag eextend ka ng time for you to check every section na meron ka, parang naabot ka ng 12 am gigising ka ng maaga may halong pagod din talaga yun, pagod at yung puyat"* (You have to extend your working hours to check and grade all your sections. Sometimes you have to work until 12 in the morning, then you have to wake up early again. It's a combination of tiredness and sleep deprivation).

Online teaching also took its toll on the mental health of some of the PE teachers. The teachers expressed that they also experienced feelings of anxiety due to the overwhelming number of student messages that they receive daily, even after their lecture hours. Although they recognize that sending messages through their social media sites like Facebook is the only way for the students to be able to connect with them and ask school-related queries, they also said that the continuous barrage of messages especially during the wee hours of the night when they are supposedly resting makes them feel stressed and anxious. In the words of Sir J, *"Minsan natatakot na din akong mag open ng mga social media kasi minsan 12 am nagcha-chat ang mga students"* (It makes me anxious sometimes to open my social media sites because some students would still send me messages even at 12 am).

Textural Theme 1b: Pedagogical Challenges

Aside from personal concerns, the PE teachers also mentioned some pedagogical challenges that they experienced related to online teaching. Pedagogical problems refer to the various issues that concern the teaching process, from the course plans to approaches to teaching, as well as management of student concerns. Among the pedagogical challenges that they encountered are: additional workload, communication barrier with students, student-related concerns, and problematic work environment.

Additional workload

Most of the participants lamented that the transition to online teaching has resulted in the increase of their workload. As mentioned previously, the current situation of online teaching modality required the PE teachers to develop new strategies to ensure the learning continuity of their students. Since most of the assessment activities in PE courses are performance based, the teachers had no other alternative but to require their students to submit video recordings of their performance activities. However, checking students' video outputs is very tedious according to the participants since it usually takes them longer hours to finish watching and grading all the outputs. This predicament was frequently narrated by the participants, as demonstrated by the experience of Sir N:

> *"So ayan kada section isang bagsak na activity talagang mahirap mag check ng activity nila. Yung pagkakaiba din, yung mga activities - so medyo mahirap talagang halimbawa nalang sa PE may papagawa kang exercise or activity so sa video pa isa-isa mo syang chechekan"* (It's very difficult to check the activities for every section because of the sheer volume. Compared to before, the student activities are now video recorded, and you have to watch and check them one by one).

Sir J also gave a similar response:

> *"Minsan napupuyat kasi parang movie marathon ng mag video. Talagang kailangan mong panoorin yung ginagawa especially yung sa mga execution ng mga bata.* (Sometimes you'll get sleep-deprived, because it's like you're binge watching the video submissions of the students. You really have to pay attention to everything especially how the students execute their performances).

Furthermore, the PE teachers shared that they have more lesson preparations now as compared during face-to-face classes. For instance, they have to devise video presentation rubrics unlike before wherein the evaluation and grading of the students' performances were more straightforward. As Sir A related,

> *"Preparation talaga sobra lalo na pag assessment yung syempre lagi ka dapat titingin kasi sa PE kasi pag actual diba mage-gradan mo yan mga yan pero pag sa online class titingin ka talaga ng rubrics talaga iisa isahin mo din talaga"* (There are more preparations now. Unlike before, you can grade the students' performances right away but now you have to use rubrics and painstakingly watch their performances).

Moreover, some of the PE teachers would spend hours preparing and recording lecture video presentations, especially those who do not want to rely on available instructional videos found on the internet. Lastly, another work burden on the part of the PE teachers is the lack of flexibility in terms of the compliance with school deadlines. The participants shared that despite the uncertainties caused by the ongoing pandemic crisis, they still need to comply with strict and rigid administrative deadlines. According to Sir C,

> *"Sometimes I feel stressed because of the requirements na ginagawa gaya ng schoolworks, we have to submit it on time. May time na kailangan syempre parin magturo, our main goal is to teach pa rin syempre kahit may extra work tayo sa school".* (Sometimes, I feel stressed because of the administrative requirements that we still need to accomplish and submit on time. There were times it got in the way of our teaching, but our main goal is still to teach in spite of the other extra school-related works that we have to accomplish)

Sir J also added,

> *"Ubos na oras mo pero syempre may deadline din tayo mga teacher kailangan mo syang tapusin kahit anong oras. Syempre, wala po tayong magagawa kasi sila yung nagpapasahod. Kaya sumunod"* (You have very limited time [because of too much workload] but you still need to accomplish your administrative work. Of course, we don't have any choice but to accomplish it because we're being paid to do it. So, we need to abide).

Communication barriers with students

The participants asserted that they also faced various barriers to communication particularly with their students. Due to the inherent nature of the online teaching modality, effectively communicating with their students became a lot challenging according to the PE teachers. For instance, some of the participants expressed that the lack of physical interaction and socialization between them and their students, which is very essential and crucial in enhancing the students' physical well-being, resulted in emotional detachment. As Sir J shared in his interview,

> *"Malayo ang loob sa students. Mahirap sa totoo lang hindi ko maiparamdam yung tinuturo ko sa kanila kasi nga 'di ko sila nahahawakan I mean, hindi talaga yung physical. Parang ang layo-layo namin PE teachers sa mga bata, sobrang layo kung baga kasi dati parang mabilis kaming mag reach out, ngayon kung baga sobrang layo ng agwat sa amin ng mga bata"* (Our relationship with the students seems to be detached. It's very difficult to make them appreciate the value of our lessons since there was no physical interaction involved. It's as if we PE teachers are too distant from them, unlike in the past [during face-to-face classes] it was very accessible to reach-out to them. Now the gap between us and our students is too wide).

Furthermore, since online messaging (e.g. through social media sites, e-mail, or LMS platforms) is the only means of communication between the teachers and the students, they argued that this unfortunately contributed to poor information dissemination (e.g. giving out instructions) and confusion on the part of the students. Consequently, students found it difficult to follow the instructions on their own, resulting in lackluster outputs and poorly executed performances. Ma'am W related her experience, *"Kapag ang instruction mo ay hindi masyadong clear sa mga bata iba 'yung result na makukuha mo, talagang may time na madi-disappoint ka"* (When you give your students with unclear and imprecise instructions, you will really get disappointed with the outputs that you will receive from them).

Lastly, another communication barrier that the PE teachers experienced was the lack of students' feedback which hampers the effective delivery of instruction. According to the participants, this is primarily due to the hesitation and unwillingness on the part of the students to open their computer cameras in order for them to monitor their responses. Also, the participants noticed that the students tend to refuse asking questions or clarifications, especially when not being directly asked, which made it challenging for them to "correct" or provide suggestions for improvements regarding their class performance. As Ma'am W pointed out in her interview, *"Lack of communication sa mga bata hindi sila nagtatanong. Ang magtatanong lang sayo 'yung mga competitive na bata"*. ([The problem is really] the lack of communication since the students rarely ask questions. Those who will ask questions are only the academically competitive ones). Meanwhile, Ma'am K shared her sentiments:

> *"I feel alone when I'm in synchronous setup because I'm not seeing my students. Naka off-cam sila parang it's like you're just talking to yourself na when you ask questions hindi minsan nag re-respond. 'Yung pakiki-socialize mo sa mga estudyante 'yun siguro yung medyo challenging talaga sakin na simula nung nagsimula ang pandemic how can I encourage my students na for them to open their cameras; for me to hear them yung makipag kwentuhan sayo, nakikita mo yung reaksyon nila"* (I feel alone when I'm in synchronous setup because I'm not seeing my students. Since they do not open their cameras, it's like you're just talking to yourself because sometimes nobody responds to my questions. The most challenging part for me, ever since the start of the pandemic, is how to foster socialization with the students. I'm thinking of ways on how I can encourage my students to open their cameras, to hear them talk and communicate with them, and to see the reaction of their faces).

Student-related concerns

The PE teachers also identified a number of student-related issues as a result of the transition to online distance teaching. One of the common concerns encountered by the participants is the widespread alibis employed by the students, typically in the form of complaints and unverified excuses. The PE teachers argued that they could no longer differentiate which of their students' excuses and complaints were valid or not. According to Sir A, *"Madaming excuses. They need extension madami silang mga ganito ganyan - submission mga deadlines ganyan pag may mga namimiss na quiz or whatsoever"* (They have too many excuses.

They tend to ask for deadline extensions whenever they miss taking quizzes or fail to submit other requirements). Sir E also expressed a similar observation, *"Mareklamo rin ang mga bata ngayon, sobrang humingi ng extension"* (The students tend to complain more now, they ask for too much extension).

Moreover, the participants faced issues regarding the non-compliance of many students of academic-related activities. This includes the non-submission or late submission of their required academic outputs. The PE teachers also observed the declining quality of student submissions. Most of the PE students, according to the participants, seemed to be only interested in complying with the requirements of the course, and not entirely driven and passionate in learning about the lessons, which is quite evident in the lack of ingenuity and creativity in the execution of their submitted works. As noted by Sir A:

> *"Pag online bahala na lang sila makagawa. That's the point din parang isa rin yan sa mga disadvantage kasi pag face to face full force sila performance level kung performance level pero pag online class siguro andyan ang hiya sa sarili, sa family, sa surrounding kaya that's one na factor na naapektuhan ang movement ng bata"* (In the online setup, the students no longer bother to submit quality outputs anymore. I think that's also one of the disadvantages of online learning, the students no longer exert as much effort in their performances compared during face-to-face classes. There are some factors that may influence and affect their performance, perhaps being too conscious about themselves, their family members, or their surroundings).

On the other hand, Sir C shared,

> *"In terms of assessments naman, sometimes hindi sila pare-pareho. Doon mo makikita yung mga bata na nag e-exert ng effort or hindi or just to comply lang ng requirements. Sometimes they submit late at yung reason nila ay internet problems"* (In terms of assessments, sometimes the students' performances are not on the same level. You will really notice the students who truly exerted their whole effort and those who just submitted for the sake of compliance. Sometimes you will receive late submissions and the reason of the students is about internet problems)

Not only that the students tend to submit mediocre or delayed requirements, many of the participants likewise claimed that they encountered numerous cases of plagiarized works. *"Dinadaya nila 'yung pinapasa nila, so ang ginagawa ko talaga pinapanood ko isa-isa"* (Some students would submit outputs that are plagiarized, so what I do is I really watch their outputs one by one), Sir E exclaimed. Lastly, the participants likewise lamented about receiving a barrage of messages from students who are inconsiderate with their time, especially when they are already resting at night. The PE teachers asserted that it is fine with them to receive student messages or queries beyond class hours especially if the need is urgent, but sometimes, some of the messages that they received were already unnecessary and insensitive of their personal time.

Problematic work environment

Another important component in effective teaching is having a conducive work environment. However, the PE teachers expressed that they encountered numerous issues as a result of the problematic work environment. Although working from home is highly advantageous to other academic staff, the participants stressed that teaching off-campus aggravated by the lack of access to proper facilities and equipment put strain on their teaching pedagogy. For instance, they lamented about the lack of enough workspace in their homes and the lack of complete athletic equipment and gears of their own to properly execute their teaching instructions. According to Sir J, *"Dito sa online class nakaupo lang kami then sometimes kikilos lack of space din naman sa bahay kaya minimal lang yung kilos namin"* (We don't have enough space here at home, so my movements are very limited and restricted. Thus, I tend to be seated in my class most of the time)

Meanwhile, Sir N has this to say about inadequate equipment:

> *"Delivery ng lesson medyo nahihirapan din talaga kasi nga yung may mga specific lesson sa PE na kailangan ng mga gamit. So, halimbawa nalang yung basketball hindi lahat may sariling bola sa bahay. Ayun kaya nahihirapan kami sa mga equipment na dapat nagagawa o ineexecute namin"* (The delivery of lessons can also be challenging because there are specific PE lessons that require equipment and gears. For instance in basketball, it is necessary that we have our own equipment, but not everyone has complete athletic gear at home. Thus, it becomes challenging for us to properly execute our lessons due to the lack of adequate teaching equipment).

Meanwhile, others mentioned about the difficulty in concentrating in their online teaching due to the various distractions (e.g. unnecessary background noises, household chores, etc.) that they frequently face in the work-from-home arrangement. Ma'am K shared in her interview a particular experience related to distractions in online teaching, *"Dahil may alaga akong aso sa*

surrounding especially kami nagbo-board lang kami dito sa Imus yung kapitbahay namin ito parang compound e yung tinitirhan namin marami rin manok so isa yan sa naging problem nung observation ng Department Chair namin sabi nya talaga palang nakakadistract yung manok" (One of the issues raised by our Department Chair [during class observation] was the distracting background noises since I have a pet dog and also we're living in a rented apartment here in Imus and our compound has many chickens).

Textural Theme 1c: Technological Issues

The transition to online teaching modality also presented numerous technology-related concerns among the PE teachers. Many of the participants mentioned struggling to adjust during the beginning of the transition due to lack of proper devices to be used for online teaching. They said that since PE classes were typically delivered face-to-face using actual equipment and tools, they were not obliged to invest in digital devices such as laptops, internet connection, and other online teaching-related gadgets in the past. Hence, when the pandemic crisis happened and they were compelled to shift to the online modality, they found themselves severely unprepared and lacking. As Sir C described in his interview, *"Sobrang nahirapan ako cell phone palang una ang gamit ko. Wala talaga akong laptop"* (At first it was really tough since I was only using a cell phone. I didn't have my own laptop). Another participant, Sir J, shared his experience, *"Laptop lang meron sobrang baba pa ng RAM sobrang ang tagal pa as in sobrang bagal tapos wala pa kaming internet sa bahay"* (I had a laptop but it was too slow [for online class]. Also, we didn't have an internet connection at home).

Aside from the inadequate devices for online teaching, some participants also mentioned having limited experience and knowledge in using these digital platforms for online teaching. Compared with other course subjects that are typically taught and evaluated using traditional assessment methods like quizzes or written essays that can be easily replicated in an online learning environment, the participants argued that PE classes do not work the same way resulting in their lack of enough technical know-how in navigating these new platforms. The participants expressed that they have never experienced teaching via online modality before since PE courses are traditionally and typically delivered through the traditional face-to-face approach. In the case of Sir J, for instance, although his institution has an already existing learning management system (LMS), he had never thought of using it before because it was not essentially needed in her classes. He stated,

> *"Di pa naman ako nakapag online class before pero meron din silang ginagamit na online platform kaso since hindi talaga sya kailangan sa PE during face to face kaya hindi ko sya ine-explore kaya dyan lang sya"* (I haven't experienced teaching online class before even though our institution has an already existing online platform. But since PE classes were typically taught face-to-face before, I never really explored it).

This predicament, however, is common among older PE teachers who have much longer experience in teaching PE classes via the traditional approach. This particular issue seems to be not a major concern among young PE teachers who participated in this study. The participants shared that they initially experienced a sense of apprehension or hesitation towards the possible transition to online teaching modality. This is primarily due to their general unfamiliarity with the delivery of PE courses through the online distance approach. As one of the participants exclaimed, "*We are not prepared, kasi pagdating sa shifting ang bilis ng pangyayari. Nalungkot ako, yun ang unang naging expression ko. Tanong ko paano ko i-execute yung mga activities. Lalo kami kumbaga we are more on skills*" (The shift to online teaching was so abrupt, and we were unprepared. My initial expression was sadness. I asked myself, "How would I be able to execute the activities?" Especially in physical education which is primarily skills-based).

Finally, even if the PE teachers have adequate technological resources and technical know-how, many are still reeling from the effects of poor and unstable internet connection. One participant, Ma'am W, does not have a stable internet connection for their online classes because she is residing in an area where there is still no available internet line. According to her, "*Ayun lang talaga ng problema is yung internet connection ko kasi napakalayo namin kasi 'yung gamit ko lang ngayon is naglo-load lang ako ng voucher*" (We don't have existing internet line here in our area so I'm only using prepaid internet). Furthermore, the constant lagging and disconnection in their online classes not only disrupt the flow of their discussion but also fuel frustration among the teachers. This predicament is particularly highlighted in Sir J's interview:

> *"Factor din yung internet. Sinabi ko pag nag dedemonstrate ako nagtatanong ako nagets nyo ba ang steps? Then sasabihin sir ma-lag sakin ang tendency uulitin mo 'yun. Pero sa part ko kasi pag di nagegets ng students inuulit ko sya. Kaya kung baga nahihirapan lang ako kasi paulit ulit"* (Internet connection is a factor. Whenever I demonstrate something in class, I would ask my students if they can understand and follow me. Sometimes they would say that my presentation is lagging on their end, hence, I would repeat it again. For me, if the students couldn't understand the lesson, I have to repeat the discussion. That's why it becomes difficult when the connection is unstable, because I have to repeat all over again).

It should be noted that this situation is a universal experience among all those who were interviewed in this study, thus underscoring the dismal state of technological infrastructure in the country that makes it challenging for educators to adapt and adjust in the new mode of teaching.

Textural Theme 1d: Lack of Institutional Support

Majority of the PE teachers who took part in this study asserted that they received very little support from their institutions especially in aspects that they really need assistance. According to the participants, there are two distinct areas that they need substantial assistance: financial and material. In terms of financial support, the teachers said that they did not receive monetary assistance, such as internet allowance or salary increase, yet the transition to online distance teaching brought them greater expenditures as opposed to the traditional face-to-face teaching. As in the words of Sir C, *"We, PE teachers ang kailangan naming tulong talaga is more on internet allowance. Ayun naman kasi ang isa sa mga root problems pagdating sa online class"* (As PE teachers, the assistance that we truly need is the provision of internet allowance because it is one of the root causes of the online class related problems). Sir N also mentioned about the need for financial support, *"Syempre money. Ayan, talagang kailangan natin, kahit akala kasi nila wala parin tayong gastos e pero ayun nga kailangan natin magbayad ng internet sa ano sa mga seminar na may bayad e kasi di naman lahat ng webinar is free - may bayad. Kuryente ayan"* (Definitely money, that's what we really need these days. Although they [referring to their institutions] thought that we're not spending that much because we're working from home, in reality, we still have a lot of expenses such as internet bills, webinar fees, and other utilities). Furthermore, the participants also mentioned that even material support, including devices for teaching and athletic equipment, was inaccessible to them. *"Kailangan din nila makapag provide ng mga needs ng mga teachers mga laptops, kung kahit makapagpahiram na big part na e okay na yun e magpahiram magbigay allowance for that - kung food allowance mo man lang tas internet allowance okay na yun"* (They [educational institutions] also need to provide assistance for our material needs as teachers, like laptops (or atleast lend laptops) as well as financial support like food and internet allowances), Sir J remarked.

When asked why they did not receive any financial and material assistance from their respective institutions, the participants responded that this is because they are not permanent faculty members. Contractual faculty members, like the PE teachers who were interviewed for this study, do not receive the same benefits and incentives as the permanent or tenured teachers even if they also spend the same amount and perform the same academic duties. According to Sir N, *"Pag part time ka parang ang job description mo parin ay JO (Job order) kaya walang nakukuha talaga"* (Part-time teachers are still considered as "job order status" [contractual], hence we do not receive incentives [like allowances]). Another participant Sir E, who is also a contractual faculty member in his university, shared the same concern:

> *"Kasi kaming mga part-time hindi kami binibigyan ng internet allowance, sa full-time lang meron. But we are the ones who are in need kasi hindi regular ang trabaho namin so pag walang pasok wala kaming kita. So dapat kami 'yung unang binibigyan ng assistance"* (Part-time faculty members like me do not receive internet allowance from our university, only the full-time teachers. But we are the ones who are in need of assistance because we do not have regular work unlike the permanent teachers. Therefore, it is only necessary that we should be given priority in terms of institutional assistance).

Structural Theme 2: Overcoming the Problems

This segment discusses the variety of strategies employed by the PE teachers in order to cope and deal with the problems and challenges associated with the transition to online distance teaching. Three distinct themes emerged from the narratives of the participants. These include: psycho-emotional strategies, pedagogical strategies, and social support.

Textural Theme 2a: Psycho-emotional strategies

The participants identified various strategies related to psycho-emotional coping which aim to address the mental and emotional concerns that they encountered as a result of the transition to online distance teaching. Positive reframing of the mind and de-stressing are among the psycho-emotional strategies that the participants developed to deal with their situation.

Positive reframing of the mind

With regards to the emotional and psychological distresses that they experienced due to the demands of online teaching, the PE teachers expressed that they were able to overcome these concerns by maintaining a positive outlook in life and towards their work. According to them, feelings of anxiety and stress are inevitable and unavoidable realities in the teaching profession that they have to accept and overcome. Dwelling too much in these negative thoughts is counterproductive and will adversely affect their performance as teachers. Hence, they said that it is important to always maintain a happy disposition in spite of the challenges that they face due to the transition to online distance teaching and the uncertainties brought by the ongoing pandemic crisis. As in the words of Sir J: *"Masaya ako sa ginagawa ko. Nag eenjoy ako. Dun ko nalang tinitingnan yung sarili ko at*

ginagawa ko - kailangan ko na lang enjoyin 'to" (I'm happy with what I'm doing. I'm enjoying what I do. That's how I look at myself and my situation, from the lens of loving and enjoying what I'm doing). On the other hand, Ma'am K related how she try to maintain a positive outlook:

> *"Ina-assess ko lang ang sarili ko kapag nakapag isip ako ng mga malulungkot ako or something kailangan mag reverse psychology ako ibahin ko yung way na naiisip ko or yung mga nakaplano ko, para maging stable at nasa tamang pag iisip parin kailangan ganun kailangan good vibes lang yun ang laging ano mo. Kailangan pag nakakaisip ka na ng negative ay hindi, hindi pede kailangan don tayo may option yan may positive yan kailangan ganan"* (Whenever I'm having some negative thoughts, I will do 'reverse psychology'; I will try to look at the situation in a more positive and good way so that I will have a more stable and optimistic outlook. You should not dwell on your negative thoughts, always look at the bright and positive side of things).

Moreover, some teachers likened themselves to stage actors who have to wear different 'masks' or 'pretend' depending on the context or situation they are in. They believe that they should not allow their personal lives to interfere with their profession as teachers. Thus, if they are experiencing some personal troubles or dilemmas, they think that they have to act like everything is fine when in front of their students. They also argued that it is essential to develop the ability to separate their "identity as an individual" and their "identity as a teacher" especially when dealing with their students. This is particularly highlighted in the statement of:

> *"Pero kailangan maging great pretender ka sa harapan ng estudyante kasi syempre para kang magulang ikaw yung pagkukuhaan nila ng lakas ng loob pero yun nga kailangan maging strong yun yung palagi kong sinasabi sa sarili ko na kaya mo yan! And inisip ko talaga na artista ka "artista ka, kailangan humarap kang nakangiti"* (You have to act like a "great pretender" and be strong in front of your students. You are like their parents through whom they draw their strengths from. That's why I always tell myself that I can do it! I always remind myself that I'm like an actor, I have to always put on a smile [because my students depend on me]).

De-stressing

The participants also found ways to de-stress and relax in order to avoid suffering from work burn-out. The most common forms of de-stressing among the PE teachers are hanging out with friends and family members, indulging on social media, and watching entertainment series. By engaging through these, the participants said that they temporarily forget about the pressures and stresses of being a teacher. Sir J related his experience, *"Nahanap ako ng time sa sarili ko like ba-basketball ako lalabas ako ng bahay, makikipagkwentuhan with friends. Yun yung ginagawa ko para malimutan saglit yung stress, nawawala kasi one way lang naman talaga to relieve stress is lumabas ka muna".* (I find time to do things for myself, such as playing basketball and going-out and talking with my friends. That's what I do to at least momentarily forget about and be relieved of stress). Sir A also shared the things that he do for relaxation, *"Nanonood ako ng Netflix, yun ang ginagawa ko para marelax ako tapos meron akong mga scented candle yung mga ganyan. Mahilig din ako mag isa mas peaceful din yon. Yun lang, nakakarelax na yon"* (I watch Netflix, that's what I do to be relaxed. I also like lighting scented candles. I also enjoy having alone time, that's how I find peace and relaxation).

Meanwhile, there were also those whose idea of de-stressing was to stay away from using any digital platforms and social media sites. They said that doing social media detox helps them clear their heads and recuperate from very stressful moments. Sir C shared his experience in his interview: *"There is a day ang ginagawa ko talaga is wala talaga akong hawak na cellphone kumbaga social media detox para ma-refresh"* (I do a "social media detox" wherein I will not use my phone the entire day in order for me to be refreshed).

Textural Theme 2b: Pedagogical strategies

The PE teachers likewise identified various coping mechanisms that aim to address their pedagogical concerns related to online distance teaching. These include the following: self-reliance, improvisation and creativity, consideration and adjustments, and dealing with students with kindness.

Self-reliance

Most of the participants argued that they often relied on themselves to overcome their problems related to online teaching. For instance, since they do not receive material and financial support from their institutions, the PE teachers made their own initiative to acquire the equipment that they need. Also, the participants shared that they watched instructional videos online to capacitate themselves about the information and skills necessary in online teaching. In the case of Sir A, he said: *"Sa YouTube, tapos self-learning nalang din. I attended a lot of seminars, like for example, how to create modules, how to create syllabus, how*

to create rubrics" (Self-learning through YouTube. I also attended a lot of seminars, for example, on how to create modules, how to create syllabus, and how to create rubrics). In addition, since many of the participants are the breadwinners of their families, they said that they had no choice but to also engage in side hustles, or other works aside from teaching, for income augmentation

Improvisation and creativity

The PE teachers also mentioned that the transition to online distance teaching taught them to be resourceful and creative in order to ensure the learning continuity of their students. For example, since they lack access to facilities, athletic gears, and equipment, they learned to use improvised materials just to make sure that the learning of the students is not being compromised.This is what Ma'am K has to say about improvisation and creativity:

> *"Wala akong masyadong gamit dito sa bahay so, especially sa mga equipment so gagawan mo ng paraan para maging creative ka and in that way magkakaroon ka kunyari ng sample equipment sa kanila pero at the same time papakita mo sa kanila ang original na equipment pero yun nga dahil tayo ay nasa remote situation papaliwanag mo sa kanila na at the same time mae-encourage mo sila na mag improvise din. Kaya pala ni Ma'am, pwede ko din pala gawin"* (I don't have that many things especially sports equipment here in my house so I really need to improvise and be creative in coming up with sample equipment that I can use in my class discussions. Somehow in this way I can also influence and inspire my students to be resourceful despite the limitations. That if Ma'am can do it, so do I).

Moreover, since one of the major concerns is to ensure that the students remain interested in their PE courses despite the lack of physical interaction, the teachers asserted that they had to make their lecture presentations more creative and interactive in order to catch the attention of their students. As a result, they learned to make their PowerPoint presentations more visually appealing and they also introduced interactive games to drive the engagement and participation of the students. In the case for instance of Sir J, he said, *"Ginagawa ko para maging masaya ang delivery ng lesson bumabawi ako sa PPT naglagay ako ng mga online games, online jokes, ano para maging buhay at least buhay pa rin yung discussion"* (I make sure my PPTs are good by including online games and I also insert humor in the lessons to make the class more lively and fun).

Other PE teachers also mentioned that they spend time and effort to make interactive demonstration videos to be shown in class because they think that the students will appreciate the lesson more if they are the ones personally acting and doing the lecture demonstrations. As Sir A said in his interview:

> *"I'm really sure pag ang studyante nakakita ng video ay kinuha lang yan ni Sir ay parang dun lang sya parang nakakawala ng motivation pero pag mismong teacher mo nakikita mo sya mismo nagdedemo at nagbibigay ng information about kung ano man binibigay nya well sa estudyante talaga makikinig talaga sila"* (I'm really sure that if the students see the [downloaded] instructional video they would think that their teacher only got it from the internet. Somehow it will diminish their motivation to learn. But if they see that their PE teacher has exerted effort in doing personal instructional videos, then they will become more motivated to listen and learn).

However, some of the participants preferred using available instructional videos online (e.g. YouTube) because they do not have ample space at home to execute the performance demonstrations or they do not know how to edit videos. This is particularly the case of Sir N. He explained, *"Medyo maliit lang din kaya medyo ano medyo kumapit tayo sa YouTube. Yung kaya ko yung halimbawa sa arnis naeexecute ko naman, ako mismo yung talagang nagvivideo sa sarili ko pero yung mga malalaki na yung halimbawa sa basketball at volleyball ayan kumakapit na talaga tayo kay YouTube"* (We have quite a small space in our house, that's why I tend to rely on Youtube for instructional videos. I make personal videos for the lessons that I can execute in the house, for instance Arnis, but for lessons that require larger spaces like basketball or volleyball, I use instructional videos from the internet).

Consideration and adjustments

To address the various student-related concerns, the participants stated that they learned to be more considerate and understanding of the situation of their students. For instance, the PE teachers opted to use the learning platform that would be most convenient for everyone to ensure that no student would be left behind in terms of learning progress. According to Sir C, *"No platform is required, kumbaga kung ano ang convenient sa mga stakeholders, teachers and students"* (No specific learning platform is being required. Depends on what's most convenient to all stakeholders, both the teacher and the students). Furthermore, since many students only rely on prepaid internet data in order to attend their synchronous classes, the teachers decided to reduce the length of their online discussions and make it more concise and comprehensive. As Ma'am K related,

> *"Yung span or duration ng teaching kasi 2 hours per meeting so kailangan i-shorten kagaya samin purely different from private we know naman na ano kasi ang mga estudyante in state universities they are not that equipped to have that especially sa connectivity sa internet kaya nagkaroon ng limitations and hindi*

naman kami pinahirapan ng university inalalayan nila kami all throughout" (Since the usual span or duration of class discussion per meeting is 2 hours, I have to shorten it because in state universities, where I am teaching, not all students have the means to attend long synchronous meetings due to high internet cost.)

Also, to avoid confusion and misunderstanding, the participants said that they make sure that they give clear and precise announcements to their students. They likewise made certain adjustments in the assessments that they give, for instance the activities were made simpler and the submission deadlines were extended, in acknowledgement that students could be coping differently and may have been dealing with different circumstances during the pandemic. According to Sir C:

> *"So ginagawa ko nalang binibigyan ko nalang sila ng consideration. I have to be considerate kasi yung mga students mo ay hindi pare-pareho ng sitwasyon so you have to extend the deadline and accept late submissions"* (So what I do is that I just give them certain considerations. I need to be considerate, especially in extending deadlines and accepting late submissions, because not all my students have the same situations or circumstances in life).

Sir A also gave a similar response:

> *"Iba-iba kasi tayo ng sitwasyon sa buhay may working student tapos may iba pang bagay well, dun ko nagpukaw na ah okay sige pagbigyan natin to tulungan natin ganon. Sa online class sobra ang daming extension. Dapat ang pagiging teacher is a virtue of patience din talaga and understand 'di sya pede na parang eto gusto ko masusunod to, no hindi lalo na sa online class kasi mas makikita mo ang totoong estado ng estudyante"* (We have different circumstances in life, some students are working already, others are not. We have to help them, especially those who are in need. In the online class set-up, we give some many considerations. Teachers should have the virtues of patience and understanding. They should refrain from being too authoritarian, especially now that we can see the real conditions of the students in the online learning set-up)

Dealing with students with kindness

Aside from being more considerate towards their students especially with their academic concerns, the PE teachers also shared that the transition to online distance teaching prompted them to be more kind towards their students. Many of the interviewed participants recalled being too strict in their class policies during the face-to-face scheme with the belief that it will help instill the importance of discipline among their students. However, they now realized the significance of being kind to their students and sensitive to their situation given the predicaments and challenges brought by the ongoing pandemic crisis. According to Ma'am W, *"Kapag hindi ka mataray sa mga bata, open sila na magchat sayo palagi kahit 'yung mga personal problems nila masasabi sayo. Kaya imbis na magalit ka sa mga bata, re-replyan mo nalang sila kung ano 'yung gusto nilang malaman"* (If you are not intimidating to the students, they will be more open to talk to you even about personal matters. That's why instead of being hostile or aggressive towards the students, you have to be more kind in dealing with them). Also, they mentioned that they became more patient in answering the messages/queries of the students even beyond class hours. They also make sure that they are careful with the choice of words that they use, especially that the students can now record their statements during online classes. *"Careful dapat sa mga salita, kasi pwede ka nilang irecord"* (We have to be careful with our words, because the students can record us), Sir E cautioned. Lastly, they emphasized the importance of being more empathetic to the needs and conditions of their students because at the end of the day, what matters most is that the students attain the intended learning outcomes. As mentioned by Sir J:

> *"Sa pagtuturo kasi ng PE, hindi lang physical activities eh, kailangan mo rin malaman yung environment nila kung paano sila agad makakaadjust kasi di naman lahat pare parehas na mabilis makagets sa mga psychomotor, kasi magkaiba naman ang domains of learning kaya kailangan mo parin talaga sya alagaan"*
> (In teaching PE, we should not only focus on the physical aspect, but we also have to consider the environment that will be conducive for their adjustment and learning. Not all students develop the domains of learning at the same pace, hence they need guidance and support).

Textural Theme 2c: Social support

Conversations with the PE teachers also revealed that another crucial strategy that they employed in order to overcome their predicaments was to seek assistance and support from their significant others. Although they previously stated that they became independent and self-reliant due to the lack of support that they received from their institutions, the participants also recognized the important role played by their family members and colleagues in overcoming many of the issues that they faced related to online distance teaching. They said that they usually turn to their family members for emotional and financial support. *"Sa totoo lang family din ako lumalapit pag napapagod na ako, pag di ko na kaya"* (Honestly, I turn to my family whenever I feel weary, whenever I feel I couldn't do it anymore), shared by Sir J. Meanwhile, Sir C confided, *"In terms of emotional support*

naman, sa misis ko kumbaga sa kanya ako sumasangguni kung ano yung mga dapat gawin" (In terms of emotional support, I always turn to my wife for guidance and support). The participants also shared that they receive social support from their co-teachers especially when it comes to information. As stated by Sir A, "We are not just working alone because we are a team. We're now like a team unlike during face-to-face *kasi* we just teach alone, *totoo yan"*. Sir N also stated in his interview the support that he was able to obtain from his colleagues in his university:

> *"Yung presence ng mga co-teachers. Especially 'yung mga PE teachers mayroon kaming monthly meeting. Ayan pinaguusapan na namin yung mga strategies yung mga dapat ituro kahit yun din napag uusapan tapos yung mga kwentuhan nalang din. Para makatulong din. Syempre mahalaga din yung may social support"*(The presence of my co-teachers. Especially in my department, we always conduct monthly meetings where we discuss and share our teaching strategies to each other and also to catch up with one another. Having a support system is indeed important).

Structural Theme 3: Perspectives towards teaching

This section explores the perspectives of the PE teachers towards the current and future state of online teaching. Three textural themes emerged from their narratives: (1) Ineffectiveness of Online PE Instruction, (2) Towards a Blended Teaching Approach, and (3) Reinforced their belief that teaching as a vocation.

Textural Theme 3a: Ineffectiveness of Online PE Instruction,

Generally, the participants argued that teaching PE courses through online modality is largely ineffective. This can be attributed to a number of reasons. For example, the PE teachers asserted that certain learning competencies in physical education cannot be delivered effectively through online or virtual platforms, especially those that require motor skills and body movements. According to the participants, in contrast to the general knowledge focus of core subject courses, physical education focuses on physical activity, which is under both the emotional and behavioral domains of learning. Thus, the PE teachers that were interviewed confided that it was a struggle to make the online physical education class a meaningful educational activity especially to the college students. According to Ma'am W:

> *"Hindi maayos kasi ang more on naitituro lang namin ay wala 'yung skills, puro knowledge lang. In terms of skills, wala. Tapos 'yung knowledge pa na naituturo mo hindi mo alam kung naiintindihan ng bata. Halimbawa, paano nadevelop yung basketball, hindi nila masasagot unlike sa face-to-face pwede kang magplay, yung mga bata mapapaisip na ay ganun pala yon. Mayroon silang actual na nakikita"* (It's not effective because we can only teach the cognitive/knowledge part, not much about the skills. In terms of the skills, nothing. Also, you're still unsure whether the students even comprehend the cognitive part. For instance, some couldn't even answer questions like "How did basketball develop?" In contrast, during face-to-face the students could have an idea about the nature of the sport while they are playing it).

Sir E, on the other hand, has this to say about online delivery of PE,

> *"I believe na ang PE kasi should be physical, hindi sya more on lecture. Kasi ang nagyayari kapag online parang theoretical sya, parang nagiging subject nalang din sya like Math, like English. Hindi na sya nakakatulong sa bata para maging healthy. Hindi na sya nakakatulong para ma-enhance yung skills nila"*
> (I believe that PE should be taught physically, not merely through lectures. What happens in online class is that PE becomes theoretical, similar to other course subjects such as Math and English. That does not help in promoting the students' physical health and well-being. Now, PE doesn't help anymore in the enhancement of the students' physical skills).

Another reason why the delivery of PE courses via online modality is ineffective, according to the PE teachers who were interviewed, is the lack of immediate feedback mechanism. Unlike in face-to-face physical education classes where students can immediately obtain feedback on their motor skills or their success in completing physical activities, students taking online PE classes cannot modify and improve their own performances by simply viewing a video of them. The PE teachers believe that immediate feedback is needed to motivate students to learn and strengthen their active class attitude. Sir J has this to say about the lack of immediate feedback in online PE classes:

> *"Yung execution ganto ganyan yung naaassess ko sya ng tama hindi ko sya nagagawa. Yung mabantayan ang bata. Hindi ko sya masita na uy mali yan hindi ko sya masita ng tama alam mo yun 'yung part na pag PE ka pag ginawa nung bata nakikita mo tas ginagawa nya uy mali yan eto ang tama hindi ko nagagawa ngayon"*(In terms of the assessing whether the actual execution is proper and correct, I couldn't do that anymore. I couldn't comment whether they are still doing the right thing or not).

Textural Theme 3b: Towards a Blended Teaching Approach

According to the participants, the new normal in teaching PE courses will be towards a blended learning approach, or a hybrid of both online and face-to-face teaching modalities. Although there are many limitations in teaching PE courses via online approach, they stated that certain aspects of PE courses can still be effectively delivered virtually or remotely. For instance, lecture discussions (e.g. theoretical concepts, historical background of sports, etc.) can be taught virtually since these topics do not require the execution or demonstration of physical movements. Moreover, they asserted that certain changes that occurred because of the transition to online teaching, which proved to be beneficial to the teachers, should be continued. Since not all class meetings will require the students to physically execute or demonstrate their performances, the participants argued that it would be more advantageous for them to teach the lecture discussions at home on certain days. As Ma'am W noted, *"Sa akin naman, okay naman kung hindi tayo 100 percent na naka face-to-face kasi diba 'yung pa 2 years na natin ngayon na tayo'y online class okay naman sya. 'Yung lecture ang online tapos face-to-face natin ang skills. Pero kung pure online padin, no"* (It's alright with me if we're not going 100 percent back to face-to-face class since there were also some positive things that happened in online classes in the past two years. The lecture part can be delivered online, then the skills are face-to-face. But if we continue with pure online classes? I disagree).

Nonetheless, the PE teachers strongly believed that performances and assessments that involve physical interaction must be delivered through face-to-face classes. They stressed that nothing will compare to the kind of learning that the students will receive if they can apply the skills that they learned through the lecture discussions in real life together with their other classmates. According to the participants, face-to-face classes can foster stronger camaraderie, better collaboration, and more positive disposition among the students as compared to online PE sessions.

Texturtal theme 3c: Reinforced their belief that teaching as a vocation

The challenges that the PE teachers experienced and faced due to the transition to online distance teaching only reinforced their passion and love towards their profession. Instead of being disheartened and discouraged because of the situation, they expressed that they grew to love their work even more. Moreover, they learned to further cultivate the virtues of patience and creativity. As Ma'am K expressed, *"LOVE, because you have to bring all that you know, 'yung pagmamahal* be compassionate with your students be compassionate on your fellow workers *yung mga* co-faculty *mo* and at the same time it's your passion *diba dapat* you have to put love on your work *kasi kapag wala yon* you're not going to be successful. You're not going to be productive. You're not going to enjoy what you're doing *so kailangan kung baga sa pagluluto, samahan mo ng pagmamahal para masarap ang kalabasan ng inyong niluluto ganyan".* According to Sir J:

> *"Innovative, kasi kung teacher ka ngayon hindi lang dapat nasa isang box kailangan mo from time to time kailangan mo mag improve hindi ka dapat ma-stuck sa kung anung meron ka. Hindi ka dapat makampante kung ano ka parang dapat igagrind mo yung sarili mo para getting better everyday. Hindi yung dapat sakto lang hindi dapat okay na yan. Kailangan mo parin mag improve and professional teacher kaya ayun innovative kailangan mo mabilis ka umadapt culture, tradition mabilis magbago yan"* (Innovative, because if you're a teacher you should not allow yourself to be boxed in. You have to continually improve and you should not be stuck to what you already know and have. You should not be complacent with what you have already achieved, you have to push yourself more to be better everyday. You need to be highly adaptive to the ever-changing culture, traditions, and society)

Summary of Findings

This chapter includes the presentation of a summary, findings, conclusion based on the hypothesis, and the corresponding recommendations.

SUMMARY
Core Essence: The Meaning of being an Online PE Teacher

The core essence of the phenomenon in this study is what it means to experience teaching PE course subjects through the online distance modality from the perspectives of teachers amidst the ongoing pandemic crisis. Based on the narratives of the participants, the essence of teaching PE courses through the online modality can be described in three ways: **(1) Online PE teaching is a struggle; (2) Online PE teaching is less effective but has potentials for improvement; (3) Being an online PE teacher is still a fulfilling vocation.** The PE teachers struggled in transitioning to the online teaching modality due to various reasons, from personal issues, pedagogical concerns, technological problems, to lack of institutional support. But they were able to overcome these problems by employing certain coping strategies. Moreover, they generally believed that online PE teaching is less effective than face-to-face classes in terms of the delivery of essential learning competencies. Unlike other course subjects that can be easily replicated and applied in an online environment, the participants argued that certain PE lessons (especially the

skills-based lessons) are more effectively delivered through face-to-face classes. However, they also purported that blended learning can address this issue, by identifying the topics that can be taught virtually (particularly the lecture discussions) and the topics that must be specifically delivered face-to-face. Lastly, in spite of all the challenges and predicaments that they encountered, the PE teachers remained passionate towards their profession and still considered their work as a fulfilling and noble vocation.

CONCLUSION

This study has examined the lived experiences of teachers in delivering Physical Education courses through the online distance modality in the midst of the ongoing pandemic crisis. In particular, this study is anchored on the following questions: Using phenomenology as the primary method of analysis, this study presented the recurrent themes drawn from the narratives of selected seven PE teachers teaching in various higher educational institutions. In total, there are three structural themes that emerged from the narratives of the participants: (1) Struggles in Online Teaching, (2) Overcoming the Problems, and (3) Perspectives towards teaching.

The first structural theme focuses on the struggles or problems experienced by the PE teachers as a result of the transition to online distance teaching modality. They identified specific concerns, including personal, pedagogical, technological, and lack of institutional support. The personal problems that the participants identified are the adverse implications of online teaching on their physical and psychological well-being. Among the physical problems that they experienced are being less fit, worsening of eye conditions, and tiredness. According to the PE teachers, these physical issues are due to the lack of engagement in strenuous physical activities, prolonged exposure to screen devices, and sleep deprivation. Meanwhile, the psychological effects of online teaching to the participants include anxiety and stress, triggered by the overwhelming demands of both their institutions and students.

Aside from the personal issues, the participants likewise mentioned about the pedagogical problems that they encountered related to online distance teaching. These include additional workload, communication barriers with students, student-related concerns, and problematic work environment. They shared that the transition to online teaching created additional work burdens for them such as checking video outputs, more lecture preparations, and the need to comply with strict school deadlines. In addition, they experienced barriers to effective communication with their students such as the lack of socialization and emotional detachment due to their distance with the students, poor information dissemination, and the lack of immediate feedback. Moreover, they experienced various student-related concerns as well such as the deluge of complaints, unverified excuses, non-compliance of requirements, plagiarized works, late submissions, poor quality of outputs, and inconsiderate messages from students. Lastly, another pedagogical concerns encountered by the participants associated with the transition to online teaching were the lack of adequate workspace, lack of proper equipment, and various distractions in their homes, resulting in a very problematic work environment.

The participants of the study likewise grappled with different technological challenges. One of the most common problems among the PE teachers is the poor and unstable internet connection which causes disruption in their delivery of instruction. Also, many of the PE teachers are not fully well-versed in using online platforms since they are more familiar in teaching PE courses in the traditional, face-to-face approach. Furthermore, because of the abrupt transition to online distance teaching, the participants initially experienced difficulty in adjusting since they did not have adequate and proper devices to use in online teaching. To add to their predicaments, the PE teachers also lamented that they did not receive enough support from their respective institutions, especially in terms of financial and material assistance. This is particularly because many of them are contractual faculty members who are, unfortunately, not entitled to necessary institutional assistance.

The second structural theme, on the other hand, discusses the variety of strategies employed by the participants to cope and deal with the problems that they faced. This section is subdivided into three categories: psycho-emotional strategies, pedagogical strategies, and social support. For the psycho-emotional strategies, the PE teachers expressed that maintaining a positive outlook despite the difficulties helped them overcome the various problems related to online teaching. They likewise shared that they engaged in different de-stressing activities as a form of distraction and as a means to recuperate from work-induced stresses.

As part of their pedagogical strategies, the participants asserted that they tend to rely on themselves in addressing many of their predicaments related to their teaching practice and methods. These include self-learning as well as engaging in some side-hustles for income augmentation. Moreover, the participants developed various improvisations and became creative with their approaches such as the use of alternative materials as sport equipment, integrating gamification into their lecture presentations, as well as making interactive demonstration videos. The PE teachers also asserted that it is crucial to be more considerate and accommodating of the needs of the students. Among the considerations and adjustments that they showed towards their students include extension of submission deadlines, use of the most convenient online platform for everyone, and reducing the length of synchronous class discussions. In addition, the participants noted that the shift towards online teaching prompted them to become kinder to their students (e.g. being more patient in answering their messages or queries even if beyond class hours, being careful

with the use of words, and being more empathic in their gestures) in recognition that not all students are dealing with the same circumstances during the pandemic. Finally, the support of their family members and colleagues was sought also by the participants which significantly helped them in their adjustment to the transition to online distance teaching.

The third and last structural theme delves into the perspectives of the participants towards the current and future state of online PE teaching. Based on the experiences of the PE teachers, they generally believe that online delivery of PE courses was less effective than the traditional face-to-face approach because there are many aspects in physical education that cannot be properly replicated and simulated in an online learning environment in contrast to other course subjects. Thus, they strongly believe that a blended-learning approach must be adopted in order to facilitate better and more effective PE instruction. Furthermore, they emphasized that their experiences with the challenges related to online teaching only reinforced their belief that teaching is indeed a noble vocation. For them being a teacher, no matter what modality it might be, must be all about love, patience, and continuous improvement.

In conclusion, the core essence of online PE teaching based on the lived experiences and perspectives of the participants of this study, can be summed up in three statements. First, online PE teaching presents various challenges, difficulties, and obstacles that have to be overcome by the teachers in order to ensure the learning continuity of their students. Second, online PE teaching is deemed less effective than traditional face to face but can be improved through a blended teaching approach. Lastly, for the PE teachers, the meaning of being an online PE teacher is about continued commitment and love towards their profession.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Limitations of the Study

As with all research, a few limitations also exist in this study. Primarily, the use of the qualitative research method in this study (specifically phenomenology) means that the findings may or may not be transferable or applicable to the situation and context of other Physical Education teachers who are also utilizing the online teaching modality in the country during the pandemic. Some of the observations presented in this study are unique and distinct to the experiences of the participants. However, there are certain findings in the study that may likewise be apparent in the context of other online PE teachers, especially the different strategies that the PE teachers employed to deal with the problems associated with the online distance teaching modality.

Recommendation for Further Studies

This study was borne out of a desire to contribute to the presently scant literature on the lived experiences of PE online teachers among PE teachers. It is hoped that the findings of this phenomenological study would not only be a mere addition to the body of literature, but would also serve as a catalyst for further studies in this area especially among researchers engaged in education research

Taking into account the aforementioned limitations, researchers may look into the following areas for future considerations. First, since this study only centered on the experiences and narratives of the PE teachers, it may also be necessary to explore and examine the experiences and perspectives of the students in future research endeavors in this area. This would provide a more holistic understanding about the applicability of online distance modality in teaching Physical Education courses in the long-term.

Second, since the blended teaching/learning scheme was identified by the participants as a better approach to take in delivering PE instruction instead of pure online learning, future studies in this area may focus on the feasibility of blended-learning scheme as the "new normal" in education.

Third, it was found in the study that the participants did not receive enough support from their educational institutions which to some extent exacerbated the problems that they faced due to the abrupt transition to online teaching. Thus, future studies must also take into consideration the crucial role of educational institutions in providing support to PE teachers in order to facilitate better adjustment and effective performance among them.

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