



## Motion of Coping: A Phenomenological Study of PWD Students' Lived Experiences in Flexible Learning

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### ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the experiences of students with disabilities in physical education classes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Students with disabilities face numerous challenges in various aspects of their lives, and the pandemic has further exacerbated these difficulties. The study aims to understand the lived experiences of these students in a flexible learning environment. The researchers used a phenomenological approach and conducted interviews and focus group discussions to gather data. Four main themes emerged from the data: physical and emotional hurdles, willpower and coping mechanisms, teachers' methodological approach, and social support system. These themes highlight the challenges faced by students with disabilities and the strategies they employ to overcome them. The researchers also developed a Pillar of Support for individuals with disabilities, which draws inspiration from the pillars of education. This framework can assist physical education teachers in creating inclusive and effective learning environments for students with disabilities. The findings of this study can also serve as a basis for future research and the development of educational policies that address the needs of this underrepresented group..

### RESUMO

Este estudo tem como foco as experiências de alunos com deficiência nas aulas de educação física durante a pandemia da COVID-19. Os alunos com deficiência enfrentam inúmeros desafios em vários aspectos das suas vidas, e a pandemia exacerbou ainda mais essas dificuldades. O estudo tem como objetivo compreender as experiências vividas por esses alunos em um ambiente de aprendizagem flexível. Os pesquisadores utilizaram uma abordagem fenomenológica e conduziram entrevistas e discussões em grupos focais para coletar dados. Quatro temas principais emergiram dos dados: obstáculos físicos e emocionais, força de vontade e mecanismos de enfrentamento, abordagem metodológica dos professores e sistema de apoio social. Esses temas destacam os desafios enfrentados pelos alunos com deficiência e as estratégias que empregam para superá-los. Os pesquisadores também desenvolveram um Pilar de Apoio às Pessoas com Deficiência, que se inspira nos pilares da educação. Esta estrutura pode ajudar os professores de educação física na criação de ambientes de aprendizagem inclusivos e eficazes para alunos com deficiência. As conclusões deste estudo também podem servir de base para pesquisas futuras e para o desenvolvimento de políticas educacionais que atendam às necessidades deste grupo sub-representado.

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## Introduction

The swift evolution of technology has ushered in a need for innovative educational approaches, leading to adaptations in teaching and learning strategies. Thus, the birth of flexible learning – a learning design perspective deeply rooted in the needs of students, with the main objective of providing them with the most flexibility about the learning content, schedules, access, and learning styles possible. It customizes learning environments using both technological and non-technological tools and allows students to have more autonomy over their learning. It provides balance, accessibility, and personalization. Students can learn and take classes anywhere and whenever they want with flexible modes of learning. This additional freedom is significant since it provides the ideal opportunity to learn at a time and place that is convenient for learners, without regard for physical location.

Students who would not otherwise have had access to a high-quality education and learning experience can benefit from flexible learning. Students can refer to materials and resources as needed, progress through topics at their own pace, and select a course that is appropriate for their existing knowledge and capabilities when using this type of learning technique. Flexible students also equate to flexible learning. It gives students greater autonomy to express their thoughts, select their educational route, and set their own pace of study. While all of these appear to be very appealing, they also increase the responsibility that students have for their future. Therefore, flexible learning is great as long as kids realize that with a little more flexibility to learn comes a greater responsibility for their destiny.

Despite all of the beneficial effects that encourage individual learning and self-paced learning, there is a vulnerable group that is somehow disadvantaged in the circumstance. According to a recent UNICEF research (UNICEF, 2022), there are approximately 1.6 million Filipino children with disabilities. According to data from the Department of Education (DepEd), 232,975 students with impairments or learning problems were mainstreamed in normal classes during the 2016-2017 school year. Prior to these revisions and innovations in the field of education, PWD students were already presented with numerous barriers in terms of acquiring information and inclusion problems. Even before the pandemic began, individuals with disabilities were among the most vulnerable and unheard voices in our society. They face injustice, violations of dignity, and deprivation of autonomy, all of which are projected to intensify as a result of the global health crisis. Catalina Devandas, a United Nations Special Rapporteur, noted that people with disabilities are not receiving the necessary support and protection in the face of the ongoing pandemic (Velasco, 2021).

According to the United Nations of Human Rights (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic threatens all parts of society, with people with disabilities bearing a disproportionate burden due to attitudinal, environmental, and institutional impediments replicated in the COVID-19 response. Many people with disabilities may become increasingly isolated and unable to

survive during lockdown measures during this crisis. PWDs continue to experience discrimination and difficulties in obtaining livelihood and income support, participating in new types of education, and avoiding assault (Tus, 2021).

Globally, obstacles that prevent individuals with impairments from pursuing their education are comparable. Students may encounter different levels of difficulty in different countries, but the fundamental issue is always the same: a lack of inclusivity. Inclusion in education provides opportunities for students with and without disabilities to learn and grow together. This leads to better academic achievement and socialization. It also fosters community and belonging, promoting acceptance and respect for diversity.

Education system disruptions in the last year have already resulted in significant losses and inequities in learning. All efforts to give remote instruction are commendable, but it has shown to be an inadequate substitute for in-person learning. According to studies, each additional month schools were closed translated into nearly one month of learning deficits among children still enrolled in school. School closures raised dropout rates in several countries, lowering learning levels even further (Stacy, 2023). Worryingly, even when schools reopen, many children, particularly girls, may not return. It is not sufficient for schools to merely reopen following COVID-19. Students will require targeted and ongoing assistance to help them transition and catch up following the pandemic.

In disciplines demanding mobility, skill development, movement mastery, and rhythmic motions, these fast transitions throw additional stress on the shoulders of students with disabilities. The aforementioned skills may be observed in Physical Education, which mostly affects children with impairments. This study focuses on the following central question: What tales best illustrate the flexible learning experiences of PWD students?

This study tries to address the central issue, "What stories illustrate the flexible learning experiences of students with disabilities?" 1. What are the actual experiences of students with disabilities in flexible learning? 2. What are the learning processes and coping skills of students with disabilities enrolled in PE courses? 3. How do they adapt to flexible learning and develop transitional skills in physical education courses? 4. What problems do students with disabilities face in PE classes during flexible learning? 5. How can learners with impairments manage the rigors of their physical education classes? How can the institution adopt new rules and procedures to support inclusive education?

## Theoretical/Conceptual Framweork

**Figure 1.**  
*Community of Inquiry Model Theory*



The paradigm of a community of inquiry depicted in Figure 1 is comprised of three essential components of an educational experience: teaching presence, cognitive presence, and social presence. This presence represents and illustrates the elements that influence the educational experiences of students with disabilities, as well as how these presences are interconnected and interdependent. Each presence explicates the several factors that influence the teaching and learning process. Social presence is the ability to portray oneself socially and emotionally, allowing one to be perceived as a "real person" in formal interactions.

Social Presence includes Communication between and with the instructor and all classmates, communication with the lecturer and all class members, and A term-long connection to a learning community that transitions from an introduction to the community to fellowship. It also discusses the participation and inclusiveness of all learners in the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. In the meantime, Teaching Presence refers to instructional design, which primarily provides various approaches for delivering scope. Organization of the course, Discussion facilitation, Directing the discussion through the four cognitive phases, and supplying students with knowledge and questions.

Finally, Cognitive Presence illustrates motivating students to interact cognitively with course material. This presence contains four phases that summarize the entire experience: (1) Triggering events, such as a problem or issue. (2) Exploration through contemplation and dialogue. (3) Construction of meaning as students examine concepts (4) Application of knowledge both within and outside the classroom.

## Materials and methods

This is a Phenomenological investigation, a qualitative research approach that attempts to understand and characterize the universal essence of a phenomenon. The method analyzes the common experiences of humans while researchers suspend their previous notions about

the topic (Dunlao, 2022). The method investigates people's actual experiences while researchers suspend their preconceived beliefs about the issue (Dunlao, 2022). To discover this occurrence, it is required to analyze the lived experiences of PWD students during flexible learning in their PE courses. Plan for Sampling - Purposeful sampling will be used. In qualitative research, the identification and collection of information-rich examples connected with the phenomena of curiosity are typically accomplished through the use of purposeful sampling.

### **Participants**

The key participants were the PWD students of the Mandaluyong City division, regardless of their disability, who provided in-depth and extended informal, semi-formal, and formal interviews addressing the investigated phenomenon. The selection of participants was based on the following criteria:

1. PWD students with any condition or disability.
2. Students should be enrolled at any school within the division of Mandaluyong.
3. Should have parental or guardian consent.
4. Should have a passing grade.

### **Instrumentation and Data Gathering**

The researchers carried out semi-structured interviews with the individuals. Furthermore, this study involved interviews and focus group discussions. The reliability of the questionnaire was verified by cross-referencing the Interview questionnaire and FGD. The interview questions were examined by three specialists in the domains of special education, education/psychology, and physical education. Their advice and advise were incorporated into the final iteration of the paper. Before the interview and focus group discussion (FGD), participants were provided with written consent to ensure ethical issues were met; for persons who were not of legal age, parental or guardian consent was required. In addition, anonymity was preserved throughout the research. The Robotfoto was employed to collect data and provide a description of the participants' Disability, Age, Year Level, and academic status. In addition, Aide Mémoire was used to summarize important discoveries, recommendations, and relevant information on the experiences of individuals with disabilities (PWDs). Pursuant to Republic Act 10173, also known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012, the gathered data was handled with the highest level of confidentiality. The interview and focus group discussion (FGD) were done virtually to ensure convenient accessibility and to observe the participants' visual presentation. Each participant interview had a duration of 30-60 minutes, while the FGD lasted for 2 hours. All participants who met the specified criteria and were available at the time were interviewed and took part in the FGD. Therefore, in order to guarantee and prevent prejudice. The technique of member checking was utilized. The people who were unable to participate in the online interviews and focus group discussions (FGD), either due to

limitations in internet access or other personal reasons, were not included in the study. Face-to-face interviews were carried out in accordance with the IATF Protocol to confirm that both participants had been vaccinated and were immune. The investigators concluded their search for information when they no longer identified any new topics and had gathered a substantial amount of comprehensive data, thus reaching data saturation.

### **Data Treatment**

Researchers utilized thematic analysis. This is frequently applied to a collection of texts, such as interview transcripts. The researcher conducted an in-depth analysis of the data to identify recurring topics, concepts, and meaning patterns. To explain, depict, or describe a phenomenon, the strategy for employing this is to assemble the data in a manner similar to a jigsaw puzzle. Researchers utilized techniques as described in Gery Ryan's article "Techniques to Identify Themes in Qualitative Data", including word repetitions, indigenous categories, constant comparison method, connectors, pawing, cutting, and sorting to identify themes.

**Coding Analysis:** This type of analysis is carried out during the process of this research. This is in order to assist the researcher in classifying and organizing the data gathered through the one-on-one interview and focus group discussion (FGD).

To fully understand the phenomenon and answer the central questions, the results of the interview were coded using Quirkos software, which creates centralized ideas through the form of bubbles per code. When there are similarities between statements and phrases, the bubbles grow and turn into larger ones, which may serve as new and relevant themes that will help the researcher to easily identify and generate common themes that explore the lived experiences of PWD students during flexible learning. In this study, it is anticipated that several concepts and sub-themes were unleashed, and there is a need for re-grouping and eliminating irrelevant data. Data frequently used, ideas that surprised the researcher, and concepts that opposed recent studies were extracted. By having this, major themes will arise and be identified. In addition, this study anchored the systematic exploitation of the data of Hycner (1999) which has five (5) phases:

1. Bracketing and phenomenological reduction.
2. Delineating units of meaning.
3. Clustering of units of meaning to form themes.
4. Summarizing each Interview, validating it, and, where necessary modifying it.
5. Extracting general and unique themes from all the interviews and making a composite summary

### **Ethical Consideration**

The study went through a lengthy approval process from the University Ethics Board to verify that research ethics were strictly followed. Consent forms were used as part of the process to guarantee that participants under the age of 18 actively engaged in data collection.

Parental agreement was also obtained, and participants were given the option to join or withdraw from the aforementioned activities. Participants' identities were similarly secured because the researchers did not use their names or aliases, instead addressing them as Participant A through Participant E.

### **Confidentiality**

The Data Privacy Act 10173, often known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012, is well-known and understood by researchers. Researchers understood that they cannot release information to anybody without consent and that they are responsible for protecting all personal and sensitive information with extreme caution. All written papers will be kept in a desk drawer at home, with only the researcher having the key. Any electronic or digital material (including audio and video recordings) was saved on a password-protected computer. The data gathered during this investigation will be maintained for three years after the study is completed. There are no records that match the real name and pseudonym.

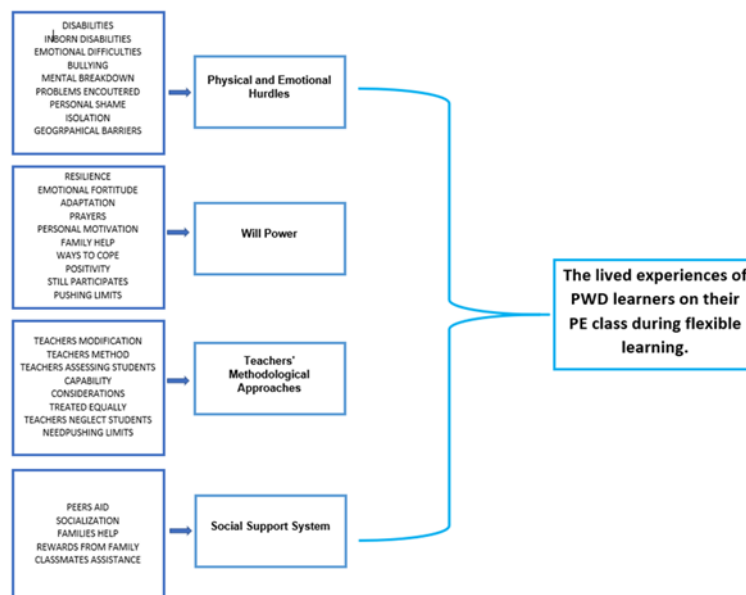
### **Member Checking**

Before the paper is finalized, the results and analyzed data will undergo member checking. This involves returning the accumulated data to the participants for them to verify if the researchers have accurately processed the data and if it aligns with their understanding. This process aims to promote consensus and ensure the validity of the acquired information. If you choose to remove any material that is deemed inappropriate or unneeded, researchers will swiftly exclude the specified portion by data privacy and consent.

### **Results**

Figure 2 depicts the codes and the developed themes that will investigate the lived experiences of people with disabilities during flexible learning. Following the methodology outlined above, researchers identified various themes, including Physical and Emotional Hurdles, Will Power, Teachers' Methodological Approaches, and a Social Support System. The clustering of units of meaning to form themes produced these themes. There are also certain codes that have been omitted that do not make sense of the phenomena, Bracketing and phenomenological reduction, and Delineating units of meaning. These processes were linked to the methodical exploitation of Hycner's (1999) data.

**Figure 2.**  
*Codes, and Themes*



**Theme 1 – PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL HURDLES**

Physical and Emotional Hurdles refer to the limitations of the PWD learners in terms of their physical capabilities and Emotional baggage as they face new forms of learning modalities to engage themselves in Physical Education. Most of the phrases and answers by the participants revolved around their stories relative to disabilities, inborn disabilities, emotional difficulties, bullying, mental breakdown, problems encountered, personal shame, isolation, and geographical barriers.

The first theme focused on the experiences of learners with disabilities and how their disability and emotional discomfort influenced their learning experiences in physical education during the Flexible learning implementation. Physical Education is a physically demanding subject since it necessitates a variety of movements, motor skills, complicated motions, and rigorous activities, and it primarily attempts to build the learners' psychomotor skills. However, learners at each Educational Institution come from diverse backgrounds, including regular students, irregular students, working students, international students, and even students with health concerns or impairments.

Some of the participants of this research a one leg amputated, one has bone cancer, and another has Blount disease which is a developmental illness that affects the lower leg bones, causing the knees to bow outward. In addition, one of the participants has a vision issue, with just one (1) eye functioning.

Finally, one individual has orthopedic difficulties that cause his feet to grow unevenly. Because of their circumstances, students with disabilities have unique challenges in obtaining a good education. Most of the participants that have a problem with their lower limbs



complained about their Balance as they performed their Physical Education task Participant C mentioned that “ if the activity requires video recording and I have to stand up, I was forced a number of times to retake it because I always get fall and out of balance and it took all of my times just to have a good take” Similar to the scenario, participants voice out its frustration “I envy my classmates because they can execute physical activities efficiently without falling and pain on their feet unlike mine” participant also added that “I am tired of always being the person behind the documentation” due to its physical challenge situation, most of the time they were excused from the task and will be given supplemental activities.

This was also seconded by a few of the participants on the FGD Similarly, participants experienced difficulties in moving which is vital in acing the subject matter. “Most of the time I have had a hard time moving if my lower body is concerned and included in the execution”. Participant D said.

In addition, Participant B complains that in times of online classes eyes can easily feel fatigued due to long screen time “Sometimes, I cannot cope with the discussion if I am using a cellphone especially if there are workouts are being played since the screen is small and my eye feel exhausted if the class is quite long” Correspondingly, Participant A hesitantly admitted that it is forcing itself on accomplishing the task in PE and engaging physical activities it result to unlikely outcome “ After doing some workouts and routine I caught fever and worst I bruised myself in the process and afterward.” It was also mentioned that the participant above force itself to do so despite of warnings and reminders coming from its Physical Education Instructor. It was explained that it is being personally pushed because they don’t want to be tagged as Dramatic

Moreover, these hardships and emotional discomfort affect also the overall performance of PWD learners as they go through various adverse experiences. “I experienced trauma way back when I was a 1st-year student due to a misunderstanding between me and my classmates over a school activity” Participant A. This encounter resulted in some anxiety attacks that lasted for the duration of my school stay. "There are times when my hands are shaking (tremors demonstrated) while I am reporting and presenting my task, especially if it involves body movements or physical activity." It was also reported that Participant A was depressed at the time. "Actually, I had depression during that time since there were a lot of problems personal and even in my academics.

Participant B was self-conscious and insecure about her physical appearance because she only had one (1) eye. It was also stated that she had mental breakdowns at night because of her insecurities. Notwithstanding this, the participant is grateful since his or her sense of seeing is still obtainable. It was also supported by the report of the World Health Organization that Many of us grew more worried, but for some, COVID-19 triggered or exacerbated much more serious mental health issues. Many people have reported psychological anguish and symptoms of sadness, anxiety, or post-traumatic stress disorder. This emotional baggage adds

up to the struggles of PWD learners as they navigate their academic discourse across all subjects and programs.

## **Theme 2 – WILL POWER AND COPING MECHANISM**

Will power denotes the emotional strength displayed by PWD learners as they master the new way of learning. There are various ways of coping mechanisms and mental fortitude mentioned in the study such as resilience, emotional fortitude, adaptation, prayers, personal motivation, family help, ways to cope, positivity, continuous participation, and pushing limits. Their willpower is the outcome of collaborating variables that lead to emotional fortitude to make the shift.

Meanwhile, the Coping mechanism pertains to the habits and actions that PWD learners use to deal with particularly stressful situations. They frequently rely on these coping mechanisms to keep themselves calm while they adjust to the change. PWD students' experiences are bittersweet, as they go through emotional highs and lows, wins and losses, and even problems throughout flexible learning. It is no secret that the academic lives of PWD students are fraught with adversity and brawls. Despite this, participants displayed tenacity and perseverance in pursuing academic success in various ways. First and foremost, acceptance is the key to maintaining sanity and productivity. "I know what I can do and give, and that's fine given my situation," Participant E stated.

With this perspective, the students were able to clearly define what they could and could not do. It is a wonderful starting point for sketching and crafting new methods that are tailored to their needs. Participant C noted, "I always make sure to include myself in the activity so that I am not isolated." He also stated that he does it because he wants to be treated equally. "I force myself to be positive all the time," Participant E stated. He further said that being negative will not get you anywhere.

Correspondingly, some of the participants rejected task modification because they didn't want to feel special and felt ashamed of themselves. It comes to the point that Participant B did not apply for a PWD Identification Card because she is shy about it. She also added "I will finish the task without even asking for special treatment" It was also added that "I even finished a semester without telling my PE instructor that I am a PWD"

Furthermore, just like most of the Filipino participants manifest coping mechanisms by portraying prayerfulness and strengthening their faith. "I always pray to God that this too shall pass and give me grace to make myself productive." This was seconded by Participant A saying "I always pray and ask direction when I am about to perform Physical Activities for me to be guided always." Faith fosters resilience by allowing us to see our current situations in a broader context. It gives us hope and saves us from being bogged down by difficult situations. Along with these, resilience is also depicted on the journey of the PWD "I always endured and execute all the activities as much as I can for me to get along with my classmates and to look

and feel normal.” Participant C detailed. Likewise, Adaptation is also mentioned to ensure that despite challenges development is still applicable and learning takes place. It was also discovered that PWD participants devised numerous coping techniques to maintain productivity while excelling academically, particularly in their Physical Education the subject at hand." I take notes and make a list of things to do," Participant C. As a result, participants were able to motivate and quickly prioritize activities that required immediate action, allowing them to fulfill and complete the tasks that would benefit them in their quest.

It was further stated that being technologically conversant saves them during flexible learning considering most projects are completed online. "It aids me that I am technologically inclined so that I can work with my task efficiently and if involves video editing, and compiling pictures of my workout and meal plans," A participant said. Because the majority of the tasks involve monitoring and documenting, it is a very important complement to be technologically literate as they investigate, navigate, and use computers to meet their requirements. Still, the major purpose of this course is to address their physical wellness and health concerns.

### **Theme 3 – TEACHERS METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH**

The teacher’s methodological approach refers to the ways Physical Education Teachers handle, teach, organize, and deliver instructions to their learners during flexible learning. These methods directly impacted the lived experiences of PWD learners. These approaches encompass Instructional materials, methods of teaching, assessment, and even evaluation. Unfortunately, negative practices were also highlighted in the study like Teachers' failure to assess students' special needs and traditional perspective in terms of handling PWD learners.

Teaching methods are crucial in classroom instruction. Without a method, teachers would be aimlessly projecting material that does not connect with or interest students. Strategies assist learners in participating in, connecting with, and adding excitement to the subject being provided (Cchiaro, 2022). That being said, approaches are critical for achieving academic achievement, especially in the context of PWD learners, because they play a critical role in students' engagement in their respective courses, such as Physical Education, which is the main subject of this study. Physical education teachers are well-known for providing inventive instructions and approaches, as well as focusing on the discourse more on Psychomotor development, which will be difficult in advancing learners with special needs and impairments. Similarly, PE instructors who are about to provide information experience the same hurdles. The following narrative will reveal the various methods of PE teachers that affect the teaching and learning process during flexible learning that affects PWD learners.

When participants were asked about the modifications made by their PE to accommodate their needs most of the participants agreed that there are and they appreciate it. Participant D “There are activities that require full body movement like in Arnis, but my teacher allowed me to perform movements that will exclude the lower body movement and will

just focus on the upper body” It was supported by Participant C “ Since I am amputated, my teacher only gives me exercises that is more on the upper body.” It is also the same with the narrative of Participant A “My PE teacher is not allowing me to perform the whole routine, instead she instructed me just to perform what I am capable to finish.”

This goes to show that some Physical Education teacher is knowledgeable in terms of inclusivity as they include and modify the set activities to cater to the PWD needs by means of Exercise regression. An exercise regression is simply a method of reducing the difficulty of an exercise or movement. A progression, on the other hand, performs the reverse by gradually raising demand through modest modifications (Miller, n.d.). This is typically utilized to include learners who are having difficulty completing the assigned task in order for them to continue participating and earning the same merit or grades.

Furthermore, PE teachers supply supplementary materials to help learners become fully engaged in the subject. "I am unable to fully digest the discussion due to my poor eyesight." "Thank goodness my PE teacher provides video-recorded materials for me to review," said Participant B. Participant D also seconded it, stating, "Our PE teacher is very diligent in providing power points and separate video that has a segmental process for us to be guided step by step." This demonstrates that PE instructors are well prepared to provide materials that are well-rounded and can be beneficial to everyone even if it takes time and another effort to create.

Additionally, when asked how their PE instructor graded them, participants cascaded that few PE teachers are fair and follow certain criteria and standards. "To be fair to our teachers, they always provide us criteria ahead of time so we know what to expect and ace. Participant B elaborated. Similarly, participant D stated that their teacher gives him enough time to complete the assignment and all the required assistance to guarantee that he completes it gracefully, which leads to strong production and acceptable grades.

Unfortunately, there are still PE teachers who tend to exempt students from all activities from start to finish and will simply assign students to other activities that are unrelated to the subject matter, which deviates from the concept of inclusivity and remains traditional. "I'm sick of being the person assigned to documentation," Participant C said. Unluckily, there are PE teachers who are not informed and aware of the situation of their PWD students due to a lack of face-to-face interaction because of the online setup teachers may have a difficult time assessing the student's fitness capability of the students unlike in traditional where fitness assessment is a must and unnegotiable in PE class from the very beginning of the class.

With that, PE teachers should be more familiar with inclusivity to really provide a necessary approach to everyone and cater to their needs. Similar to the scenario, the research by Mangope in 2013 found that there are teachers who do not meet the qualifications. knowledge and talents in dealing with students with these types of problems (Mangope, 2013).

#### **Theme 4 – SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEM**

The social support system is concerned with the environment and people's interactions with PWD learners; these interactions affect the coping mechanism as well as how individuals behave, act, and respond to flexible learning. A variety of persons and their ways of showing support for the PWD were also highlighted as they were acquainted with the new learning system. The study included peers, family, colleagues, and even a rewards-based system coming from the support group. People who surround PWD learners as they explore the new landscape of education play a crucial role in guiding and assisting them. Family, friends, peers, and teachers are people who consistently help PWD learners.

An essential factor for the achievement of learners with disabilities (PWD) is the existence of a robust support system in their social environment. This idea is frequently examined within the realm of online learning environments, but it has substantial importance in all educational contexts, including physical education classes that employ an adaptable learning method (Gianreco, 2013).

When participants were asked if there was help they received from their circle participants gratefully said yes and they were happy with all the aids that they indulged. Since this is a flexible setup, there are times that classes happen remotely when families assist the learners. "For most of my activities, I was assisted by my older sister, they give me advice on how to do it efficiently." Participant B stated. "My grandmother is always there to help me when I fell out of balance" Participant D. But eventually, I learned to manage to do it alone and now I can balance alone and even hop around in our house without my crutches." He also added. It means that scaffolding is important to ensure support to students as they learn and develop a new concept or skillset just like what participant B developed.

Consequently, Participant C experienced being rewarded by her family once she was able to have good grades and even socialize with her peers just to make sure that her sanity was intact and that she still made friends. "My parents always give me rewards when I have good grades, especially in the subjects that I am disadvantaged like Physical Education" This practice is linked to the concept called Reward systems It is an excellent technique to recognize and reward student success and positive behavior. The usage of prizes in the educational setting serves as an example of extrinsic motivation for students, motivating them to collaborate in academic and social learning activities.

Moreover, classmates and peers are highly supportive and are always willing to provide a helping hand when needed. Participants A and D both stated that "my classmates are always there to support and assist me in a face-to-face setting, they make sure that I will maintain my balance and help me when I am about to fall." Participants also feel safe and like they belong to their group, and they are never excluded or bullied because of their impairments, which makes them more motivated to attend and engage in their PE classes. "I am always excited if

there are group activities in PE because I always feel like I have brothers and sisters maybe not by blood but by heart," said Participant A joyfully.

This demonstrates how crucial it is that accommodation and assistance go a long way if done correctly and regularly. This will result in more inclusive and fruitful teaching and learning experiences for our PWD students. Furthermore, accommodations are so important in allowing children with disabilities to access the regular curriculum, engage in school including extracurricular, and nonacademic activities, and Physical Education even if they are naturally disadvantaged in this course, and be educated alongside their peers who do not have disabilities.

The study conducted by Giangreco et al. (2013) highlights the importance of social presence in inclusive education. It emphasizes that the ability to establish strong connections with peers, educators, or other supportive individuals creates a positive environment that enhances learning for individuals with disabilities. It fosters coherence and standardization in thoughts and behaviors, hence augmenting engagement in diverse pursuits, as well as heightened commitment.

## **Discussions**

Upon carefully conducting data gathering and analyzation of data, the researchers found out that 4 major themes correspond to the Lived experiences of PWD learners during their PE class using flexible learning. PE classes aim to enhance overall well-being by fostering physical exercise and honing skills. Nevertheless, individuals with disabilities face distinctive obstacles that impact their encounters within this specific academic sphere. This study identified various dimensions of individuals' real-life encounters, with a specific emphasis on the challenges they confront in terms of their physical and emotional well-being, their determination, their strategies for dealing with difficulties, and the impact of social networks on both the learners' experiences and the teachers' instructional methods.

### **Physical and emotional hurdles**

Learners with disabilities face various struggles in their Physical Education class including physical constraints and emotional discomforts that hinder them from fully maximizing the essence of the subject matter. These two equal forces are intricately intertwined in their academic discourse and the manner they interact with their fellow learners, absorb knowledge, and value themselves not just as students but in a holistic sense. By analyzing these barriers, we get insight into the complex interplay between physical limitations and mental well-being.

### **Will power and coping mechanism**

Even when faced with particular challenges, PWD students often show remarkable perseverance. Their resilience is shown in their commitment to participating in physical

activities, overcoming physical challenges, and challenging traditional conventions. Furthermore, individuals with disabilities employ many coping strategies, such as the creation of adaptable methods, the formation of a strong support network, and the fostering of a positive mindset. Acquiring a thorough comprehension of these strategies for dealing with difficulties is essential for creating a learning environment that is inclusive and supportive.

### **Social support system**

The presence of social support plays a vital role in influencing the experiences of students with disabilities during physical education sessions. The presence of supportive classmates, empathetic teachers, and actively engaged parents can significantly impact learners' self-perception and motivation. Conversely, a lack of social support can result in feelings of isolation and hinder the entire process of learning.

### **Teachers methodological approach**

Teachers play a crucial role in shaping the experiences of students with disabilities in physical education programs. Understanding the specific needs of each student and using inclusive teaching methods creates a positive environment that encourages active participation and improves performance. Furthermore, the successful implementation of an inclusive and responsive teaching and learning process necessitates classroom management, exceptional expertise on the subject, creativity, and innovation.

This investigation sheds light on the complexities faced by students with disabilities in physical education courses, their capacity for resilience in the face of these challenges, and the role of social support systems in promoting academic success. Moreover, comprehending the methodological methods of instructors can aid in the development of inclusive and supportive practices, thereby promoting a just and fulfilling learning environment for students with disabilities in physical education.

This study finds that creating a meaningful Physical Education experience for individuals with disabilities necessitates the collective effort of a community. This aligns with the concept of the Community of Inquiry, which asserts that Social Presence, Cognitive Presence, and Teaching Presence should be interconnected. Consequently, PE teachers should have an in-depth understanding of inclusivity and possess strong classroom management skills to smoothly facilitate teaching and learning. In addition, physical education teachers should possess advanced technical knowledge in their specific area of expertise in order to effectively monitor students' progress and make ongoing adjustments to programs that promote participation and inclusivity. This will aid in achieving our battle cry that Physical Education and sports are for all.

**Figure 3.**  
*PWD's Pillars of Support*



Using the collected tales and narratives, the researchers constructed a Pillar of Support for individuals with disabilities (PWD) as they persistently overcome challenges in their physical education (PE) classes, which are conducted in a flexible or Hyflex format. The concept of "pillars of support" draws inspiration from the four pillars of education.

**Moving to Know** – This component emphasizes the acquisition of adequate knowledge and understanding of material pertaining to inclusive education. Furthermore, this component also elucidates the comprehension of the varied yet recognized requirements of learners with disabilities, which aids educators in facilitating the dissemination of new information that facilitates the assimilation and adaptation of new knowledge or information. In order to develop an appropriate and achievable program for learners with disabilities, it is essential for physical education educators to possess knowledge and the ability to assess the motor skills of these learners. This enables them to identify the specific needs of the learners and prevent any physical limitations or obstacles that may impede their skill development.

**Moving to do-** Relates to the process of acquiring or learning a new set of skills and competencies that may be applied to any task at hand. It also addresses the motor tasks that individuals with disabilities can overcome effortlessly due to their capabilities while facing limits or physical limitations. Accomplishing physical tasks can lead to more advanced tasks that enhance motor development and challenge societal stereotypes and assumptions that individuals with disabilities are only suited for unskilled jobs or sedentary occupations.

**Moving to Live Together-** To maintain consistent development and support in Physical Education, it is essential to establish continuous contact among the instructor, parents, and peers of individuals with disabilities (PWD). This communication acts as a conduit for the exchange of knowledge and expertise pertaining to movement and physical capabilities. The cultivation of comprehension and acceptance towards individuals with disabilities fosters a meaningful and effective educational experience and necessitates a



collective endeavor involving parents, peers, educators, community members, and school officials.

**Moving to Be-** The PWD's continuous learning, improvement of moral values, ability to act independently, and personal accountability are all outcomes of the aforementioned pillars of support. This encompasses the cognitive, emotional, social, and motor skills that align with the principles of physical education, promoting holistic development and enabling individuals to reach their full potential through engaging in physical activities.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this research provides valuable insights into the real-life experiences of learners with disabilities in adaptable learning physical education programs. The study identifies four primary themes that outline the challenges and opportunities faced by these learners. These themes include the existence of physical and emotional barriers, the resilience and coping mechanisms of learners with disabilities, the importance of a supportive social network, and the significant influence of teachers' methodological approaches.

The research highlights the need for inclusive educational methods and the importance of creating a supportive and inclusive environment for learners with disabilities. By understanding these principles, educators and policymakers can develop strategies to make physical education programs more inclusive and beneficial for learners with disabilities. This will empower these learners to overcome barriers, maximize their potential, and enjoy participating in physical activities alongside their peers.

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