EXPERIENCES OF PHYSICALLY-CHALLENGED STUDENTS TOWARD PHYSICAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

STELLA R. MARQUEZ*1^(D), LEMUEL G. GUIGUE^{2^(D)}, SAMANTHA LORAINE R. SALAYSAY^{2^(D)}

Teachers College, University of Bohol, Tagbilaran City, Philippines

Corresponding Authors: srmarquez@universityofbohol.edu.ph

ABSTRACT

Article History

Submission: July 6,2023 Revised: December 20,2023 Accepted: August 11,2024 Publication: September 18, 2024

Keywords— lived experiences, phenomenology, physically challenged, physical education activities, Tagbilaran City, Philippines The experiences of physically-challenged students within physical education activities settings have been a topic of increasing attention and concern. Physically-challenged learners (PCLs) need physical activities, yet there are increasing worries that these students still struggle with practical sessions. These barriers not only limit physical participation but also contribute to a cycle of exclusion and negatively impact the social and emotional well-being of students with disabilities. Addressing these environmental and systemic issues is crucial for fostering a more inclusive

and supportive physical education framework that enhances self-esteem and promotes equal opportunities for all students. This study was conducted to explore the lived experiences of the physically-challenged students toward Physical Education activities. The study utilized the descriptive phenomenological inquiry aided by a semi-structured interview. Eight enrolled university students during the first semester of SY 2024-2025 were

© Stella R. Marquez, et al. (2024). Open Access. This article published by University of Bohol Multidisciplinary Research Journal is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0). You are free to share (copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format) and adapt (remix, transform, and build upon the material). Under the following terms, you must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use. You may not use the material for commercial purposes. To view a copy of this license, visit: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

randomly selected and included in the study upon obtaining their consent for participation. Data revealed that the challenges faced by physically-challenged students included difficulties in participation and social interactions that led to feelings of exclusion and frustration highlighting the need for more inclusive practices within the physical education programs.

INTRODUCTION

The involvement of children with physical disabilities in physical education (PE) environments has drawn more attention recently, mostly because of worries regarding social integration, accessibility, and inclusion. These pupils' opportunities for meaningful involvement and socializing have been limited due to their historical exclusion or segregation from physical education programs. According to Rekaa, Hanisch, and Ytterhus (2019), children with disabilities frequently feel unwelcome and excluded in PE settings, creating an exclusionary loop. While physical activity is essential for all students, including those with disabilities, research shows that persistent barriers prevent full involvement, particularly during practical sessions. Important modifications like ramps, flexible equipment, and well-trained personnel are often absent from

physical education programs, which exacerbates accessibility issues. In addition to physical restrictions, these challenges exacerbate negative social and emotional experiences, which lower self-esteem and reduce participation in school-related activities.

This research is critical in addressing the persisting challenges that physically challenged learners (PCLs) encounter, including inaccessible facilities, limited social support, and poor teacher preparation (Thekethe & Ogbonnaya, 2024). Negative assessments from peers and teachers create a hostile and alienating atmosphere that lowers self-esteem and breaks down peer relationships. In the absence of targeted interventions, these teenagers run the risk of losing out on the advantages of physical activity, which are critical for social development, mental health, and physical health.

Investigating the lived experiences of physically challenged students taking part in physical education activities during the first semester of the school year 2024–2025. The study aims to add to the growing body of knowledge about inclusive education by examining their viewpoints, difficulties, and coping mechanisms and to promote more welcoming and accessible physical education settings.

Related Studies. Physically challenged students face unique challenges that can significantly impact their educational experiences. In educational settings, they often encounter barriers that hinder their full participation in classroom activities and physical education.

Tungaraza's study that underscored the accomplishment of challenges of students with disabilities at a certain university in Tanzania (2018) that

involved nineteen PCLs revealed that accessibility problems, awareness, and lack of or inadequate equipment and materials were predominant challenges encountered by the key informants. Hence, the researcher suggested making necessary modifications to the PCLs' learning environment and making the community aware of their special needs.

Furthermore, Durian and Perena (2022), in their research on the challenges of students with disabilities in higher education, found that the primary concerns encountered by the 20 PCLs as key informants of the study in the HEIs from Sorsogon were the lack of facilities, policies, and student support services that catered to these students' needs. They further noted that these challenges were due to limitations of the aforementioned provisions.

Physically-challenged learners do not only suffer physical struggles and demands but also their emotional state. Undiyaundeye and Basake (2020), in their cross-sectional and naturalistic phenomenological study on psychosocial challenges of PLCs among secondary school students in Ogoja Educational Zone, Nigeria, disclosed that learners with physical disabilities suffered low self-esteem and that only a few teachers' special education training were limited. Hence the need for a disabled-friendly school environment was alarming. The study recommended that the government should provide adequate educational services for persons with needs and disabilities.

The challenges faced by physically challenged students are multifaceted, encompassing infrastructural inadequacies, psychosocial barriers, and insufficient support services. Addressing these issues requires a concerted effort from educational institutions, policymakers, and society at large to create an inclusive environment that promotes equity and access for all students.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study utilized the descriptive phenomenological inquiry that allowed the researchers to explore and understand the lived experiences of physically challenged students toward physical education activities. This design was appropriate since it uncovered the essence of these experiences by examining the key informants' feelings, perceptions, experiences, and interpretations. The key informants were the eight PCLs of the University of Bohol during the first semester of SY 2024-2025. A semi-structured interview aided by the interview guide questions was employed to extract or obtain the data. The interview guide questions were divided into three basic parts, namely the introductory questions, probing questions, and concluding questions.

To ensure safety and no harm will happen to the key informants, the researchers sought permission from the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Dean of Research, and the Dean of the Student Personnel Services for the identification of the key informants. After the signed approval, the researchers personally contacted the key informants to ask for consent to take part of the study by stating the researcher's identity and the purpose of the study. Once

consent was given, the researchers stated the instructions. The data gathered were coded, interpreted, and analyzed thematically. The coded data were stored in the researcher's Google Drive, which only the researchers can access. The researchers observed privacy and confidentiality throughout the study, assuring that the gathered data are used for research purposes only, practicing ethical considerations throughout the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Theme 1: Challenges and Experiences in Physical Education. Promoting students' general development and lifelong engagement in physical activities depends critically on physical education (PE). Studies show that good physical education experiences help to build emotional resilience, social competency, and physical abilities. The *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance* claims that relevant and fun physical education programs improve students's sense of belonging and inspire continuous involvement in physical exercise. Kalina et al. (2020) underline how greatly students' views of physical education are shaped by the difficulties they face, such social anxiety or failure fear. Overcoming these obstacles can result in resilience and personal development, thereby underlining the need to design surroundings that help pupils negotiate obstacles and build confidence in physical activity venues.

Three basic areas define the difficulties related to physical education: emotional, social, and physical. Emotional difficulties, including performance anxiety and fear of criticism, could cause emotions of isolation or unwillingness to engage. While physical restrictions, including access problems or insufficient adjustments, further limit participation, social barriers—including peer pressure and lack of acceptance—can severely affect students' engagement. Promoting good PE experiences depends on removing these obstacles by inclusive and encouraging learning settings (Kumar, 2021).

Studies show that children who feel valued by their teachers and classmates are more likely to participate in physical activities, therefore enhancing their motivation and well-being (Warburton, 2017). On the other hand, bad peer interactions could cause disengagement and an unwillingness to engage in physical education (Steenberghs et al., 2021). Particularly, students with disabilities often deal with extra difficulties, including social isolation, limited support, and dissatisfaction in navigating their PE experiences (Brewer et al., 2023). Differentiated instruction and social-emotional learning (SEL) initiatives (Ibarra, 2022) are one successful way to encourage inclusiveness in physical education. PE teachers may create an inclusive environment that promotes lifetime physical activity by seeing and knowing the social dynamics and emotional reactions of their pupils.

Students with disabilities often find involvement in physical education to present special issues like marginalization, self-doubt, and social interaction difficulties. Further contributing to poorer self-esteem and less drive are

inadequate changes as well as limited awareness and comprehension among peers and teachers (Abadinas et al., 2024). Fostering emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and confidence requires an inclusive setting. Giving pupils alternate chores or adaptable activities catered to their particular needs will help to improve interest and drive (Bertills & Björk, 2024). Not only can helping kids with disabilities in physical education directly help them, but encouraging empathy, teamwork, and mutual respect also enhances the learning opportunities for every student.

Fostering personal growth and social inclusion depends critically on removing the obstacles that PE presents for kids with impairments. Studies point to adaptive and encouraging learning environments helping students with disabilities overcome challenges and flourish in physical education contexts (Bertills et al., 2019). Integrating inclusive practices and adjustments in PE programs guarantees equitable chances for participation, skill development, and pleasure for all students, regardless of their physical ability.

Sub-Theme 1.1: Challenges to Participation: Emphasizing the need of inclusive approaches to improve students' involvement, the results show the great obstacles physical disability students have in Physical Education (PE). For these students, the World Health Organization notes "difficulty in participating" as a main obstacle since different physical, emotional, and social elements restrict their involvement in PE events.

One of the main difficulties is physical ones. Emphasizing physical ability, traditional PE programs make it challenging for pupils with impairments to fully engage (Abadinas et al., 2024). Many schools lack the required adaptations, including adapted exercises or adaptable tools, therefore underlining the exclusion of children with disabilities from significant participation in physical education (Bertills & Björk, 2024). Students who find it difficult to keep up with their peers without suitable modifications could experience frustration and discouragement.

Beyond physical challenges, emotional factors also greatly influence limited involvement. Many children with disabilities suffer from low self-esteem, anxiety, and fear of judgment, which affect their inclination to participate in physical education (Kalina et al., 2020). Particularly in group projects, the fear of failing might cause students to be reluctant to try new activities or really engage themselves in physical exercise. These emotional difficulties accentuate isolation and support negative self-perceptions, therefore deterring students from active participation.

Moreover, social barriers exacerbate the challenges experienced by students with impairments in physical education. Negative peer interactions—including bullying and exclusion—can lead to an unwelcome environment that discourages involvement (Wei & Graber, 2023). Students may be less likely to participate in physical education if they feel unsupported by their peers, therefore further marginalizing them from the advantages of physical activity. Studies highlight the need to create a welcoming social environment

since peer support and encouragement can greatly increase students' eagerness to engage (Blavt, 2023).

There are quite clear advantages to assigning different activities in physical education. First of all, they raise confidence and involvement since they lower anxiety and let students participate in activities catered to their level of ability (Thekethe & Ogbonnaya, 2024; Abdoshahi & Shemshki, 2021). Offering adapted exercises helps children feel more competent and inspired to engage, thus, improving their whole PE experience. Second, different jobs promote social involvement and cooperative learning. Participating in customized group projects fosters cooperation and lets pupils feel like they belong among their peers (Mawena et al., 2024). Last but not least, pushing students to investigate several approaches to finish an activity fosters their adaptability and resilience and promotes critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Ibarra, 2022; Bertills & Björk, 2024).

For kids with impairments, the inclusion of alternative activities within PE programs ultimately improves engagement, skill development, and social interaction (Bertills & Björk, 2023; Abadinas et al., 2024). Ensuring the effective application of these techniques depends much on educators. Equipping instructors with the resources required to create an inclusive PE environment calls for professional growth in adaptive teaching practices and adaptable curriculum design (Ibarra, 2022; Kumar, 2021). Schools may guarantee that children with disabilities have the same chances for involvement, development, and enjoyment as their peers by implementing these techniques, therefore producing a more fair and enriching PE experience.

Sub-theme 1.3 Social Challenges. Particularly in their capacity to develop relationships, communicate effectively, and engage in school activities, social issues significantly affect students with disabilities in learning environments. Students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), who commonly struggle with social interactions that result in loneliness and poor self-esteem, have especially more these difficulties (Kasari & Sterling, 2013). Peer ignorance of disability aggravates exclusion even further (Ke, Whalon, & Yun, 2018).

Key causes of these societal problems include communication breakdowns. Many disabled students find it difficult to explain themselves, which causes misunderstandings and frustration (Raymundo et al., 2023). Social skills picture books and other visual aids have been demonstrated to improve social interaction and enable pupils better to understand social cues (Baker et al., 2019). By encouraging inclusive communication practices and supporting peer comprehension, educators significantly help to lower these hurdles (Woodcock et al., 2022; Bertills & Björk, 2024).

Dynamics in the classroom also add to social difficulties. Standard educational practice, group projects, can be challenging for students with disabilities since they might feel underappreciated or reluctant to engage (Niemi & Vehkakoski, 2024.). Negative peer interactions, including exclusion or ridicule, further separate these students. Participant stories show emotions

of anxiety and exclusion; students express unwillingness to participate in events because of fear of judgment or incapacity to keep up physically. While some students expressed relief at being free from physically taxing chores, others claimed jealousy of their peers who could fully engage.

Overcoming social hurdles has been attributed mostly to peer assistance. Supporting peer relationships can greatly improve social integration and inspire physical activity involvement (Zhou et al., 2023). By using techniques that support group learning and good peer interactions, teachers also significantly help to enhance social inclusion (Blancia & Jusay, 2021). Dealing with the social issues experienced by students with disabilities calls for focused interventions like teacher training in inclusive practices, organized peer support programs, and classroom environments that respect variety and involvement.

The experiences of the participants highlight how greatly social issues affect their involvement in physical education. Many students said they felt different from their friends, which caused self-consciousness and avoidance of participation. Others related stories of exclusion from PE activities either from structural obstacles or peers' insensitivity. While some students tried to push their boundaries despite challenges, others coped by deciding not to participate. Ensuring that every student, regardless of ability, feels valued and involved in physical education and other school activities depends on a welcoming and sympathetic learning environment.

Theme 2. Inclusive Practices and Accommodations. Inclusive techniques in the classroom guarantee that every student from all backgrounds has equal learning possibilities. Effective inclusion calls for changes in curriculum, instructional approaches, and assessment strategies—that is, changes in physical locations, alternative assessment forms, and longer deadlines—by means of which physical spaces are altered (Rahmi et al., 2024). Developing customized education plans (IEPs) to meet the various requirements of pupils depends on cooperation among families, professionals, and teachers (Llanos et al., 2024).

By encouraging good relationships, empathy, and social acceptance—which helps to lower bullying and exclusion—a really inclusive atmosphere helps to Studies show that inclusive policies help kids with and without disabilities excel academically, develop their social skills, and generally feel better (Manos, 2024). Maintaining inclusive education depends mostly on teacher preparation, especially in physical education (Moon, 2023). Including inclusive tactics can help PE programs make ensuring every kid, regardless of ability, participates in movement and gains from physical exercise (Tianio et al., 2024).

Sub-Theme 2.1. Empowerment by means of alternative activities and customizing. Customizing and alternative activities enable students to have flexible learning experiences catered to their needs and interests, therefore empowering them. Coordinated with Universal Design for Learning (UDL),

this strategy guarantees accessibility for all students by way of several means of participation, representation, and action. Customizing lets students choose or change activities according to their level of ability, therefore boosting their self-efficacy, motivation, and involvement.

Adaptive sports, arts-based projects, and customized fitness challenges catering to various physical abilities and interests constitute part of the adaptive techniques. These changes help children grow personally and participate, therefore avoiding feelings of exclusion. According to Deci and Ryan's 2000 Self-Determination Theory, autonomy is a major motivator; when students have influence over their learning decisions, they become more accountable and owner of their education. In physical education, where self-selection improves participation and enjoyment, this idea is particularly important.

Designed PE programs greatly increase student involvement, social connection, and motor skill development, Bertills and Björk (2024) underline. Customizing activities helps pupils feel competent and included, therefore supporting their sense of value. Furthermore, offering various learning possibilities fosters agency, confidence, and self-esteem, therefore promoting lifetime good attitudes toward movement and education.

Sub-Theme 2.2 Building a Culture of Acceptance and Support. Inclusive education depends on building a culture of acceptance and support to encourage diversity and good connections among teachers, students, and families. For kids with impairments especially, a supportive learning environment improves well-being and academic performance. Encouragement of empathy and understanding among students helps to lower stigma and promotes good relationships (Dhami, 2019; Llanos et al., 2024). Students that value and respect diversity participate in more positive activities, therefore promoting an inclusive school environment.

Educators substantially foster acceptance by exhibiting inclusive attitudes and promoting collaboration (Aas, Uthus, & Løhre, 2024). Highlighting the necessity of collaboration and peer support strategies, peer interactions significantly influence students' sense of belonging (Montecillo et al., 2024).

Schools must also follow certain regulations, including anti-bullying programs under Republic Act No. 10627 (Franca, 2019), to guarantee a safe and inclusive atmosphere. Training in conflict resolution helps staff members and students develop critical communication abilities, strengthening the supportive culture.

Families and communities outside of classrooms must welcome diversity. Parental participation supports messages of acceptance at home, therefore enhancing students' social development (Tause, 2024). Programs in social-emotional learning (SEL) help improve empathy, self-awareness, and relationship-building abilities, therefore fostering a more inclusive educational environment (Kim et al., 2024).

By raising emotional well-being, lowering anxiety, and increasing academic involvement, an inclusive culture helps students.

It also encourages required social skills and helps to lower bullying, particularly for students with disabilities. Working in inclusive environments helps teachers feel more supported, which raises their capacity to satisfy various learning requirements. Moreover, inclusive education strengthens ties between families and institutions, therefore fostering a coherent society that helps every pupil.

The comments of the participants emphasize the need for adaptable physical education programs and provide substitutes for inclusive activities such as yoga, modified exercises, and other tasks. Many voiced the need for teachers to be attentive and flexible to make sure kids with impairments are not pushed into activities beyond their capabilities. Others underlined the need of awareness and argued for schools to give acceptance top priority over exclusion and apply programs promoting belonging.

Theme 3. Personal Growth and Development. Personal development is an endless road covering emotional, social, intellectual, and physical aspects. It is closely related to Maslow's idea of self-actualization, in which people try to reach their potential. Particularly in physical education, obstacles include goal-setting, endurance, and social interactions that build resilience, adaptation, and a good attitude in learning environments. These changes help students with impairments greatly since inclusive settings help them to develop their emotional well-being and self-concept (Blavt, 2023).

Physical education is especially helpful in fostering life skills and personal development, including resilience, teamwork, and communication (Suardika et al., 2021; Sasson & Davidson, 2023). Acquired through adaptive activities, these qualities go much beyond physical health and give kids with disabilities the means to excel socially and intellectually. Such surroundings help students develop the life skills required for success and create good self-images. Overcoming educational obstacles becomes a chance for development for students with impairments, therefore supporting their academic performance and emotional health.

Studies on personal development underline its relevance for general welfare. Studies on psychological well-being underline the main elements of self-acceptance, personal development, and good connections (Chaudhry et al., 2024). Furthermore, the idea of a growth mindset—as defined by Dweck (2022)—helps pupils see difficulties as chances for development, therefore developing resilience and tenacity in the face of adversity. Self-determination theory goes on to say that human growth is much aided by autonomy, competency, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2012)—students who are free to follow their interests and make decisions feel more fulfilled and grow.

Giving personal development a top priority in education helps students acquire essential skills for success—in the classroom and outside. Teachers can enable students to control obstacles, fulfill their potential, and improve their general well-being by encouraging self-awareness, resilience, and a growth mindset. This method enhances not only academic results but also helps with

lifetime personal growth and fulfillment.

Sub-Theme 3.1 Lifelong Learning and Adaptation. Lifelong learning and adaptation are lifelong processes of acquiring the right knowledge, skills, and competencies for successful functioning in our ever-changing, globalized world. The idea here is that you seek adventure, encourage new experiences, embrace change, and look for growth opportunities, both personally and professionally. As per the OECD (2019), lifelong learning involves a broad range of experiences, including formal, non-formal, and informal learning processes that shape a person's skills, knowledge, and adaptability across diverse situations. Gündüz (2023) pointed out that continuing education provides a continuous engagement with knowledge and is vital in an everchanging world.

The research based on Knowles' (1984) andragogy, or adult learning theory, emphasizes the role of self-directedness in adulthood (Loeng, S. 2020). Knowles argues that adults learn when they see information relevant to their lives and careers. Viewer-curated media encourages a sense of adaptability as they take ownership of their learning and pursue those opportunities that prove beneficial.

In addition, D'Souza, R. (2024) presents a new way of thinking about learning through "heutagogy," or self-determined learning, which promotes the value that adaptability brings to the learning experience. Their research supports this argument by suggesting that people who participate in pedagogical practices have a greater chance of acquiring lifelong learning and adaptation skills because they actively influence their learning environment.

Educators, students, and the general public all need lifelong instruction and molding. By emphasizing lifelong learning, educators can foster learning environments that enable ongoing growth and development. This not only fosters student achievement in their studies but also equips students to thrive in their personal and professional endeavors.

This emphasizes the need for lifelong learning and adaptability. Educators must inspire people to become lifelong learners, developing their unique skills for whatever challenges they may face.

Sub-Theme 3.2 Emotional Intelligence and Self-Awareness. Emotional intelligence (EI) is the capacity to recognize and affect the emotions of others as well as to control one's own. EI promotes good relationships, clear communication, and general well-being for teachers and students alike in educational environments (Nieto-Carracedo et al., 2024). Self-awareness is a key component of emotional intelligence. It enables students to exercise self-reflection and control their emotional reactions, therefore supporting both academic and personal development (London et al., 2023).

High emotional intelligence students are more suited to manage stress, establish resilience, and create close relationships that would result in academic success and a feeling of belonging (Jiang, 2024). Self-aware students also often seek guidance, openly articulate themselves, and welcome helpful

criticism—all of which are absolutely vital for development. By including social-emotional learning (SEL) programs in the curriculum and modeling emotional intelligence (EI), teachers significantly help to build these abilities (Jeong et al., 2021). By means of improved emotional intelligence and self-awareness, this creates a favorable climate whereby both teachers and students gain from which to promote both personal and academic achievement (Nieto-Carracedo et al., 2024; London et al., 2023; Jiang, 2024).

EI and self-awareness have a big impact on how engaged, involved, and socialized kids with physical limitations find in physical education. These children can better identify and control their emotions, which enables them to deal with fear and frustration and finally results in more enjoyable PE experiences (Ubago-Jiménez et al., 2019).

Encouragement of emotional intelligence and self-awareness helps to lower stigma and promote social cohesiveness, therefore strengthening the inclusive learning environment. This setting helps students with physical disabilities by strengthening their social bonds and coping mechanisms, therefore improving their general well-being and achievement in both physical and intellectual activities (Ubago-Jiménez et al., 2019). These results highlight the need to develop emotional intelligence and self-awareness to assist kids in their development, increase their involvement in physical education, and so create an inclusive environment.

These revelations support the requirement that educational systems give emotional intelligence and self-awareness top priority so that every student—including those with disabilities—feels respected and competent in realizing their potential.

CONCLUSIONS

Employing descriptive phenomenology, the immersion of data revealed three essential themes within the experiences. This was reflected in the barriers facing physically challenged students, particularly regarding participatory activities and peer interactions. Such implicit or explicit constraints contributed to feelings of exclusion and frustration experienced by students, revealing the need for improved practices related to inclusivity in physical education.

On the other hand, the study also sheds light on the brighter side of the potentialities of their experiences, such as empowerment through diverse activities, development of emotional intelligence, and self-awareness. Across the activities, participants reported that adapted physical education exposure improved their physical competency while facilitating growth and coping. Peer groups and teachers created supportive relationships that nurtured a culture of acceptance and encouragement.

This descriptive phenomenological study reveals the complex and multifaceted nature of the experiences of physically challenged students in physical education. It is a rallying cry for educators and policymakers who

must commit to the inclusion and support necessary to help all students excel in physical education. With the outcome of this research, future research studies and practices can be developed for the benefit of physically challenged students in educational settings. Understanding the unique challenges that physically challenged students face can also help stakeholders to formulate specific approaches and encourage collaboration between teachers, support staff and families to ensure a more inclusive learning environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are recommended based on the findings of the qualitative study utilizing descriptive phenomenology on the experiences of physically challenged students at the University of Bohol toward physical education activities.

- 1. Enhance Inclusivity in Physical Education Programs. Develop and implement inclusive physical education curricula that accommodate the diverse needs of physically challenged students. This includes adapting activities and providing alternative tasks that allow for meaningful participation.
- 2. **Training for Educators.** Provide professional development and training for physical education instructors on inclusive teaching practices, disability awareness, and fostering a supportive environment. This training should emphasize strategies for engaging physically challenged students and promoting their active participation.
- 3. **Create Supportive Peer Networks.** Establish peer mentorship programs that connect physically challenged students with their peers. These programs can facilitate social interactions, build friendships, and create a sense of belonging in physical education.
- 4. Implement Accessible Facilities and Equipment. Ensure that physical education facilities and equipment are accessible to all students. This may involve modifying existing equipment or providing specialized tools that enable physically challenged students to participate fully in activities. By fostering an environment that prioritizes accessibility, educators can promote equal opportunities for participation and encourage a sense of belonging among all students.
- 5. **Encourage Student Feedback.** Regularly solicit feedback from physically challenged students regarding their experiences in physical education. This feedback can inform ongoing improvements and adaptations to the program, ensuring that it meets the needs of all students.
- 6. **Promote Emotional and Social Development.** Integrate activities focusing on emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and social skills into the physical education curriculum. These activities can help physically challenged students develop resilience and confidence in

- their abilities.
- 7. **Foster a Culture of Acceptance.** Actively promote a culture of acceptance and respect within the physical education environment. This can be achieved through awareness campaigns, workshops, and activities celebrating diversity and encouraging student empathy.
- 8. **Collaborate with Disability Support Services.** Work closely with disability support services within the university to ensure that physically challenged students receive the necessary accommodations and resources to succeed in physical education.
- 9. **Conduct Ongoing Research.** Encourage further research on the experiences of physically challenged students in physical education to identify challenges and best practices continuously. This research can help inform policy changes and program enhancements.

By implementing these recommendations, the University of Bohol can create a more inclusive and supportive physical education environment that empowers physically challenged students to thrive and fosters their overall development and well-being.

REFERENCES CITED

- Aas, H. K., Uthus, M., & Løhre, A. (2024). Inclusive education for students with challenging behaviour: development of teachers' beliefs and ideas for adaptations through Lesson Study. European Journal of Special Needs Education, 39(1), 64-78. https://bit.ly/400F2Fn
- Abadinas, E. A., Amesola, J., Alia, G., Booc, D. A., Arabis, K., Baulete, R., Apiag, J., Abdul Rachman, M. S., Longakit, J., Aliser, J., & Englatiera, B. (2024). Beyond the playground: Challenges in physical education (PE) for students with additional needs: A case study exploration. *American Journal of Arts and Human Science*, 3, 239–246. https://bit.ly/4fLIWYx
- Abdoshahi, M., & Shemshaki, A. (2021). The role of physical education on motivation, engagement, sport satisfaction, and health-related fitness of high-school students. International Journal of School Health, 8(4), 209-216. https://bit.ly/405QhvZ
- Bertills, K., & Björk, M. (2024). Facilitating regular Physical Education for students with disability—PE teachers' views. Frontiers in Sports and Active Living, 6, 1400192. https://bit.ly/3W7hTQa
- Bertills, K., Granlund, M., & Augustine, L. (2019, August). Inclusive teaching skills and student engagement in physical education. In Frontiers in education (Vol. 4, p. 74). Frontiers Media SA.

- Blavt, O. (2023). Effectiveness of Inclusive Physical Education Classes on the Ability to Perform Rhythmic Activities of Students with Disabilities. Journal of Learning Theory and Methodology, 4(1), 19-25. https://bit.ly/3DIf4Pr
- Blancia, M. M., & Jusay, C. R. (2021). SOCIAL SUPPORT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF GRADE SIX PUPILS OF TALOMO DISTRICT A, DAVAO CITY. The Rizalian Researcher, 8(1), 1-1. https://bit.ly/4gyyAfL
- Brewer, G., Urwin, E., & Witham, B. (2023). Disabled student experiences of Higher Education. Disability & Society, 1–20. https://bit.ly/4j6HYZC
- Chaudhry, S., Tandon, A., Shinde, S., & Bhattacharya, A. (2024). Student psychological well-being in higher education: The role of internal team environment, institutional, friends and family support and academic engagement. Plos one, 19(1), e0297508. https://bit.ly/4a3QEf8
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2012). Self-determination theory. Handbook of theories of social psychology, 1(20), 416-436. https://bit.ly/3W2KIgY
- Dhami, J. (2019). Building empathy for students with Special Educational Needs through disability awareness (Doctoral dissertation, Electronic version published by Vancouver Island University). https://bit.ly/4a54gH3
- Durian, R., & Perena, E. (2022). Challenges of Students with Disabilities in Higher Education. https://bit.ly/40wuYpb
- D'Souza, R. (2024). Understanding Heutagogy: A New "Gogy". Journal of Research Initiatives, 8(4), 3. https://bit.ly/3W6kQ3Q
- Franca, G. C. (2019). Conflict resolution skills and team building competence of school heads: A model for effective school management. SPAMAST Research Journal, 7(1), 39-43. https://bit.ly/3W5jZ3f
- Gündüz, A. Y. (2023). The Importance of Investigating Students' Lifelong Learning Levels and Perceptions of 21st-Century Skills. International e-Journal of Educational Studies, 7(15), 788-796. https://bit.ly/3BZyP4v
- Ibarra, B. N. (2022). Understanding SEL to create a sense of belonging: The role teachers play in addressing students' social and emotional wellbeing. Current Issues in Education, 23(2). https://bit.ly/4221AIh

- Jeong, J., Bansal, V., Downey, S., & Liu, X. (2021). Integration of social and emotional learning into basic education programming: Findings from eight case studies (Contract No. GS-10F-0033M/AID-OAA-M-13-00010, Tasking N7617.026.01). USAID. https://bit.ly/400FdR3
- Jiang, R. (2024). The mediating role of emotional intelligence between self-efficacy and resilience in Chinese secondary vocational students. Frontiers in Psychiatry, 15, 1382881. https://bit.ly/3C5KNcH
- Kalina, Irina & Golubev, Aleksandr & Aidarov, Rustam. (2018). The Role of Physical Education in Developing Students' Social and Psychological Qualities of a Personality. SHS Web of Conferences. 50. 01075. 10.1051/shsconf/20185001075. https://bit.ly/4a81ukh
- Kasari, C., & Sterling, L. (2013). Loneliness and social isolation in children with autism spectrum disorders. The handbook of solitude: Psychological perspectives on social isolation, social withdrawal, and being alone, 409-426. https://bit.ly/4a9CERo
- Ke, F., Whalon, K., & Yun, J. (2018). Social skill interventions for youth and adults with autism spectrum disorder: A systematic review. Review of Educational Research, 88(1), 3-42. https://bit.ly/421wa4H
- Kim, E. K., Allen, J. P., & Jimerson, S. R. (2024). Supporting Student Social Emotional Learning and Development. *School Psychology Review*, 53(3), 201-207. https://bit.ly/4a7qVCF
- Knowles, M. S. (1984). Theory of andragogy. A Critique. International Journal of Lifelong. Cambridge MA. https://bit.ly/4ad18cs
- Kumar, S. (2021). Creating effective and inclusive learning environments. Asian Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Humanities, 11(11), 227-232. https://bit.ly/3Pn4CPJ
- Llanos, A., Baluyot, L., & Besin, J. M. (2024). Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing Inclusive Education in Philippine Elementary Schools. International Multidisciplinary Journal of Research for Innovation, Sustainability, and Excellence (IMJRISE), 1(4), 103-110. https://bit.ly/4aafJFl
- Loeng, S. (2020). Self-directed learning: A core concept in adult education. *Education Research International*, 2020(1), 3816132. bit. ly/4fPOS2y

- London, M., Sessa, V. I., & Shelley, L. A. (2023). Developing self-awareness: Learning processes for self-and interpersonal growth. Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, 10(1), 261-288. https://bit.ly/4a2EQtP
- Manos, M. J. B. (2024). AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF INCLUSIVE PRACTICES IN MAINSTREAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS. Southeast Asian Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies, 4(1). https://bit.ly/4ad1foo
- Mawena, J., & Sorkpor, R. S. (2024). Enhancing inclusive physical activity for students with disabilities: Patterns and opportunities. Aquademia, 8(1), ep24002. https://bit.ly/4a4ha8i
- Montecillo, M. J., Pejoto, J. L., & Moral, R. V. (2024). Enhancing educational effectiveness through management and inclusive practices. Educational Journal of Educational Research, 3(1). https://bit.ly/4h2RXx8
- Moon, O. (2023). Teachers' Readiness and Teaching Performance in Inclusive Education: Their Relationship to the Implementation of Inclusive Education Program. AIDE Interdisciplinary Research Journal, 6, 65-110. https://bit.ly/3DFaDVo
- Niemi, K., & Vehkakoski, T. (2024). Turning social inclusion into exclusion during collaborative learning between students with and without SEN. International Journal of Inclusive Education, 28(13), 3301-3320. https://bit.ly/3DMfi8k
- Nieto-Carracedo, A., Gómez-Iñiguez, C., Tamayo, L. A., & Igartua, J. J. (2024). Emotional intelligence and academic achievement relationship: Emotional well-being, motivation, and learning strategies as mediating factors. Psychology, Society, and Education, 14(1), 1-15. https://bit.ly/4h0mjk4
- Rahmi, I., Damra, H. R., Desvianti, E., & Dalimunthe, H. L. (2024). Strategies for Successful Implementation of Inclusive Education in Indonesia: A Review. In Trend: International Journal of Trends in Global Psychological Science and Education, 1(3), 30-36. https://bit.ly/3DFaOQy
- Raymundo, J. P., Monteverde, C., Carullo, A., Dequiña, A. J., Fontanilla, S. M., Felix, R. G., ... & Blanco, E. (2023). Social Interaction Among Learners

- with Disability (LWD) Under the Inclusion Program. Psychology and Education: A Multidisciplinary Journal, 11(1), 1-1. https://bit.ly/403go6X
- Rekaa, H., Hanisch, H., & Ytterhus, B. (2019). Inclusion in physical education: Teacher attitudes and student experiences. A systematic review. International Journal of Disability, Development and Education, 66(1), 36-55. https://bit.ly/3Pm0tf0
- Steenberghs, N., Lavrijsen, J., Soenens, B., & Verschueren, K. (2021). Peer effects on engagement and disengagement: Differential contributions from friends, popular peers, and the entire class. Frontiers in psychology, 12, 726815.
- Suardika, I. K., Ma'mun, A., Kusmaedi, N., & Budiana, D. (2021, December). Development of Life Skills Through Physical Education and Sports. In International Joint Conference on Arts and Humanities 2021 (IJCAH 2021) (pp. 367-371). Atlantis Press. https://bit.ly/4gWRPA1
- Tianio, J. S., Robles, A. C., Sabinay, C. D., & Briones, J. O. (2024). Exploring inclusive practices in physical education for students with disabilities. *Psychology of Education*, 28(4), 402-410. https://bit.ly/4gH2DC6
- Thekethe, D. B., & Ogbonnaya, I. C. (2024). Challenges experienced by physically challenged learners in practical physical education classes in South Africa: a systematic analysis. https://bit.ly/4gMJEpS
- Tause, U. M. (2024). EXPLORING FAMILY DYNAMICS AND PRACTICES TOWARDS STUDENT PERSEVERANCE IN LEARNING: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH. Southeast Asian Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies, 4(1). https://bit.ly/4gDLtoM
- Tungaraza, F. (2018). Accomplishments and challenges facing students with disabilities at the University of Dar es Salaam: thirty years of navigating the hill. Papers in Education and Development, (29). https://bit.ly/405QIGD
- Ubago-Jiménez, J. L., González-Valero, G., Puertas-Molero, P., & García-Martínez, I. (2019). Development of emotional intelligence through physical activity and sport practice. A systematic review. Behavioral

- Sciences, 9(4), 44. https://bit.ly/3ZWB7Jq
- Undiyaundeye, F. A., & Basake, J. (2020). Psychosocial challenges of physically challenged secondary school students in Ogoja Educational Zone. In Proceedings of Research World International Conference, Krakow, Poland, 13th–14th July. https://bit.ly/4gyySmR
- Warburton, V. E. (2017) Peer and teacher influences on the motivational climate in physical education: A longitudinal perspective on achievement goal adoption, Contemporary Educational Psychology, Volume 51, p 303-314, https://bit.ly/40mMaxg
- Wei, M., & Graber, K. C. (2023). Bullying and physical education: a scoping review. Kinesiology Review, 12(3), 217-234. https://bit.ly/4gG3Xox
- Woodcock, S., Sharma, U., Subban, P., & Hitches, E. (2022). Teacher self-efficacy and inclusive education practices: Rethinking teachers'engagement with inclusive practices. Teaching and teacher education, 117, 103802. https://bit.ly/3ZWoT3G
- Zhou, Y., Meng, X., Wang, J., Mo, X., Jiang, S., Dai, C., & Liu, M. (2023). Daily peer relationships and academic achievement among college students: A social network analysis based on behavioral big data. Sustainability, 15(22), 15762. https://bit.ly/40kf54J