

Juggling Roles: Unveiling the Multifaceted Experiences of Physical Education Teachers in Secondary Schools

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Abstract

As educators, Physical Education teachers navigate the challenge of juggling multiple responsibilities, including instruction, coaching, and administrative tasks, which often demand significant time and effort. This study uncovered the multifaceted experiences of secondary school Physical Education teachers, focusing on the challenges they face in juggling their roles and identifying strategies to support them effectively in the selected schools in the Municipality of Tantangan, specifically New Lambunao Integrated School, Tantangan National High School, Bukaypait National High School, and Tantangan National Trade High School. Using the qualitative phenomenological approach. The research employed semi-structured interviews with eight (8) teachers and analyzed the data using thematic analysis. The findings revealed several key themes regarding the Lived Experiences (Lifeworld/Worldviews) of Physical Education Teachers including (1) student empowerment and transformation, (2) coaching and athletic development, (3) professional identity and role integration, (4) mentorship and

influential figures, (5) personal growth and transformation, and (6) impact on personal relationships and work-life balance. The Contexts of Lived Experiences (Lifeworld/Lifeviews) of Physical Education Teachers including (1) emotional experiences in daily teaching, (2) reflective practice and professional insights, (3) physical changes and states associated with teaching, and (4) joy and fulfillment in teaching. The Future Self-Views and Professional Aspirations of Physical Education Teachers include (1) reflective practice and professional growth and (2) future vision and continuous growth. The lived experiences of Physical Education teachers highlight their intertwined professional and personal growth, emphasizing their roles in student empowerment, mentorship, self-reflection, and continuous professional development despite various challenges. The need for continuous professional development, self-care initiatives, mentorship networks, and further research is recommended to support the growth, well-being, and effectiveness of Physical Education teachers.

Keywords: *Physical education, juggling roles, multifaceted experiences, secondary schools*

Introduction

Physical Education teachers faced the challenge of balancing multiple roles, from teaching and coaching to administrative duties, often stretching their time and energy. This juggling act was further complicated by the demand for individualized attention to students' diverse needs, which required both physical and mental resilience. The lack of adequate resources and support exacerbated these struggles, making it difficult for PE teachers to fully realize their professional potential. Hence, the study aimed to explore the multifaceted experiences of secondary school Physical Education teachers, focusing on the challenges they faced in juggling their roles and identifying strategies to support them effectively.

Globally, research highlighted the multifaceted challenges faced by Physical Education teachers in managing their roles. For instance, in the United Kingdom, a study by Bailey et al. (2019) emphasized the critical role of Physical Education in promoting students' holistic well-being, noting the strain teachers faced in balancing diverse responsibilities, including teaching, coaching, and administrative tasks. Armour and Harris (2023) further explored these challenges, identifying role conflicts and insufficient resources as recurring issues, while underscoring the importance of professional development to support teachers effectively.

In the Asian context, Wang and Liu (2018) examined the cultural expectations placed on PE teachers in East Asia, such as organizing school events and fostering discipline, which exacerbated role conflicts. Similarly, Nasir and Salim (2021) reported that in Southeast Asia, the integration of new curriculum demands and the increasing expectation to incorporate technology added to the workload of PE teachers, emphasizing the need for innovative training programs tailored to regional challenges.

Moreover, studies in the Philippines provided insight into the unique struggles of Filipino PE teachers. Dela Cruz and Manlapig (2017) highlighted the multiple roles of teachers, including coaching, organizing sports events, and clerical tasks, which often led to stress and burnout due to a lack of institutional support. Gumapac (2022) shed light on the additional hurdles faced by teachers in rural areas, such as limited resources, large class sizes, and expectations to promote community engagement, further complicating their roles. Collectively, these studies underscored the complex and multifaceted experiences of Physical Education teachers across different contexts, calling for targeted strategies to address these challenges. According to Comainking and Dizon (2024), teachers recognized the value of these experiences for their personal and professional growth, emphasizing the importance of equitable distribution of responsibilities and institutional support to enhance their well-being and effectiveness.

Hence, conducting this study was essential in understanding the challenges that Physical Education teachers faced in juggling multiple roles, including teaching, coaching, and administrative tasks. By exploring these experiences, the study aimed to identify strategies that could provide adequate support to teachers, improve their well-being, and enhance the overall effectiveness of Physical Education programs. Addressing these challenges was crucial in ensuring that PE teachers could fulfill their responsibilities efficiently while maintaining job satisfaction and work-life balance. Ultimately, the study sought to benefit both educators and students by fostering a more supportive, sustainable, and effective teaching environment in secondary schools.

Objective of the Study

The study aimed to explore the multifaceted experiences of secondary school Physical Education teachers, focusing on the challenges they faced in juggling their roles and identifying strategies to support them effectively.

Methods

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences of PE teachers with multiple designations in school. Tomaszewski et al. (2020) pointed out that qualitative research design prioritized people's real lived experiences over the opinions of researchers and participants, making it susceptible to subjectivity and potential bias. By employing this method, the study delved deeply into teachers' unique perspectives, capturing their insights and understanding of their professional roles.

Transcendental phenomenology focused on the descriptions and meanings that participants assigned to their experiences. It adhered to the methodological principle of epoché, in which the analyst suspended judgment about participants' experiences to achieve a neutral perspective (Moustakas, 1994).

Following Moustakas' approach, thematic analysis emphasized identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns and themes within the data. This process systematically organized and described all data in detail. Thematic analysis consisted of six steps: (1) familiarizing with the data, (2) generating initial codes and themes (initial themes), (3) searching for themes (clustered themes), (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes (emerging themes), and (6) producing the report. These systematic steps enabled the researcher to uncover the challenges and opportunities that PE teachers experienced in their multiple roles, as well as the instructional approaches they adopted and the perceived advantages and difficulties within their practice.

Sampling Technique

The study utilized the purposive sampling technique to select participants. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), purposive sampling is a non-random sampling technique in which researchers deliberately select specific individuals or groups that possess certain characteristics or meet predetermined criteria relevant to the research objectives. This method is particularly useful when researchers aim to include participants with specific qualities, experiences, or knowledge essential for effectively addressing the research questions or objectives.

The primary goal of this sampling approach was to select individuals who could provide rich and relevant information about the study's focus (Johnson & Christensen, 2019). Additionally, Creswell (2013) suggested that the ideal number of participants for a phenomenological study typically ranges between seven and twelve, ensuring an in-depth exploration of lived experiences.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. Lived Experiences (Lifeworld/Worldviews) of Physical Education Teachers

Emerging Themes	Clustered Themes	Codes	Significant Statements
Emerging Theme 1: Student Empowerment and Transformation	Student confidence building Overcoming fear Transformation in participation	fear confidence shy	I help my students overcome their fear of participating in physical education activities. I gradually help them to build confidence through positive

		hesitant active transformation	<p>reinforcement like encouraging them to join and enjoy the activities.</p> <p>I worked with a student who struggled with confidence and physical activities. So this student was always hesitant to participate, and you could see the frustration and self-doubt in their eyes during each class.</p> <p>I also made sure to create a supportive and understanding environment in my classes.</p>
Emerging Theme 2: Coaching and Athletic Development	Athletic coaching Sports training Athletic success	baseball coach volleyball athletics palarong pambansa national trainer tournament manager	<p>I was seeing one of my players. Qualified for the Palarong Pambansa. So, from the beginning, I witnessed his dedication, hard work, and passion for the sport.</p> <p>I was a volleyball player in my younger years, and until now, I am still able to use it in my life. This is connected to my role as a PE teacher because I can teach my students the basic skills they need to improve their volleyball playing.</p> <p>Training children, especially in athletics, is important because athletics is one of the main sports, yet it seems like not many pay attention to it... even reached the Palarong Pambansa</p> <p>Becoming a national trainer for grade 10 during the launch of the K-12 curriculum held at Cebu City... serving as a tournament manager in baseball.</p>
Emerging Theme 3: Professional Identity and Role Integration	Daily routines integration Role embodiment	daily routine connected role as a PE teacher	<p>My daily routine is always connected to my role as a teacher, so starting from the moment I wake up, I have to pull myself up, stretch, do simple cleaning, and go to school.</p> <p>So, in short, everything that I did was connected to my role as a PE teacher.</p>
Emerging Theme 4: Mentorship and Influential Figures	Provision of Support networks Mentorship and guidance	mentor colleagues	<p>My former PE teacher during my high school days, my colleagues, my fellow educators, my students, and all,</p>

		<p>former teacher</p> <p>students</p> <p>family</p> <p>friends</p> <p>principal.</p>	<p>PE</p> <p>especially my family and friends.</p> <p>Several individuals have profoundly impacted my experience as a PE teacher. First and foremost are my students... my mentor, veteran PE, Professor.</p> <p>First are my mentors and colleagues... my previous coaches or sports professionals during my high school life. Of course, my students. And last is my family and friends.</p> <p>I am deeply grateful to several individuals, of course, along our way. My former principal... my current principal..</p>
Emerging Theme 5:Personal Growth and Transformation	Self-improvement Health and leadership development Emotional growth	<p>patience</p> <p>empathy</p> <p>physically active</p> <p>fitness</p> <p>strict</p> <p>weight</p> <p>leadership</p> <p>communication</p> <p>responsible</p> <p>adaptable</p> <p>confident</p>	<p>I became physically active. That impacts my own health. I really became motivated to stay fit, adopt healthy habits, and set an example for my students.</p> <p>I understand now how much deeper level the connection between physical activity and stress reduction.</p> <p>I have a realization just this year that I have to lose weight because, first and foremost, I am a PE teacher, and I must set a good example for my students</p> <p>Increased patience and empathy, physical fitness and health awareness, enhanced communication skills, increased confidence and leadership, adaptability and problem-solving.</p>

Emerging Theme 6:Impact on Personal Relationships and Work-Life Balance	Shared activities Work-life balance Relationship quality	shared interests stress long hours work-life imbalance quality time family significant others active lifestyle	We share interests and activities that help them to release stress and emotional fatigue. We also shared values around health and wellness. I encourage my loved ones to participate in physical activities... strengthening our connections through shared experiences. Strengthened my relationships with significant others by teaching me the importance of balance and communication. sharing moments from baseball and taekwondo with them has brought us closer My time with family and friends has become more meaningful because I have embraced an active lifestyle with them. They are my significant others.

Six (6) emerging themes were articulated through careful data analysis and interpretation, which were synthesized from various initial and clustered themes. The three emerging themes were emerging theme 1: student empowerment and transformation, emerging theme 2: coaching and athletic development, emergin theme 3:professional identity and role integration,emerging theme 4:mentorship and influential figures,emerging theme 5:personal growth and transformation, and emerging theme 6:impact on personal relationships and work-life balance.

Table 2. Contexts of Lived Experiences (Lifeworld/Lifeviews) of Physical Education Teachers

Emerging Theme	Clustered Themes	Codes	Raw Statements
Emerging Theme 1:Emotional Experiences in Daily Teaching	Range of emotions Emotional responses from interactions and challenges	enjoy passion dream joy satisfaction	I experience a wide range of emotions throughout my days, mainly arising directly from my interactions with students ... joy ... satisfaction and happiness, One thing is the challenge of managing anger. Sometimes, we easily get frustrated because of exhaustion. We are not just

		<p>happiness</p> <p>anger</p> <p>frustration</p> <p>excited</p> <p>energy</p>	<p>teaching inside the classroom; we also handle a lot of extracurricular activities.</p> <p>I may experience a range of emotions that arise from various aspects of my daily work and understanding. So, these are the following emotions. So, first is happiness,frustration ,stress and anxiety ,guilt, pride.</p> <p>I have gone through a mix of emotions. I feel joy when I see my students learning and enjoying. I feel challenged when it's difficult to motivate them. And I feel fulfilled when I see that my teaching has a positive impact on them.</p>
Emerging Theme 2:Reflective Practice and Professional Insights	Thoughts on teaching Reflections on experience Classroom dynamics Continuous improvement	<p>reflection</p> <p>inclusivity</p> <p>holistic development</p> <p>teamwork</p> <p>confidence</p> <p>self-esteem</p> <p>perseverance</p> <p>resilience</p> <p>classroom</p> <p>relationship</p> <p>improvement</p> <p>feedback</p> <p>growth</p>	<p>I found out that every student comes with different physical abilities and interests. As their teacher, I strive to create an environment where all of my students feel included and valued and they are motivated.</p> <p>Several thoughts and reflections stand out. Firstly, the profound impacts of physical activity on students' holistic development is undeniable .fostering teamwork, building confidence, promoting self-esteem.</p> <p>One thing that stands out to me is how much I've grown alongside my students. ... I'm not just teaching sports but also life lessons like teamwork and resilience. ... I've learned the importance of patience</p> <p>PE teacher is that teaching PE is not easy. Why? Because you need to be multitasking, multi-talented</p>
Emerging Theme 3:Physical Changes and States	Experiencing bodily changes Encountering physical demands	<p>Movement</p> <p>motor skills</p>	<p>It really requires constant movement in terms of demonstrating exercises, leading activities, and staying active during lessons.</p>

Associated Teaching	with	Health impact Self-care teaching	in	<p>coordination</p> <p>posture</p> <p>body alignment</p> <p>stress</p> <p>withdrawal</p> <p>weight gain</p> <p>obesity</p> <p>fatigue</p> <p>injury</p> <p>active</p> <p>energized</p> <p>sore</p> <p>mindful</p>	<p>I am regularly engaged in physical activities, it really improves my motor skills and coordination.</p> <p>I feel more active and energized from all the physical activity, but it can also be tiring after a long day of coaching or demonstrating exercises. I sometimes feel sore but also proud of the work done.</p> <p>I have become more active and have placed greater value on my health. I have also become more mindful of my physical well-being because I know that I serve as a role model for my students.</p>
Emerging Theme 4: Joy and Fulfillment Teaching	Theme and in	Celebrating student success Aspiring positive impact Personal satisfaction Creative expression		<p>joy</p> <p>fulfilment</p> <p>success</p> <p>growth</p> <p>achievement</p> <p>progress,</p> <p>inspiring,</p> <p>health</p> <p>lifelong activity</p> <p>pride</p>	<p>Can bring a lot of joy and fulfillment, such as seeing my students grow up and develop not only mentally but physically. Witnessing my students' progress ... is such a great fulfillment.</p> <p>We can express ourselves in arts, music, and dance. And we are always at special events where happiness and entertainment come.</p> <p>Promoting health and fitness ... inspiring lifelong activity ... building confidence and self-esteem ... fostering positive relationships.</p> <p>Seeing my students succeed. Whether it's when they make progress in baseball or taekwondo or when they push past their limits, it's fulfilling to watch them grow in confidence and teamwork.</p>

A common feeling among teachers is the joy they experience when students succeed. They mention moments of pride and satisfaction when they see students grow, learn new skills, or achieve personal milestones in their physical education journey.

Table 3. Future Self-Views and Professional Aspirations of Physical Education Teachers

Emerging Theme	Clustered Themes	Codes	Raw Statements
Emerging Theme1: Reflective Practice and Professional Growth	Reflecting on past lessons Allowing self-reflection Insight into personal & Professional growth	reflecting on the lesson valuable insights continuous learning self-reflection learned	<p>The interconnectedness of physical and mental health is undeniable. ... continuous learning and adaptation are vital.</p> <p>Always be equipped with your self-knowledge and skills so that you will not be left behind. Because in PE, there are always updates and new rules, policies, games, modifications, etc</p> <p>To understand that every student has a different situation. It's important to create a conducive learning environment</p> <p>As a PE teacher, I've realized that I'm not just teaching sports and exercise—I'm also teaching discipline, teamwork, and perseverance.</p>
Emerging Theme2: Future Vision and Continuous Growth	Refining skills Continuous improvement Focusing on professional development Visioning more leadership roles Ensuring student success	refining and enhancing my teaching skills learning new things continuous growth become more successful	<p>I failed and won in this field, but I see myself refining and enhancing my teaching skills, being willing to adopt changes, and learning new things to better meet the needs of my students.</p> <p>I envision my future as a PE teacher with a blend of continued growth and dedication to my students. Develop my expertise in exclusive teaching practices... seeking professional development opportunities</p>

		<p>leadership roles</p> <p>improving as a teacher</p>	<p>I envision my future focused on continuous growth. Of course, I aim to refine my skills in baseball and taekwondo ... take on more leadership roles..</p> <p>I see students gaining confidence and learning to take care of themselves for the future. I want to continue improving as a teacher, learning new teaching methods</p>
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A strong future vision drives continuous growth by setting clear goals and inspiring innovation. Organizations and individuals who embrace lifelong learning and adaptability remain competitive in an evolving world. Consistent self-improvement and strategic development ensure sustained success and long-term impact.

Summary

This study uncovered the multifaceted experiences of secondary school Physical Education teachers, focusing on the challenges they face in juggling their roles and identifying strategies to support them effectively in the selected schools in the Municipality of Tantan, specifically New Lambunao Integrated School, Tantan National High School, Bukaypait National High School, and Tantan National Trade High School. Using the qualitative phenomenological approach The research employed semi-structured interviews with eight (8) teachers and analyzed the data using thematic analysis.

The findings revealed several key themes regarding the Lived Experiences (Lifeworld/Worldviews) of Physical Education Teachers including (1) student empowerment and transformation, (2) coaching and athletic development, (3) professional identity and role integration, (4) mentorship and influential figures, (5) personal growth and transformation, and (6) impact on personal relationships and work-life balance.

The Contexts of Lived Experiences (Lifeworld/Lifeviews) of Physical Education Teachers including (1) emotional experiences in daily teaching, (2) reflective practice and professional insights, (3) physical changes and states associated with teaching, and (4) joy and fulfillment in teaching.

The Future Self-Views and Professional Aspirations of Physical Education Teachers including (1) reflective practice and professional growth and (2) future vision and continuous growth

Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusion

The following conclusions are based on the synthesized emerging themes and the participants' experiences.

The lived experiences of Physical Education (PE) teachers revealed a deeply intertwined relationship between their professional roles and personal growth. Through student empowerment and transformation, they played a crucial role in fostering confidence and active participation among learners. Their contributions to coaching and athletic development highlighted their dedication to nurturing talent and guiding students toward athletic success. Furthermore, their professional identity was seamlessly integrated into their daily routines, shaping their teaching approaches and classroom interactions.

In addition, mentorship and influential figures served as pillars of support, reflecting the significant impact of colleagues, mentors, and students on their careers. Personal growth and transformation emerged as essential themes, with teachers experiencing increased patience, empathy, leadership, and self-improvement. Their roles also extended beyond the classroom, influencing personal relationships and work-life balance, where shared activities and an active lifestyle contributed to meaningful connections.

Moreover, the lived experiences of PE teachers revealed a complex interplay of emotions, reflective practice, physical demands, and personal fulfillment. Their journey was marked by a dynamic range of emotions—from joy and passion to frustration and anxiety—as they navigated the challenges of engaging students in active learning. Through reflective practice, they continuously sought professional growth, fostering inclusivity, teamwork, and resilience in their classrooms. Additionally, the physical nature of their profession led to noticeable bodily changes, requiring them to balance self-care with teaching responsibilities. Despite these challenges, the overwhelming sense of joy and fulfillment derived from witnessing student progress and success underscored the profound impact of their role. These findings ultimately highlighted the dedication and resilience of PE teachers, emphasizing the importance of recognizing their contributions to holistic student development.

Furthermore, PE teachers demonstrated a deep commitment to self-reflection and professional growth. Their future self-views and aspirations revolved around two key themes: Reflective Practice and Professional Growth and Future Vision and Continuous Growth. Teachers emphasized the value of looking back on their experiences to refine instructional methods, adapt to student needs, and remain updated with evolving trends in physical education. They recognized that their role extended beyond sports instruction, encompassing broader educational values such as discipline, teamwork, and perseverance.

Lastly, their professional aspirations underscored a commitment to continuous improvement, leadership, and student success. Many teachers envisioned refining their skills, embracing new learning opportunities, and assuming leadership roles to enhance their impact. Despite the challenges they faced, they remained motivated by the fulfillment of seeing students grow and succeed.

In conclusion, this study underscored the resilience and dedication of PE teachers, highlighting the importance of lifelong learning, adaptability, and recognition in shaping their professional journeys and in advancing the holistic development of learners.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Schools and educational institutions may provide ongoing training, workshops, and mentorship programs for Physical Education teachers. This will help them refine their teaching strategies, stay updated with evolving trends, and develop leadership skills essential for fostering student success.
2. Given the physical demands and emotional challenges of their profession, PE teachers may be encouraged to engage in self-care practices. Schools can implement wellness programs, peer support

groups, and workload management strategies to help teachers maintain a healthy balance between their professional and personal lives.

3. Administration may establishing strong mentorship networks within the teaching community can support professional growth and knowledge-sharing. Encouraging collaboration among experienced and new teachers will create a more supportive environment, enhancing both teaching effectiveness and career satisfaction.

4. Future researchers may investigate the long-term effects of a career in Physical Education on teachers' professional development, personal growth, and overall well-being. A longitudinal study could provide deeper insights into how their experiences evolve over time and how they influence student outcomes in the long run.

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