

# The Role of Physical Education in Promoting Mental Health and Well-Being Among Students

April Mae B. Dayrit

**Abstract.** This study explored the experiences and perceptions of teachers regarding the role of Physical Education (PE) in promoting mental health and well-being among learners. Specifically, it aimed to examine teachers' views on how PE contributes to students' holistic development, their coping strategies in addressing students' mental health challenges, and the broader insights drawn from their lived experiences. A phenomenological approach was employed to gain a deep understanding of teachers' perspectives, utilizing semi-structured online interviews and focus group discussions. Thematic analysis through coding revealed key themes. For the first objective teachers' perceptions of the role of PE in promoting mental health and well-being themes included Physical Health and Fitness, with subthemes such as Nutrition and Dietary Habits and Weight Management and Body Composition. Teachers also highlighted the theme of Mental Health and Emotional Well-Being, with subthemes including Social Connection and Support and the importance of Work-Life Balance for both students and educators. The second objective focused on how teachers cope with the challenges related to students' mental health and well-being. Emergent themes included Resilience and Adaptability in Teaching Practices, Empathy and Emotional Support, and the importance of Collaborative Approaches and Support Systems. For the third objective—insights drawn from the study—themes surfaced such as Passion and Commitment to student development, Challenges in Engagement with learners facing mental health concerns, Professional Development Needs, and the understanding of the Role of PE Teachers Beyond Physical Education, including their function as mentors and emotional support figures.

## KEY WORDS

1. Physical education 2. mental health 3. student well-being 4. coping mechanisms 5. teacher perspectives 6. supportive environment

Date Received: April 05, 2025 — Date Reviewed: May 15, 2025 — Date Published: June 18, 2025

## 1. Introduction

Physical education (PE) plays a pivotal role in the holistic development of students, extending beyond physical fitness to significantly impact mental health and overall well-being. Regular physical activity has been proven to reduce symptoms of anxiety, depression, and stress among young people. Engaging in physical

activities such as sports, dance, and exercise not only releases endorphins, which are natural mood enhancers but also helps in the regulation of the stress hormone cortisol. As a result, students who participate in PE classes regularly tend to experience better mental health outcomes, including improved mood and reduced

feelings of anxiety and depression. A major issue in Cambodia, as well as globally, is the lack of focus on mental health outcomes in physical education (PE) programs. Many PE curricula primarily emphasize physical fitness and motor skills, while neglecting the mental health benefits that physical activity can provide (Gulliver et al., 2019). This limited focus prevents educators from fully harnessing PE as a tool to address mental health concerns like anxiety and depression, which are increasingly common among students worldwide (World Health Organization, 2021). Without incorporating mental health goals in the curriculum, students miss out on the broader benefits that a well-rounded PE program could offer. In Thailand, another significant gap is the absence of mental health education in PE, leaving teachers ill-prepared to identify and assist students who may be dealing with mental health challenges. Many PE instructors are not trained to spot the signs of mental health issues or to incorporate strategies into their lessons that support students' psychological well-being through physical activity (McMahon et al., 2019). Additionally, schools in lower-resource areas often lack the necessary facilities, equipment, and trained staff to deliver effective PE programs, limiting students' opportunities to benefit from physical activities that can improve mood and reduce anxiety (World Health Organization, 2019). In China, cultural factors also play a role in limiting access to PE, particularly for girls and marginalized groups. In some cultures, physical activity is not encouraged for girls, which results in lower participation rates and fewer mental health benefits for these students (Hills et al., 2019). Another significant challenge in the field of PE is the lack of interdisciplinary research that connects mental health and physical education. Although there's increasing evidence supporting the positive effects of physical activity on mental well-being, research often focuses on physical health, while mental health benefits are frequently overlooked

(Biddle et al., 2019). This divide limits our understanding of how PE can be optimized to promote mental health and how physical activity can be tailored to meet the needs of students dealing with mental health issues (Lubans et al., 2019). As a result of this gap in research, there are few evidence-based strategies available to PE teachers to effectively integrate mental health support into their lessons. While general guidelines on promoting physical activity exist, there is a lack of concrete resources for addressing mental health through PE (Eime et al., 2019). In the Philippines, a key issue is the limited focus on mental health education within the current PE curriculum. While the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum emphasizes holistic development, it offers little guidance on how PE can specifically promote students' mental health and well-being (Department of Education, 2019). PE classes in the Philippines are typically centered on physical fitness and skill development, with minimal attention given to the psychological benefits of physical activity, such as stress reduction, improved mood, and anxiety management (Razon, 2019). This oversight represents a missed opportunity to use PE as a platform for addressing mental health, especially considering the growing mental health concerns among Filipino youth (Paz, 2021). Moreover, mental health stigma in the Philippines remains a significant barrier to integrating mental health education into PE. Cultural beliefs that equate mental health problems with weakness discourage students from openly discussing mental health issues, even in supportive PE environments. This stigma not only hinders the effectiveness of mental health initiatives within PE but also obstructs broader efforts to promote mental health awareness and support in schools. Changing this mindset requires a concerted effort to shift cultural perceptions and create a more accepting space for discussing mental health within educational settings. Another challenge in the Philippines is

the unequal distribution of resources for quality PE programs. Schools in urban areas, especially private institutions, generally have better access to facilities such as sports fields, gyms, and equipment, which support more comprehensive PE programs (Guillermo, 2019). However, many rural and public schools struggle with overcrowded classrooms, inadequate facilities, and a lack of proper equipment, severely limiting the PE teachers' ability to implement effective programs that foster both physical and mental health (Mendoza and Rivera, 2019). This disparity prevents many students from accessing the mental health benefits that come with regular physical activity. Finally, traditional gender roles in the Philippines also influence participation in PE, particularly for girls. Cultural norms may discourage girls from engaging in certain physical activities, especially those considered "masculine," which reduces their opportunities to benefit from mental health-enhancing activities like team sports or vigorous exercise (Fernandez, 2019). Boys, on the other hand, may face pressure to excel in sports, leading to stress and anxiety if they do not meet societal expectations (David et al., 2019). These gendered expectations create barriers to the inclusive promotion of mental health through PE, as they prevent students from participating in a way that is most beneficial for their well-being. Societal attitudes toward the importance of academic achievement over physical education further compound this issue. In many Filipino households, academic success is highly prioritized, and physical activities, including PE, are often seen as secondary or even disruptive to academic performance (Guillermo, 2019). In the Davao Region, a significant issue that affects the role of physical education (PE) in promoting mental health and well-being among students is the disparity in access to quality PE resources and facilities. While urban areas in Davao City may have relatively better facilities, such as sports complexes, gymnasiums, and access to

equipment, many schools in rural areas, particularly in Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur, and Davao Occidental, face significant challenges in providing adequate PE infrastructure (MindaNews, 2019). This disparity can hinder the effective delivery of PE programs that promote not just physical fitness but also mental health, leaving students in rural and under-resourced areas at a disadvantage. The lack of resources is further exacerbated by the geographical challenges in the region, which consists of mountainous areas and remote islands that are difficult to access (NEDA Davao Region, 2019). These geographical barriers contribute to the uneven distribution of educational resources, including those necessary for PE, such as sports equipment and facilities. As a result, students in these remote areas may not have the same opportunities to engage in regular physical activities that are crucial for their mental well-being, such as stress relief, anxiety reduction, and improved self-esteem (Smith et al., 2020). Without adequate facilities, PE classes are often limited to basic physical activities that do not fully engage students or promote the comprehensive mental health benefits that more structured programs could provide.

*1.1. Purpose of the Study*—The purpose of this study is to uncover the perception of teachers in the role of Physical Education in promoting the well-being of learners, especially on their mental health. This includes their everyday experiences and their reasons for implementation. This will shed some light on this subject area as this is an understudied phenomenon. To fill a gap in the literature and offer valuable implications for curriculum development, teacher training, and student support services. Ultimately, the findings may inform educational stakeholders on how to better leverage PE as a tool for fostering holistic development in learners.

*1.2. Research Questions*—The main purpose of this study is to discover the experiences

of the teachers in their roles and responsibilities to learners' mental health about physical activities in school. The researcher wanted to narrow down the highlights and lowlights of their expe-

riences, the challenges, and the teachers' coping practices on the challenges that come along the way. Specifically, this research aims to answer the following:

- (1) What are the teachers' perceptions of the role of physical education in promoting mental health and well-being among learners?
- (2) How do teachers cope with the challenges faced in the Mental Health and the well-being of the students?
- (3) What insights can be drawn from the study?

This study is significant to the following:  
Students – Understanding how physical education (PE) influences mental health can help students recognize the importance of staying active for reducing stress, anxiety, and depression.

Teachers – As they will be heard, and their problems will be identified. As this can be an avenue for the teachers to voice out their anxieties, challenges, and needs they can develop a strategic plan to address and help them to cope better.

School Heads – Promoting mental well-being through PE can lead to reduced absenteeism and enhanced student achievement, both of which reflect positively on school performance metrics.

*1.3. Review of Significant Literature*—The Future of Education and Skills 2030 framework by the OECD (2019) emphasizes the integration of physical, mental, and social well-being within educational systems. In this context, Physical Education (PE) is uniquely positioned to support holistic development, being the only subject that directly addresses multiple aspects of human growth (Bailey et al., 2019).

*1.3.1. Physical Education and Mental Health*—Quality education entails providing students with life skills that extend beyond academics (UNESCO, 2019). Mental health concerns among youth have escalated in recent years, with studies reporting that up to 20 percent of children may experience significant mental health challenges (Alghadir, 2021; Pascoe,

2019; Smith, 2020). Research consistently indicates that regular physical activity is associated with reduced levels of anxiety, stress, and depression, and improved self-esteem and overall psychological well-being (Leahy et al., 2020; Bailey, 2020, 2021; Vella et al., 2019).

Despite these benefits, some PE environments may inadvertently contribute to student stress due to inappropriate teaching practices (Blankenship, 2020). Thus, it is essential that PE settings foster inclusivity, engagement, and psychological safety to optimize their mental health benefits (Kohl, 2019, 2023; Sollerhed et al., 2020).

*1.3.2. Conceptualizing Mental Health and Well-Being*—Mental well-being has traditionally been approached from two perspectives: the hedonic view, which focuses on happiness and pleasure (Kahneman et al., 2020), and the eudaimonic view, which emphasizes self-realization and meaning (Ryff Singer, 2020; Waterman et al., 2020). Huppert and So (2009) reconciled these perspectives through the concept of flourishing, describing well-being as both effective functioning and positive emotion. Mental health is now seen not merely as the absence of disorder, but as a contributor to productivity, learning, and quality of life (Huppert So, 2020; Mills, 2019).

*1.3.3. Mental Health in Educational Contexts*—Although mental health support in schools is often limited to students with overt disorders or behavioral concerns (Atkins et

al., 2019; Garcia-Carrion et al., 2019), evidence suggests a broader, systemic approach is necessary. Anxiety related to assessments, peer pressure, and family dynamics significantly impact students' well-being (Van Loon et al., 2019; O'Toole, 2019). Teachers, often lacking specialized training, are vital front-line responders and must be equipped to support mental health through classroom practices and social-emotional learning (Atkins Rodger, 2021; Sharp et al., 2021).

Given the importance of mental health for learning and development, PE should be re-examined as a critical medium for delivering psychosocial support, not just physical activity (UNESCO, 2019; European Commission, 2019).

*1.3.4. Physical Activity and Mental Health Outcomes*—There is robust evidence linking moderate physical activity with enhanced mental health outcomes in youth. Studies show that adolescents engaging in 150 minutes of physical activity per week experience fewer depressive symptoms and greater emotional resilience (Checkrout, 2019; WHO, 2020; Tyson et al., 2020). Conversely, excessive physical exertion may have adverse effects, including addiction or increased psychological distress (Elbe et al., 2019).

Interventions promoting autonomy, competence, and relatedness within physical activity settings are particularly effective in improving mental well-being (Sylvester et al., 2020; Cecchini et al., 2020). Physical activity also contributes to physiological improvements, such as increased serotonin and reduced cortisol, which support mental health (Alghadir et al., 2021). Furthermore, sedentary behavior—particularly among adolescent girls—has been linked to elevated depression levels (Cecchini et al., 2020).

*1.3.5. The Role of PE Teachers and Inclusive Practice*—PE teachers are central to fostering mentally healthy environments. Their ability to recognize emotional distress and pro-

vide supportive instruction is key to student success (Bailey, 2019). Inclusive PE programs, adapted for students with diverse needs, promote emotional safety and participation (Goodwin Watkinson, 2020; Ntoumanis, 2019). Effective programs incorporate game-based, cooperative activities that encourage lifelong engagement and self-efficacy (Cocca et al., 2020; Lubans et al., 2019).

Well-designed PE curricula can reduce stress, enhance self-esteem, and develop social-emotional competencies critical to students' academic and life success (Weiss Smith, 2022; Janssen LeBlanc, 2020). Integrating mental health education into PE also empowers students with emotional regulation strategies and greater awareness of the exercise–well-being connection (Ratey, 2019).

Current literature supports the integration of physical education into mental health promotion in schools. When PE is implemented in a psychologically safe, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate manner, it fosters significant improvements in students' emotional and social well-being. As mental health challenges continue to rise among youth, positioning PE as a platform for prevention, resilience-building, and holistic development is both timely and essential (Bailey et al., 2019; Park et al., 2020; Andermo et al., 2020).

*1.4. Synthesis*—Physical Education (PE) has evolved beyond a focus on physical fitness to become an essential component in fostering students' mental health and emotional well-being. Recent research emphasizes how structured physical activity in schools can significantly reduce symptoms of stress, anxiety, and depression. PE provides students with a healthy outlet for emotional release, which is particularly vital in today's increasingly pressure-filled academic environments. A recurring theme in studies is the connection between physical activity and improved emotional regulation. Students who participate in regular physical activities

experience better moods, reduced aggression, and greater emotional stability. These improvements are not only physical, due to the endorphin release from exercise, but also psychological, as physical challenges allow students to set goals, achieve mastery, and experience personal growth, all of which contribute to higher confidence and resilience. The social aspect of PE also plays a critical role in enhancing mental health. Team sports and cooperative games promote communication, trust, and camaraderie among students, preventing social isolation and fostering meaningful relationships. These social interactions are protective factors against mental health issues, and thus, PE serves as a key space for building social skills and fostering a sense of belonging in school. The role of the PE teacher is pivotal in creating a supportive environment. Teachers who are inclusive, empathetic, and sensitive to students' emotional needs can motivate them to participate and experience the full mental health benefits of physical activity. Research indicates that when teachers provide positive reinforcement and nurture an emotionally safe atmosphere, students are more likely to engage and benefit from PE. Inclusivity is another critical factor in promoting mental health through PE. By adapting programs to accommodate all students, regardless of ability or mental health status, PE can ensure that every student feels valued and accepted. This inclusive approach challenges the traditional competitive PE model and promotes a wellness-centered, holistic philosophy. Furthermore, integrating mental health education into the PE curriculum enhances students' understanding of how exercise influences emotional well-being. Teaching them about stress management, mindfulness through movement, and the mental benefits of exercise equips them with lifelong coping strategies. This combination of physical and mental education makes PE an effective platform for promoting overall well-being. In conclusion, current research demonstrates that PE is a powerful tool for enhancing

students' mental health and well-being. Beyond its physical benefits, PE fosters emotional resilience, social connection, and psychological empowerment. To fully realize the potential of PE, schools must ensure programs are inclusive, teachers are trained in mental health awareness, and curricula integrate both physical and emotional learning. With these elements in place, Physical Education becomes a cornerstone of holistic student development.

*1.5. Theoretical Lens*—This study is anchored on Joseph Sandler the Psychodynamic Theory. Joseph Sandler has significantly advanced the integration of object relations theory and the structural model in psychoanalysis, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of mental health. His work emphasizes the importance of representations and affects in psychoanalysis, highlighting that motivation is more about emotional states than drive instincts (Sandler Rosenblatt, 1962). Sandler's work suggests that safety, an emotional experience sought throughout development, plays a crucial role, with individuals often recreating past relational patterns due to their association with safety, even if these patterns are maladaptive (Sandler Sandler, 1987). One of his key contributions is the distinction between past and present unconscious processes (Sandler Sandler, 2019), which has significant clinical implications for psychodynamic therapy. Sandler further asserts that the focus of psychodynamic approaches should not be on early childhood trauma or primitive fantasies, but rather on the current effects of past experiences, where unconscious wishes and fantasies create dynamic conflicts that lead to defensive behaviors (Sandler, 2019). He conceptualizes the direct influence one individual has over another by evoking particular roles in the other person's unconscious mind. In this framework, childhood relational patterns are often re-enacted in adult interpersonal interactions, impacting how individuals behave within current relationships. Psychody-

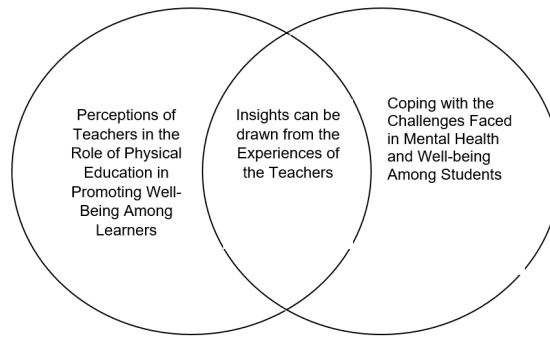


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

dynamic theories, grounded in Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis, focus on the unconscious motives behind human behavior and personality. Freud's model, particularly his theory of drives, explains how the id (unconscious desires seeking self-gratification), ego (mediating between the id and superego), and superego (moral reasoning) shape behavior (Sharf, 2022). Defense mechanisms, such as denial or projection, serve as unconscious strategies to manage anxiety or distress arising from unresolved past issues (Sharf, 2022). Transference and countertransference are also key components of psychodynamic theory, referring to the unconscious projection of past relationships onto the therapist, and the therapist's emotional responses, respectively (Ruch et al., 2020). Theories such as those developed by Carl Jung, Alfred Adler, and Melanie Klein have further expanded psychodynamic thought. Jungian analysis, for instance, focuses on the unconscious mind, archetypes, and symbolic representations, exploring both extroverted and introverted personalities (Sharf, 2022). Adlerian psychology, emphasizing individual differences, inferiority, and birth order, offers insight into how early life experiences shape one's personality and worldview (Sharf, 2022). Klein's object relations theory posits

that the relationships formed in early childhood form the basis for how individuals experience and react to relationships throughout adulthood, shaping their personality and interactions (Sharf, 2022). Kohut's self-psychology further elaborates on this by focusing on the self, particularly the deficits within the self that shape psychological well-being (Sharf, 2022). Crisis theory, also considered a psychodynamic approach, explains how individuals respond to stressful events and how they grow or develop from crises. This theory suggests that when an individual's coping mechanisms are insufficient to manage stress or trauma, they enter a state of crisis, leading to psychological distress (Caplan, 2019). Psychodynamic theories are critical in social work assessments as they help explore a client's past experiences and their impact on current challenges. Understanding defense mechanisms can aid social workers in interpreting client behavior, relationships, and emotional responses, and informs interventions such as psychotherapy or crisis intervention. These theories help social workers identify underlying psychological issues that contribute to presenting problems and assist in developing targeted interventions (Sharf, 2019).

## 2. Methodology

This chapter outlines the research design, philosophical assumptions, participant selection and sampling, ethical considerations, research instruments, data collection, and data analysis. The

three most commonly used qualitative methods are participant observation, in-depth interviews, and focus groups. Each method is tailored to gather specific types of data. Participant observation is effective for capturing naturally occurring behaviors in their usual environments. In-depth interviews (IDI) are ideal for gathering personal histories, perspectives, and experiences, particularly when addressing sensitive topics. Focus groups are valuable for understanding the cultural norms of a group and gaining broad insights into issues important to the represented cultural groups or subgroups. Patton (2019) defined phenomenology as a form of inquiry that seeks to answer the question, “What is the structure and essence of the experience of this phenomenon for these individuals?” This research aligns with this definition, aiming to understand the challenges faced by floating teachers. Giorgi (2019) cautioned researchers to expect an investigation that extends beyond the initial description, suggesting that what is presented is only a glimpse of the broader context. He advised researchers to view the gathered information as merely the tip of the iceberg.

*2.1. Philosophical Assumptions*—The philosophical assumption in research serves as a framework for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data within a specific field of study. It sets the foundation for the conclusions and decisions made throughout the research process. Various types of philosophical assumptions are commonly used in research, and they are discussed below. A strong research endeavor begins with the careful selection of the topic, problem, or area of interest, along with the appropriate research paradigm. A paradigm, as traced by Stanage (2019), comes from the Greek and Latin terms meaning “pattern” or “model.” A paradigm is essentially a way of thinking, a guiding example or model that shapes research design and actions. In other words, a paradigm represents a specific worldview that influences the research approach. Denzin and Lincoln (2019) support this by defining a research paradigm as a “basic set of beliefs that guide action,” addressing the researcher’s core principles or worldview. Three main philosophical assumptions guide the development of research methodologies: epistemological, axiological, and ontological assumptions. Epistemological assumptions relate to how knowledge is obtained, focusing on subjective evidence collected from field studies. Axiological assumptions consider the researcher’s biases, highlighting the importance of openly address-

ing them to determine whether behaviors are influenced by the environment or the environment shapes the behaviors (Pring, 2019). Ontological assumptions deal with the nature of reality, and they are particularly relevant to qualitative research. As a qualitative researcher, I believe that reality is shaped by individual perceptions and experiences, which play a significant role in how people engage with and understand the world. This study uses phenomenology as a methodology to explore teachers’ personal views, feelings, experiences, and acquired knowledge and skills. It adopts a realistic ontology that assumes the existence of a world of causes and effects, but with an emphasis on how those causes and effects influence teachers’ decisions and actions in their present context. The research focuses on understanding how individual realities are shaped by personal and social experiences, aligning with a casual view of reality.

Ontology – Ontology pertains to the nature of reality and how it is understood in the context of the study. According to Creswell (2019), reality is subjective and can vary among participants. The ontological issue addresses the various realities experienced by the individuals involved in the study. Each participant, including the researcher and the audience, holds their own interpretation of reality. This study focuses on exploring the different realities surrounding the

implementation of online distance learning during the pandemic, especially since face-to-face classes were not possible. The realities of the participants and researcher are analyzed through direct quotes and themes to understand diverse perspectives. The participants' responses were carefully coded and analyzed to ensure reliability. The analysis aimed to build common themes while respecting the uniqueness of individual experiences. Throughout the study, I took great care to uphold the authenticity of the participants' voices, ensuring that the findings were based on their interpretations without introducing personal biases.

**Epistemology** – Epistemology in this study refers to how knowledge claims are justified by staying close to the participants and collecting firsthand data. Guba and Lincoln (2019), as cited by Creswell (2019), state that the researcher should minimize the distance between themselves and the participants, striving to become an "insider" by spending time in the field. This allows for direct engagement and deeper understanding. For this research, I will apply phenomenology with thematic analysis to uncover meaningful insights into the experiences of learners during the pandemic. By engaging closely with participants, I aim to gain valuable information that provides a clearer understanding of their lived experiences during off-classroom activities. The study's goal is to highlight key details that shape the learners' perspectives and teaching experiences during this challenging time.

**Axiology** – Axiology addresses the role of values in the research process. Creswell (2019) highlights that values significantly influence a study. As the researcher, I recognize the personal and value-laden nature of the information gathered from participants and the need to acknowledge and discuss these values. The interpretation of participants' answers is conducted with the utmost respect for their views, aiming to reflect their perspectives while being mindful

of my own beliefs and values.

**Rhetoric** – The rhetorical assumption in this study emphasizes the researcher's use of a personal, informal style in writing, utilizing the first person to explain the participants' experiences and coping mechanisms. The researcher's voice is essential in interpreting the qualitative data. I align with the post-modern educational philosophy, as expressed by Afzal-os-sadat Hossieni (2019), which emphasizes the development of critical thinking, the production of knowledge, and the fostering of individual and social identity. In postmodern education, teachers guide students to discover new ideas, encouraging open discussions and creative thinking. In this framework, students are encouraged to listen to differing perspectives, engage in critical reflection, and respect diverse cultures and viewpoints. The focus on cooperative and independent learning, as well as critical verbal methods, aligns with postmodern educational approaches, where creativity and critical thinking are interconnected. This philosophy emphasizes the importance of fostering an environment where students can develop both academically and socially.

**2.2. Qualitative Assumptions**—The methodology is an adaptive and responsive approach to exploring questions and subject matter, while the method refers to the specific knowledge and procedures used in research (Gerodias, 2019). In this study, the researcher seeks to uncover the experiences and coping strategies of out-of-school youth, particularly those from Evaristo Moralizon National Vocational High School in Manay North District, Davao Oriental Division. The researcher's motivation to explore the deeper meaning behind the challenges faced by out-of-school youth led to the choice of qualitative research. This approach, as Kalof and Dietz (2019) mention, is valuable for exploring the "meanings and motivations that underlie cultural symbols, personal experiences, and phenomena" (as cited in

Gerodias, 2019). By employing phenomenology, the researcher aims to address this need by highlighting the stories of the floating teachers, as David (2020) suggested, allowing the themes, symbols, and meanings of their experiences to emerge. Phenomenological research rests on two main premises. The first is that experience serves as a valid, rich, and insightful source of knowledge. According to Becker (2019), cited in Morrissey and Higgs (2019), experience shapes behavior and is a key source of knowledge, not an unreliable one. Human experience is considered a cornerstone in understanding human phenomena. The second premise of phenomenology holds that the everyday world provides valuable insights. By examining how events unfold in daily life, we can gain significant understanding about ourselves and the nature of these events (Morrissey Higgs, 2019). Through phenomenology, which focuses on the "what" and "how" of experiences (Moustakas, 2019), this study aims to explore the subjective experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms of teachers. The insights gained from this research are expected to inform policy analysis related.

**2.3. Design and Procedure**—This study employs a qualitative research design using a phenomenological approach. According to Hancock et al. (2019), qualitative research addresses questions related to societal issues, exploring why people behave the way they do, what opinions and attitudes are formed in specific situations, how individuals are influenced by society in their actions, and how societal practices and culture develop. Phenomenology, both as a philosophy and as a research method, goes beyond a mere approach to understanding; it is an intellectual engagement in the interpretation and meaning-making processes used to understand the lived experiences of human beings at a conscious level. Data collection strategies in phenomenological research can include interviews, observations, and discussions,

making phenomenology both a philosophical and a methodological stance (Qutoshi, 2019). Phenomenology is a qualitative research approach that focuses on understanding the shared aspects of lived experiences within a specific group. The primary goal of phenomenology is to describe the essence of a phenomenon as experienced by individuals (Creswell, 2019). Typically, this approach involves conducting interviews with individuals who have direct experience with a particular event, situation, or experience. These interviews seek to answer two broad questions (Moustakas, 2019): What have you experienced in relation to this phenomenon? What contexts or situations have shaped your experience of this phenomenon? Other forms of data such as documents, observations, and artistic representations may also be utilized.

**2.4. Ethical Consideration**—This study will employ purposive sampling to select the research participants. A total of twelve (12) elementary teachers from Kinamayan Integrated School, Sto. Tomas East District will be chosen based on the following inclusion criteria: (1) teachers must have at least two years of teaching experience, and (2) they must be currently teaching in a school under the Division of Davao del Norte. The participants will be divided into two groups: five (5) teachers will take part in a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) to explore shared experiences and perspectives on integrating social-emotional learning (SEL) into classroom management, while seven (7) teachers will participate in In-Depth Interviews (IDI) to provide a more detailed and personal account of their challenges and best practices. The researcher adopted purposive sampling as it allows the selection of participants who meet specific criteria relevant to the study's objectives (Creswell, 2019). This method, also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, ensures that the findings are authentic, contextually rich, and reflective of the lived experi-

ences of teachers managing classrooms with SEL strategies (Marshall, 2019). The researcher has a responsibility to uncover, transfer, and exploit knowledge for the benefit of educational institutions. To do so, the researcher takes up the following roles in the course of the study:

**Facilitator and Promoter of Unbiased Research**

The researcher interviews the participants and guides them in the process. The researcher interprets ideas and responses based on existing literature and related studies and not on the researcher's knowledge, thoughts, and feelings to avoid the intrusion of bias.

**Expert in qualitative methods**

The researcher implements the qualitative method correctly. To do so, the researcher assesses himself and seeks help to the research adviser and other research professionals. These help him exhibit competence in explaining the study without biasing the participants, conducting interviews properly according to the design, making appropriate field observations, selecting appropriate artifacts, images, and journal portions, and employing Environmental Triangulation and Thematic Content Analysis precisely.

**Collector and Keeper of Data**

The researcher ensures different ways of making a record of what is said and done during the interview and Focus Group Discussion, such as taking handwritten notes or audio and/or video recording. The recordings are transcribed verbatim before data analysis can begin. Records done by the researcher are properly secured as they contain sensitive information and are relevant to the research. However, the data are being collected, the primary responsibility of the researcher is to safeguard participants and their data. Mechanisms for such safeguarding must be clearly articulated to participants and must be approved by a relevant research ethics review board before the research begins.

**Analyst of data**

The researcher sees the phenomenon or

problem from the participants' perspective by interpreting data, transcribing and checking, reading between the lines, coding, and theming. The researcher makes sure that the findings are true to the participants and that their voices are heard.

**Organizer and presenter of data**

The researcher presents the problem and the related literature and studies that support it. Findings of the study are presented too by research questions – stating the results for each one by using themes to show how the research questions were answered in the study. Moreover, future directions and implications of the study are given by the researcher for the improvement of educational policy and practices.

**2.5. Research Instruments**—Qualitative analysis was established the study's credibility, transferability, and dependability. The participants' experiences were audio-recorded during a semi-structured focus group discussion interview. Each participant will be asked to participate in a focus group discussion, expected to last about three hours. This structure was validated by three experts in the field of Educational Management. Interview Guide. I prepared five open-ended questions for the semi-structured interview to gather additional information and supporting answers to validate the study's findings. The interview questions were designed to align with the study's research questions and objectives.

**2.6. Research Participants**—In the selection of the research participants, purposive sampling was applied. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique in which the researcher relies on his or her judgment when choosing members of the population to participate in the study. It is a non-probability sampling method and it occurs when elements selected for the sample are chosen by the judgment of the researcher. Researchers often believe that they can obtain a representative sample by using sound judgment, which will save time and money (Black,

2020). In this study, suitable samples including ten (10) teachers at Evaristo Moralizon National Vocational High School, Manay North District, Davao Oriental Division. There were be ten (10) informants who are teachers either male or female, who part of the Department of Education who will be part of the in-depth interview. Moreover, to protect the identity of the participants, coding was be used. IDI-P1 to IDI-P10 will be used for the informants several participants which are the teachers, coordinators, job contractor of the same field which is teaching of the in-depth interview (IDI).

**2.7. Role of the Researcher**—In this study, I played various roles to attain the success of the study. First, I asked for permission to conduct the study which will start with the Schools Division Superintendent and then with the participants of my study. As a researcher, if consented, I recorded the actual interview to achieve the needs of this type of research. The interview's goal is to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of teachers in the new normal way of teaching and learning. The interview would also include how the DepEd should improve its programs. After the needed data had been gathered, everything had been transcribed and analyzed by the researcher. However, human instruments are more important to be studied in case the quality of this research has to deal with biases and assumptions in dealing with the persons involved in the research (Greenbank, 2019).

**2.8. Data Collection**—According to Creswell (2019), an essential part of the research process is identifying people or sites to study, gaining access to them, and establishing rapport with participants to ensure the collection of high-quality data. Equally important is developing a strategy for purposeful sampling of individuals or locations. Once the participants are selected, the researcher must decide on the most suitable methods for data collection. This involves developing protocols and

anticipating potential challenges in the field, such as insufficient data, needing to leave the site prematurely, or losing valuable information. Additionally, the researcher must determine how to store and protect the data to ensure it is easily accessible and secure from damage or loss. The following is a detailed step-by-step process for data gathering.

**Asking Permission from the Dean** – Before conducting interviews, the researcher obtained an endorsement letter from the Dean, which confirmed approval to proceed with the study.

**Asking Permission from the Schools Division Superintendent** – The researcher then sought permission from the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) to conduct the study within the identified school. This involved sending a letter addressed to the SDS, including Chapters 1 and 2, along with the research instrument and a description of the study's objectives and participants. The researcher awaited the SDS's approval before proceeding.

**Asking for Permission from School Heads** – After securing the SDS's approval, the researcher sent letters to the school principals to explain the details of the study and seek their permission to conduct the research in their schools.

**Obtaining Consent from Participants** – Permission was sought from the participants and their parents or guardians. The researcher ensured that all participants were fully informed about the study and its process before they agreed to participate.

**Conducting the Interview** – The researcher conducted in-depth interviews using a structured interview questionnaire. During the interviews, the researcher took notes and recorded conversations with a sound recorder for easier transcription. The researcher actively engaged with participants, listening attentively and responding appropriately.

**Transcribing the Responses of Interviewees** – The researcher transcribed the responses accu-

ately, referring to the sound recordings. Since participants communicated in their local language, the researcher translated their answers into English.

**Data Coding and Thematic Content Analysis** – Following transcription, the data was categorized and coded. Themes were then extracted from the data, and the responses from different participants were compared and contrasted. A second round of interviews, in the form of a Focus Group Discussion (FGD), was conducted to clarify and supplement any data that required further explanation. The additional information was carefully analyzed and integrated into the existing data. After this, the researcher compared the data across participants to identify patterns and trends.

**2.9. Data Analysis**—The study utilized thematic analysis for analyzing the collected data. The researcher analyzed the participants' responses using Creswell's thematic approach, which focuses on identifying themes in qualitative research. According to Creswell (2019), themes are formed by aggregating similar codes together to represent major ideas within the data. Familiarization with the data is a key part of qualitative analysis, and the researcher immersed themselves in the data by reading and re-reading it, noting initial observations.

**Coding** – Coding is a common element in qualitative analysis and involves assigning labels to key aspects of the data relevant to the research questions. This is both a data reduction process and an analytical one, capturing both the semantic and conceptual meanings within the data. The researcher will manually code all data items, concluding this phase by collating the codes and the corresponding data extracts.

**Searching for Themes** – The next step involves identifying coherent patterns in the data that relate to the research question. The researcher will collate the coded data into distinct themes, ensuring that the themes provide a meaningful representation of the data.

**Reviewing Themes** – The researcher will review the identified themes to ensure they provide a compelling narrative about the data. This process involves refining the themes, defining their nature, and understanding how they relate to each other. The researcher will employ thematic content analysis to further analyze these themes.

**Thematic Content Analysis** – Thematic content analysis involves providing a descriptive analysis of the qualitative data, focusing on identifying the essence of each theme. This process will include giving each theme a clear and concise name that accurately captures its meaning (Andersen, 2019). To enhance validity and provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon, the researcher will also use environmental triangulation. This technique involves analyzing the results of the same study using different methods of data collection, taking into account various environmental factors such as location, time, and season that could influence the findings (David, 2020; Naeem, Saira, 2019). This triangulation helps validate the findings by determining if they remain consistent across different settings and variables.

**Writing-up** – The writing-up process involves synthesizing the analytical narrative and data extracts to tell a coherent and persuasive story about the data. This stage is critical in translating raw data into a structured narrative that accurately reflects the participants' voices while aligning with the study's objectives. The researcher will ensure all the analysis aligns with the existing literature, providing a thorough contextualization of the findings. The researcher will gather all data, analyze it, and then organize it into key topics and themes. This process involves familiarization, coding, developing a thematic framework, indexing, charting, mapping, and interpretation (Ritchie Spencer, 2019).

**Familiarization** – Familiarization with the data is an essential first step, requiring the

researcher to read and re-read interview transcripts, listen to audio recordings, and review contextual or reflective notes. This immersion helps identify critical ideas and recurring themes, which will be noted during the process.

**Developing a Thematic Framework** – After coding a few transcripts, the researcher will compare labels and select a set of codes to apply across all subsequent transcripts. Codes will be grouped into categories, forming a working analytical framework. This framework will be iterated until no additional codes emerge, ensuring a comprehensive analysis.

**Indexing** – Indexing involves identifying relevant portions of data related to specific themes and categorizing them for ease of reference. This procedure helps organize all textual data, such as interview transcripts, making it easier to navigate during analysis.

**Charting** – Charting involves summarizing data by category from each transcript, striking a balance between reducing the data and retaining the original meaning. The chart will include relevant quotations to illustrate the findings.

**Mapping and Interpretation** – The final stage of analysis involves mapping and interpreting the data to identify key insights. This stage provides a visual representation of the data, helping the researcher understand the relationships between themes and interpret the findings in the context of the study's objectives. The researcher will focus on defining key concepts, mapping phenomena, creating typologies, identifying associations, offering explanations, and developing strategies. By following these steps, the researcher will ensure that the analysis is thorough, meaningful, and grounded in the participants' real experiences, ensuring the study provides a rich understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

*2.10. Trustworthiness of the Study*—In qualitative research, the concepts of validity and reliability are not as central as they are in quan-

titative studies. Instead, qualitative researchers focus on ensuring the trustworthiness of the data. Trustworthiness in qualitative research is assessed through four key components: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Harts, 2019).

**Credibility** – Credibility refers to the confidence in the truthfulness of the data. It involves ensuring that the researcher has spent enough time in the field, engaging deeply with participants to capture a comprehensive and accurate understanding of the phenomenon. To address credibility, I interviewed as many participants as possible, continuing until data saturation was achieved—when no new insights or themes emerged from further interviews.

**Transferability** – Transferability concerns the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other contexts or settings. Unlike in positivist research, where the goal is to generalize results to a broader population, qualitative research focuses on specific environments or individuals. Thus, the researcher does not aim to demonstrate broad applicability. However, I recognize that it is my responsibility to provide detailed contextual descriptions of the study's fieldwork sites, so that readers can assess whether the findings may be relevant to other situations or populations.

**Confirmability** – Confirmability refers to the degree of objectivity in the research process, ensuring that the findings are shaped by the participants' experiences and not by the researcher's biases or preferences. While true objectivity is challenging in qualitative research, steps must be taken to minimize bias. This includes ensuring that the findings are based on participants' insights rather than the researcher's own views. In this study, I took careful steps to ensure that the conclusions drawn were firmly grounded in the data provided by the participants, rather than my own perspectives or preferences.

### 3. Results and Discussion

This chapter discussed the research questions and their findings based on participant responses. The study looked into the perception of teachers in the role of Physical Education in promoting the well-being of learners, especially on their mental health. This includes their everyday experiences and their reasons for implementation.

*3.1. Perceptions of Teachers in the Pole of Physical Education in Promoting Well-Being Among Learners*—Teachers widely recognize Physical Education (PE) as a vital element in promoting students' overall well-being. However, their views on its role are influenced by factors such as available resources, training, and institutional support. Enhancing these perceptions through professional development and stronger policy support can amplify the positive effects of PE on student well-being. Makopoulou and

Cumming (2024) found that teachers believe PE has a significant impact on promoting mental health and well-being, owing to the nature and context of the lessons. Teachers suggested creating an engaging, inclusive, and supportive environment, which aligns with key principles of inclusive education and student-centered pedagogies. This perspective is further supported by Teraoka and Kirk (2021), who emphasized that physical education is crucial for fostering the health and well-being of students.

*3.1.1. Physical Health and Fitness Promotion*—Promoting physical health and fitness among students is crucial for their overall well-being, academic success, and personal development. Engaging in regular physical activity helps alleviate mental health issues such as stress, anxiety, and depression, while also improving cognitive functions, concentration, and overall academic performance. Teachers can encourage physical health by developing school-based fitness programs, sports clubs, and intramural activities. Additionally, workshops and campaigns can educate students about the importance of a healthy lifestyle, while incorporating physical activity into daily routines, such as taking active breaks during lessons. According to Lubans et al. (2021), focusing on physical activity in youth has been shown to help alleviate mental health struggles for many students. Students who are not engaged in physical education have a higher risk of developing mental health problems. Strong evidence suggests that regular physical activity can significantly improve various mental health outcomes (Leahy et al., 2020). In many schools, physical

education teachers are being encouraged to address not only the physical but also the mental well-being and mental health challenges of their students (Kumar, 2023). Physical education offers unique benefits that other subjects may not, including improvements in mental health (Kumar, 2023). Physical education and sports also play a vital role in teaching students the importance of social values (Checchini et al., 2020). Advocates for physical education emphasize the numerous benefits that come from participation in physical activities (Smith, 2020). Additionally, Anderson and colleagues conducted a study on the impact of school-related physical activity interventions on mental health in children and adolescents. They found that such interventions could reduce anxiety and promote positive mental health (Andermo et al., 2020).

The statement of (P3) underscores the significant impact that physical activity has on reducing academic stress. Physical stress, particularly in the context of schoolwork, can lead to anxiety, burnout, and decreased cognitive functioning, making it harder for students to stay focused and productive. Engaging in physical activity offers

a natural and effective outlet for this stress. Research consistently highlights that physical exercise improves emotional well-being and mental health by increasing endorphins, the body's natural mood enhancers (Goleman Boyatzis, 2019). Activities such as sports, gym sessions, or even simple exercises like walking or stretching can reduce feelings of stress and anxiety. By offering students a chance to step away from academic pressures and focus on their physical well-being, schools help improve their students' overall capacity to manage stress and perform academically (Vaish Warneken, 2019). The P5 statement, (P5), highlights the dual benefits of sports: relieving stress and enhancing academic performance. Sports activities not only provide physical benefits, but they also serve as a motivational tool. Students who may struggle academically often find renewed interest in their studies after participating in sports because these activities help build confidence, teamwork, and a sense of accomplishment, Brehony (2020). According to Mayer et al. (2020), engaging in physical activity fosters positive psychological changes, including improved self-esteem and a greater sense of discipline, both of which can be transferred to academic work. As students engage in physical activities, they experience the satisfaction of mastering a skill or participating in a team effort, which often leads to greater motivation and focus in the classroom. This highlights the importance of integrating sports into the school curriculum as a tool not only for physical health but also for academic improvement, Landry (2019). The P6 statement, , demonstrates the positive role of structured, regular sports activities in maintaining student well-being. Having a dedicated sports coordinator who organizes frequent sports events helps ensure that students have consistent opportunities to engage in physical activities. According to Landry (2019), regularly scheduled physical activities provide students with a routine that

they can rely on for stress relief. These activities not only allow students to apply their skills from physical education lessons but also create a sense of community and teamwork, further enhancing their emotional resilience. By having regular activities, students know they can look forward to these events, which provide a predictable break from academic challenges and promote both physical and mental health. This continuity in physical activity encourages a balanced approach to education, where mental well-being is just as important as academic performance, Vaish and Warneken (2019). In summary, the importance of physical activity in reducing academic stress and improving overall well-being cannot be overstated. Through participation in sports, students are provided with a valuable outlet to release stress and boost their mental health. This, in turn, leads to improved motivation and interest in their academic work. With the support of school sports coordinators, who ensure regular, structured physical activities, students can apply what they learn in physical education while also benefiting from stress relief and enhanced emotional resilience. Integrating such activities into the school routine not only promotes healthier students but also contributes to a more well-rounded and effective educational experience, Brehony (2020).. The participants shared their experience about providing opportunities for physical activities in the school to address the mental health, well-being, and mental illness of their students. Educators act as role models by demonstrating active lifestyles. Provide encouragement and positive reinforcement. Create supportive environments that prioritize health and wellness. Ensure schools have adequate facilities and resources for physical activity. Implement policies that promote daily physical activity and healthy habits. Collaborate with community organizations for broader outreach, Mayer (2020).

*3.1.2. Mental Health and Emotional Well-being*—Mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and stress are becoming more prevalent among students across all age groups. Addressing emotional well-being is essential for academic success, social development, and overall life satisfaction. High academic expectations and heavy workloads often contribute to stress and burnout, while peer relationships, bullying, and the influence of social media can affect self-esteem and emotional stability. Transitions such as moving to a new school, starting college, or facing future uncertainties can lead to anxiety. Additionally, family dynamics, trauma, or mental health struggles within the family can also impact students' emotional health. Students may show signs of distress through behavioral changes such as withdrawal, irritability, trouble concentrating, shifts in eating or sleeping habits, or a decline in academic performance. To support mental well-being, schools should create inclusive, respectful, and supportive environments where students feel safe to express their emotions. Encouraging healthy lifestyle habits like regular physical activity, balanced nutrition, sufficient sleep, and mindfulness practices is crucial for mental health. Research has shown that a lack of physical activity during adolescence is linked to mental health problems. Cecchini et al. (2020) found similar results in their study, highlighting that adolescent girls who were the most sedentary had the highest likelihood of experiencing depression. When promoting a physically active lifestyle among youth, it is important to consider social issues and internal struggles that may also contribute to mental health challenges (Kantomaa et al., 2020). Physical Education (PE) can play a vital role in supporting students' mental health and overall well-being. To achieve this, teachers advocate for creating an engaging, inclusive, and safe environment through various practices that align with the principles of inclusive education and student-centered pedagogies (Gatt, A. M.,

Makopoulou, K., and Cumming, J., 2024).

P1 said that The increasing presence of social media in the lives of young people has been identified as a significant factor contributing to mental health issues, particularly depression and anxiety. The constant exposure to social media trends can negatively influence their self-image and emotional well-being. The issue of excessive screen time, replacing face-to-face interaction with family members, is also a growing concern. According to Twenge and Campbell (2019), excessive use of social media correlates with a higher incidence of depression among adolescents, as it often replaces more meaningful, real-world experiences and connections. P4 shared that The decline in physical activity among young people, particularly due to increased mobile phone usage and social media engagement, has been associated with negative outcomes for both physical and mental health. Zhou et al. (2020) highlighted the inverse relationship between screen time and physical activity, suggesting that longer hours spent on mobile devices lead to sedentary behavior, which in turn contributes to poor mental health outcomes. Lack of physical activity is a well-known risk factor for anxiety and depression, as exercise plays a crucial role in the regulation of stress hormones and the enhancement of mood. P5 statement reinforces the notion that excessive social media usage, particularly on platforms like Facebook, Messenger, and TikTok, has serious repercussions on the mental and physical health of adolescents. Research has consistently demonstrated that long hours spent on social media contribute to the deterioration of both mental and physical health. Primack et al. (2019) found that social media use is linked to higher levels of stress, anxiety, and depression in adolescents, particularly when used excessively or mindlessly. Encouraging a balance between screen time and physical activity is a critical intervention. As Wang et al. (2019) pointed out, physical activity is not only bene-

ficial for physical health but also contributes to improved mental well-being by reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression. While our discussions continued, the participants' shared experience during the in-depth interview pointed out mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and stress are increasingly common among students of all ages because students are

used to be in their mobile phones rather than doing physical activities. Supporting students' mental health requires a holistic approach that involves awareness, proactive support, and an environment conducive to emotional well-being. Investing in these areas not only benefits individual students but also creates healthier, more productive learning communities.

*3.1.3. Nutrition and Dietary Habits*—A balanced diet is essential for providing the body with vital nutrients such as carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, and minerals, which support growth, immune function, and cognitive performance. Proper nutrition plays a key role in enhancing concentration, memory, and overall academic success. Maintaining regular meal times is important for sustaining energy levels and preventing overeating. Staying adequately hydrated is crucial for brain function and overall physical health. It is important to reduce the consumption of processed foods, fast foods, and foods that are high in sugar, salt, and unhealthy fats. Encouraging students to adopt healthy eating habits not only benefits their physical health but also boosts their academic performance and general well-being. Promoting awareness and providing practical strategies can help students make informed food choices, leading to a healthier future. According to the concept of health in the field of nutrition, lifestyle is a major determinant of health. The increasing prevalence of overweight and obesity among younger populations is a direct result of poor lifestyle choices. The diet of most adolescents examined in this study was found to lack sufficient quantities of pro-health food products. One in ten young males followed a diet that is likely to contribute to negative health outcomes. More than half of the young males and one-third of the young females surveyed had limited knowledge about food and nutrition. The level of nutritional knowledge among these youth was strongly linked to the quality of their diet, both in terms

of beneficial and harmful health traits. Due to their lack of knowledge, young people often make poor nutritional choices, which can lead to overweight, obesity, and other diet-related health issues in the future (Mizia, Felińczak, Włodarek, and Syrkiewicz-Świtła, 2021).

The statement of P6 highlights a common concern that many children today lack knowledge about proper nutrition, largely because their families also do not consume healthy foods. This has made it harder for children to learn about healthy eating habits at school. Research supports the idea that family eating patterns significantly influence children's dietary habits (Lytle Sokol, 2020). If families are not consuming nutritious meals at home, children may struggle to adopt these behaviors, even when they are taught them in educational settings. The importance of family modeling in children's nutrition is well-documented, as children are more likely to adopt healthy eating habits when they observe these practices within their household. This statement of P7 emphasizes the significance of proper nutrition for children's growth and development and the challenges children face in following healthy diets. Factors such as the abundance of processed foods and a lack of knowledge about nutrition contribute to this problem. Studies have shown that the availability of processed foods and sugary snacks in schools and homes plays a major role in poor dietary habits (Kramer et al., 2020). The statement advocates for education on nutritious food choices both at home and in schools, which is crucial for shaping healthy eating habits in chil-

dren. Research indicates that health education interventions at both school and community levels can significantly improve children's dietary knowledge and practices (Miller et al., 2019). Both statements highlight the critical role that proper nutrition plays in the growth and development of children. They emphasize that children often lack healthy eating habits due to the availability of processed foods and a lack of family support. To overcome this challenge, education both at home and in schools is essential. Studies confirm that family eating behaviors and proper nutrition education can positively influence children's dietary choices and overall health. Encouraging healthy eating habits from an early age is key to improving children's long-term health outcomes (Lytle Sokol, 2020; Kramer et al., 2020). The participants shared their experience about the difficulty of instilling to the students the proper nutrition and habit of proper food intake. Many young people tend to favor fast food, snacks, and sugary beverages due to convenience, taste preferences, and targeted marketing. This often leads to higher intake of calories, saturated fats, sugar, and sodium. Despite awareness of their health benefits, many youths do not meet the recommended daily servings of fruits and vegetables, leading to potential deficiencies in essential vitamins, minerals, and fiber. (Miller et al., 2019). In addition, frequent snacking, often on unhealthy options like chips, candies, and soda, is common. This pattern can contribute to weight gain and metabolic issues if not balanced with nutritious meals. Stress, anxiety, and emotional factors can influence eating habits, leading to emotional eating or disordered eating patterns in some young people. However, there is a growing interest in plant-based diets, organic foods, and wellness trends among youth, reflecting an evolving landscape of dietary habits. The dietary habits of young people are shaped by a complex interplay of convenience, social influences, awareness levels, and lifestyle factors. Addressing these issues re-

quires targeted education, improved access to healthy foods, and promoting active lifestyles to foster lifelong healthy eating behaviors, (Lytle Sokol, 2020).

*3.1.4. Weight Management and Body Composition*—Effective weight management and understanding body composition are continuous processes that require healthy eating, regular physical activity, sufficient sleep, and stress management. For students, establishing these habits early on can lead to long-term health benefits and enhanced academic performance. Maintaining a healthy weight involves balancing the calories consumed through food and beverages with the calories expended through physical activity and metabolism. A diet rich in whole grains, fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and healthy fats is essential, while limiting processed foods, sugary drinks, and high-fat snacks is crucial for optimal health. Weight management is a key aspect of overall well-being, as it helps prevent or reduce the risk of chronic diseases like obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and certain cancers (Cai et al., 2022; Madigan et al., 2022). However, it is also influenced by a complex combination of psychological, social, and environmental factors that affect a person's motivation, behavior, and outcomes (CDC, 2023). In recent years, physical activity levels among young people have notably declined, leading to reduced adherence to recommended physical activity levels. In this context, physical education provides a valuable setting to help improve adherence to physical activity recommendations. PE programs teach students important movement skills and knowledge, positively influencing their activity levels (Moreno-Diaz et al., 2024). Inappropriate lifestyle habits have become more common among children and adolescents in recent decades. These include increased screen time, sedentary behavior, and insufficient physical activity. Consequently, physical fitness levels have declined, although active children have shown improvements. The

negative impact of these lifestyle changes, such as poor diet, excessive salt intake, sleep disturbances, and lack of physical activity, contributes to the onset of hypertension and other cardiometabolic risk factors (Tozo et al., 2025).

The P1 statement discusses the difficulty of guiding students on proper nutrition and managing their weight according to their height and age due to challenges at home. Factors such as lack of discipline in eating habits and limited financial resources for purchasing healthy food make it harder to monitor students' nutrition. Research shows that home environments, including food availability and family eating behaviors, significantly influence children's diet and weight management (Cohen et al., 2020). If healthy food options are not available at home or there is a lack of structure in meal planning, children may struggle to follow proper nutritional advice. Moreover, financial barriers are a critical factor in ensuring that children have access to a balanced diet. P2 highlights the role of schools in educating students about proper nutrition and using physical activities to help manage their weight and body composition. Education about nutrition, alongside the promotion of physical activities, plays a crucial role in helping students achieve a healthy weight and body structure. Research has shown that

incorporating physical activity in school curriculums significantly contributes to healthier body composition and weight management in children (Cohen et al., 2020). In addition, providing students with knowledge about nutritious foods and encouraging an active lifestyle can help them develop healthy habits that improve both their physical and mental health. Both statements discuss the challenges and solutions regarding students' nutrition and weight management. While home environments, including discipline in eating and financial constraints, can complicate proper nutrition, schools play a critical role in educating students about healthy eating and promoting physical activities to support weight management. Research supports that interventions at home and school are essential for improving children's nutrition and health outcomes, with schools being key in providing education and structured physical activities (Cohen et al., 2020). Somehow, teachers' insights during the interview shared such as effective weight management goes beyond just losing weight; it involves improving body composition by reducing excess fat while preserving or increasing lean muscle mass. Combining proper nutrition, regular physical activity, behavioral strategies, and personalized assessment leads to healthier, sustainable outcomes.

**3.1.5. Work-life Balance—Importance for Well-being** is maintaining a healthy work-life balance is essential for overall mental, emotional, and physical well-being. It helps reduce stress, prevent burnout, and improve overall happiness. Employees who achieve a good balance tend to be more productive, engaged, and motivated. When work demands are managed effectively, individuals can focus better and deliver higher quality results. Individuals can improve their work-life balance by prioritizing tasks, delegating when possible, practicing time management, and ensuring they allocate

time for hobbies, exercise, and social connections. Teachers play a crucial role in shaping the future of students and society, but the demanding nature of their profession often possesses challenges to their work-life balance and overall well-being (Duran, Pontillas, and Comon, 2024). One study stated that promoting teacher well-being was essential if the school targets to improve its overall performance. Teachers' well-being was regarded as a state of reduced stress, sickness and absence, improved teaching ability and performance. Hence, it was imperative for schools starts with the staff: they were

in the front line of this work, as it was hard for them to be genuinely motivated to promote emotional and social well-being in others if they feel uncared for and burnout themselves (Castaños, 2020). This positive sentiment can lead to increase motivation, engagement, productivity and improve over - well-being of the teachers. The narratives shared by participants particularly teachers, coordinators, job contractors in the same category during the in-depth interviews revealed their thoughts about the topics discussed.

P3 statement discusses the challenges faced by a PE teacher in balancing the responsibilities of educating children about proper nutrition and physical fitness, especially when the teacher is not in the best physical condition themselves. This difficulty is compounded by the many activities at school, which can make it hard to monitor students' physical activity. Studies show that teachers often face challenges in promoting health and physical activity, especially when they feel inadequately prepared or lack personal health habits (Le Masurier et al., 2020). The personal health and physical condition of teachers play a significant role in their ability to engage in physical education effectively and serve as role models for students. P4 and P5 state-

ments emphasize the challenge of balancing work tasks such as teaching nutrition, encouraging physical activity, and monitoring students' progress, particularly when the teacher's own physical condition is a limiting factor. It suggests that finding ways to improve one's own health while managing work responsibilities is crucial. Research confirms that teacher wellness is essential for effectively promoting student health (Brennan et al., 2020). Teachers who maintain their own physical health are better equipped to lead physical activities, serve as positive role models, and maintain the energy needed to effectively monitor students' health and physical progress. Both statements highlight the difficulties PE teachers face when trying to balance educating students about nutrition, promoting physical activity, and monitoring their progress, particularly when the teacher's own physical health is not ideal. Research supports the idea that teachers' physical and mental well-being directly impacts their ability to effectively teach and promote healthy behaviors in students. It is crucial for teachers to find ways to manage their own health to serve as positive role models and effectively engage students in health-promoting activities (Le Masurier Corbin, 2020; Brennan et al., 2020).

*3.1.6. Social Connection and Support—* Social connection and support among Physical Education (PE) teachers play a crucial role in fostering a sense of community, which helps reduce feelings of isolation. Strong peer relationships contribute to higher job satisfaction and overall well-being, which can significantly alleviate the burnout and stress commonly found in educational environments. Supportive networks allow teachers to share best practices, resources, and innovative teaching strategies. Collaboration also promotes continuous professional growth, particularly in fields like PE, where the curriculum and trends in activities change fre-

quently. Teachers who feel supported are generally more confident in their teaching abilities. Social connections provide both emotional encouragement and practical advice, leading to more engaging and effective PE lessons that motivate students. Teachers with strong social support systems are better equipped to create positive, inclusive environments, which foster greater student engagement, participation, and enthusiasm for physical activity key factors in promoting long-term health habits. It is crucial for PE teachers to maintain psychological well-being, as they face numerous job demands and stressors. Social support plays a significant

role in enhancing mental health and well-being (Fitranto et al., 2025). Previous research has shown that social support has a profound impact on perceived stress levels. Özer et al. (2021) found that increased family support was linked to lower stress, explaining 11 percent of the variance in stress levels. Similarly, Ekmen et al. (2021) found that support from family and significant others significantly reduces stress, with stress serving as a partial mediator of life satisfaction. McLean et al. (2023) reinforced this connection, finding that increased support was associated with lower stress levels among college students. Social support not only directly affects stress but also influences overall life satisfaction by shaping how stress is perceived. This emphasizes the vital role that social support plays in reducing perceived stress and improving mental health. In summary, there is consistent empirical evidence showing that greater social support leads to improved mental health outcomes. Social support is a key factor in reducing perceived stress and enhancing mental well-being, which is supported by Lazarus and Folkman's stress and coping theory. This study, therefore, examines how social support indirectly impacts mental health by influencing perceived stress levels (Acoba, 2024).

P1 statement underscores the importance of social support for PE teachers who face challenges in motivating students to live healthy physically and mentally. The teacher shares experiences with colleagues from other schools to alleviate stress and gather ideas for more effective teaching. Research has shown that social support among teachers plays a significant role in reducing stress and improving job satisfaction (Collie et al., 2020). When teachers collaborate and share strategies, it can enhance their teaching methods and create a supportive network that helps in overcoming challenges like motivating students and maintaining their own well-being. P2 and P3 statements highlight the reduction of stress that PE teachers experience

when they have a supportive group to share and discuss challenges, particularly in motivating students to adopt healthy eating habits. Teachers who have a network to exchange experiences and solutions are better equipped to handle the pressures of their job. Research suggests that collaborative practices among teachers can improve their ability to motivate students and manage stress (Yim et al., 2021). This group dynamic helps in addressing challenges more effectively, such as encouraging healthy eating habits among students. Both statements emphasize the value of social support among PE teachers in overcoming the challenges they face, particularly in motivating students towards healthier lifestyles. By connecting with other teachers, they can share experiences and strategies that alleviate stress and enhance their effectiveness. Research supports the idea that teacher collaboration and social support not only reduce stress but also improve teaching outcomes and the ability to motivate students (Collie et al., 2020; Yim et al., 2021). Fostering social connection and support among PE teachers is essential for their professional satisfaction, resilience, and effectiveness. Schools and educational authorities should actively promote environments that facilitate positive relationships, leading to better outcomes for teachers and students alike. Creating a supportive environment where teachers can share and discuss challenges is a great way to reduce stress and improve teaching strategies. Regular Team Meetings dedicated to sharing experiences, challenges, and successes related to PE and health education. Peer support groups of teachers to discuss specific topics like student motivation, nutrition, or mental health encourages peer learning and problem-solving. Moreover, Professional Learning Communities established focused on health and PE, where teachers can collaboratively develop lesson plans, share resources, and discuss effective strategies. Also, by creating online platforms or chat groups for ongoing discussion, resource sharing, and sup-

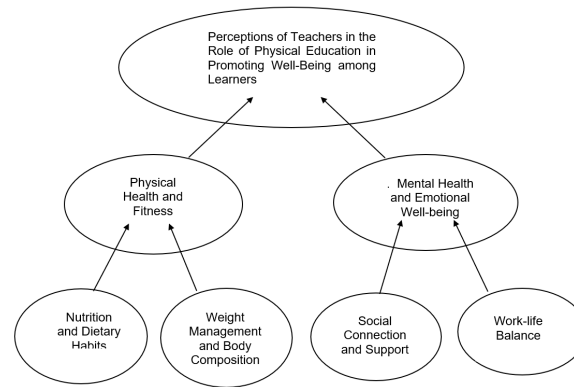


Fig. 2. Perceptions of Teachers in the Role of Physical Education in Promoting Well-Being Among Learners

port. By building a community of practice focused on health and PE, teachers can support each other, exchange ideas, and develop innovative solutions to motivate children and promote their overall well-being. Figure 3 emphasizes the Perceptions of teachers in the role of Physical Education in promoting well-being among learners. It has Physical Health and Fitness, with subthemes of Nutrition and Dietary Habits and Weight Management and Body Composition, and Mental Health and Emotional Well-being, with subthemes of Social Connection and Support and Work-life Balance. Moreover, Nutrition and Dietary Habits poses challenges. Increased consumption of processed foods, fast foods, sugary snacks, and sugary beverages contribute to poor nutrition and related health issues such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases. Many individuals lack knowledge about balanced diets, portion sizes, and

the importance of various nutrients, leading to poor dietary choices. Modern lifestyles often involve minimal physical activity, which, combined with poor nutrition, exacerbates health problems. Limited access to healthy foods due to economic constraints or food deserts can hinder proper nutrition, especially in low-income communities. Busy schedules can lead to reliance on convenience foods rather than preparing nutritious homemade meals. Preference for salty, sweet, or fatty foods, along with addictive tendencies, can make healthier choices difficult. Advertising often promotes unhealthy foods, influencing consumer choices, especially among children and adolescents. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive education, policy interventions, and individual behavioral changes to promote healthier eating habits and improve overall nutritional status.

3.2. *Teachers Coping Mechanism with the Challenges Faced In the Mental Health and Well-being of the Students*—Teachers play a crucial role in supporting the mental health and well-being of their students, but this responsibility also comes with its own set of challenges. To manage these challenges effectively, educators adopt various coping strategies. One such strategy is engaging in professional development and training. Teachers often pursue

workshops and courses on mental health awareness, trauma-informed practices, and effective classroom management techniques to enhance their ability to understand and assist students' emotional and psychological needs. Another key coping mechanism is building support networks. Teachers actively seek connections with colleagues, school counselors, psychologists, and administrators to create a support system where they can share experiences, exchange ad-

vice, and collaborate on solutions. This network allows teachers to feel supported and better equipped to navigate the complexities of student well-being.

*3.2.1. Resilience and Adaptability in Teaching Practices*—Resilience and adaptability are crucial qualities for PE teachers to effectively handle the challenges that come with their role. By developing these traits, teachers can enhance their teaching effectiveness, promote student success, and create a positive learning environment. Continuous professional development, reflective practices, and maintaining a growth mindset are essential in fostering resilience and adaptability in teaching methods. Teachers play an integral role in the teaching and learning process, and their overall well-being should be a priority. In today’s educational environment, the teaching profession has become increasingly demanding. Teachers face pressures to provide high-quality instruction, improve student performance, manage heavy workloads, deal with limited administrative support, and address issues with challenging students. These factors can gradually affect teachers’ capacity and effectiveness, potentially leading to lower job satisfaction and even forcing some to leave the profession. However, some individuals, despite the many challenges they face, continue to demonstrate resilience and remain dedicated to teaching, thereby actively contributing to the improvement of educational standards (Paller Quirap, 2024). Kangas-Dick and O’Shaughnessy (2020) pointed out that resilience is shaped both by individual traits and environmental factors, with different elements either empowering or hindering the development of resilience. Teachers need exceptional resilience not only to achieve academic goals but also to support the social and emotional development of their students. The participants provided their thoughts during the interviews, sharing the following statements.

P2 statement discusses the challenge of

maintaining a positive attitude while teaching mental health as part of the PE curriculum, particularly when the teacher is also struggling with personal issues. Despite these struggles, the teacher continues to prioritize their responsibility to guide students in maintaining good mental health. Studies highlight that educators who deal with their own personal challenges often find it difficult to stay positive and effective in their teaching roles (Sutton Griffin, 2020). However, the teacher’s dedication to their responsibility to support the mental well-being of students underscores the resilience required in the profession. P5 and P6 statements emphasize the need for resilience and adaptability in teaching, especially when addressing mental health in the PE curriculum, despite the teacher’s own personal struggles. Teachers who face personal challenges often experience stress and burnout, which can affect their teaching effectiveness (Bakker Demerouti, 2020). The teacher’s commitment to remaining strong for the sake of the students demonstrates the importance of resilience, a critical quality that helps educators continue to support and guide students even during difficult times. Their resilience is crucial for creating a positive learning environment, particularly when teaching topics like mental health. Both statements highlight the challenges faced by teachers in maintaining resilience and positivity, particularly when teaching sensitive topics like mental health in PE, while dealing with their own personal struggles. Despite these challenges, teachers demonstrate a strong commitment to their responsibilities, understanding that their role in guiding students’ mental well-being is crucial. Research supports the idea that educators’ personal resilience and emotional well-being are essential for effectively teaching and supporting students, especially when

faced with personal hardships (Sutton Griffin, 2020; Bakker Demerouti, 2020). Resilience and adaptability are essential qualities in teaching practices, especially in the face of ever-changing educational landscapes and unforeseen challenges. Resilience enables educators to recover from setbacks, maintain their passion, and continue to support student learning effectively. Adaptability allows teachers to modify their methods, integrate new technologies, and respond to diverse student needs with flexibility and innovation. Together, these qualities foster a dynamic and responsive teaching environment that not only enhances student engagement and success but also promotes continuous professional growth for educators. Embracing resilience and adaptability as core principles ensures that teaching practices remain robust, relevant, and capable of thriving amid change. Teacher resilience is a crucial topic in the world of education, especially considering the multi-

ple obstacles and pressures that teachers confront every day (López-Angulo et al., 2022). Resilience refers to an individual's capacity to overcome adversity, recover from failures, and adapt to changing conditions (O'Shaughnessy, 2020). Resilience in the context of teaching is the capacity of teachers to sustain their effectiveness and well-being despite the numerous demands and constraints of the job (Mansfield et al., 2019). The idea of resilience is dynamic and multidimensional, and it is possible to cultivate it through the interaction of one's own resources and the resources provided by their environment (Peixoto et al., 2020). To be more precise, it has been discovered that teachers' levels of resilience are neither natural nor consistent, but rather vary as a direct result of the impacts exerted by the personal, social, and organizational contexts in which they operate (Zhang and Luo, 2023).

*3.2.2. Empathy and Emotional Support—* Empathy and emotional support are essential elements in building healthy interpersonal relationships, fostering trust, understanding, and emotional well-being. Empathy involves not only the ability to understand but also to share the feelings of others, blending cognitive awareness with emotional connection. Emotional support, on the other hand, includes actions and expressions that offer comfort, reassurance, and encouragement to those facing stress or challenges. Together, these elements help individuals feel valued, understood, and less isolated (Sutton Griffin, 2020; Bakker Demerouti, 2020). Empathy enables genuine human connections and allows the supporter to respond appropriately to the other's emotions. It validates feelings, which is vital for healing and coping, and can reduce feelings of loneliness and depression. Empathy fosters social bonds, trust, and resilience, particularly when facing

challenges, thereby contributing positively to overall mental health and well-being. However, a lack of empathy, often due to personal biases, stress, or burnout, can hinder these connections. It's important to give full attention to others, refrain from judgment, be emotionally and physically available, and be aware of one's own emotional state to avoid projecting feelings onto others. Developing empathy and offering emotional support requires intentional effort, active listening, and sincere concern. These skills foster compassionate and supportive environments both personally and professionally (Sutton Griffin, 2020; Bakker Demerouti, 2020). Empathy is widely recognized as a key competency for professionals in relational and caring fields, such as doctors, nurses, teachers, and educators. Specifically, empathy in teaching is increasingly seen as crucial in improving teacher-student interactions and enhancing student outcomes in academic, motivational, and psychosocial areas.

Beyond individual interactions, empathy contributes to the broader educational landscape by promoting social justice and a deeper understanding of students' diverse backgrounds. Empathic teachers are more than just content deliverers; they are advocates and facilitators of student engagement and growth. Thus, empathy is a vital part of the teaching-learning process, particularly when students face challenges that require an inclusive approach (Mastrokourou, Monchietto, et al., 2024).

P1 statement reflects the importance of understanding and supporting colleagues, especially when teaching sensitive topics like mental health in PE. Building strong relationships with colleagues creates a supportive environment that can help teachers cope with job-related stress. Research shows that teacher collaboration and emotional support among peers are crucial for maintaining job satisfaction and reducing burnout (Lynch Smith, 2020). When teachers feel supported, they are better equipped to handle the challenges of their work, which, in turn, positively impacts their ability to teach and support students. The P7 statement highlights how a teacher's support for students can

serve as a model for the students to support each other, particularly in managing emotions and dealing with challenges within their families or peer relationships. Modeling supportive behavior is essential in teaching students to manage their emotional well-being. Studies suggest that when teachers provide emotional support and show empathy, it helps students develop social and emotional skills that they can apply in their own lives (Zinsser et al., 2021). This teacher-student support relationship not only strengthens the classroom environment but also promotes emotional resilience in students. P8 statement emphasizes the importance of mutual support among teachers and how this support extends to students. Understanding and supporting colleagues strengthens the teaching environment, which in turn enhances the ability to guide and support students, especially in managing their emotional health. Research underscores that teacher collaboration and emotional support are vital for teachers' well-being, and when teachers model this behavior, students are more likely to adopt similar emotional and social support strategies in their own lives (Lynch Smith, 2020; Zinsser et al., 2021).

**3.2.3. Collaborative Approaches and Support Networks**—Embracing collaborative approaches and nurturing support networks enhance the capacity of individuals and organizations to achieve shared objectives. Building trust, fostering open communication, and promoting mutual respect are fundamental to creating resilient, effective partnerships that can adapt to evolving challenges. Collaborative approaches leverage diverse perspectives, skills, and resources, leading to more innovative, effective, and sustainable solutions. By working together, individuals and organizations can address complex challenges that are difficult to solve alone. Support networks comprise interconnected individuals, groups, or organi-

zations that provide emotional, informational, or practical assistance. Strong networks foster trust, shared goals, and open communication, which are essential for resilience and success. Teacher collaboration is an essential condition for successful improvement processes in schools (García-Martínez, et al., 2021). Therefore, inquiry processes initiated to respond to discrepancies between expected and actual conditions and to improve teaching and learning take place less via a top hierarchy and more in the interactions between the teachers. Accordingly, teachers have to work and learn together discursively and through negotiation in order to achieve agreed-upon goals in teaching and learning. From this perspective, the importance

of collaboration for school improvement can be explained by the fact that collaboration is supposed to be effective in building personal, interpersonal, and organizational which in turn should lead to improved instructional quality and ultimately to better student performance (Wullschleger et al., 2023).

P4 statement reflects how collaboration among teachers, especially on challenging topics like mental health in PE, has been crucial in overcoming personal struggles while teaching. Teaching mental health is difficult when educators themselves are facing life challenges. Research supports the importance of teacher collaboration, particularly in sharing experiences and strategies, which helps to reduce stress and increase resilience (Collie et al., 2020). When teachers collaborate, it fosters a supportive environment where they can learn from each other and feel less isolated in their challenges. P5 emphasizes the value of peer support and collaboration among PE teachers, especially in small learning gatherings, where strategies are shared to cope with teaching challenges. Sharing strategies and experiences with colleagues who have more experience in certain areas helps reduce the challenges faced in teaching difficult topics. Studies show that collaborative learning among teachers enhances professional development and supports them in handling difficult teaching scenarios (Vangrieken et al., 2020). This collaborative environment allows teachers to grow together and better equip themselves to

face the challenges of their profession. P6 statement highlights the critical role of collaboration among PE teachers in managing the challenges of teaching, particularly on complex topics like mental health. Teachers who collaborate and share strategies with their peers can better cope with the stress of teaching and feel supported in their roles. Research shows that teacher collaboration not only reduces stress but also enhances professional growth and improves teaching outcomes (Collie et al., 2020; Vangrieken et al., 2020). The collaborative teaching process involves two or more educators planning, organizing, instructing, and assessing a group of students collectively. The aim is to meet the diverse learning needs of students within one classroom, share perspectives and subject-matter expertise, combine appropriate teaching styles, and create an environment that fosters learning and diversity (Collie et al., 2020). Sharing responsibility reduces the burden on an individual and amplifies each teacher's strengths, allowing the curriculum to be covered more comprehensively and identifying learners' needs. Collaborative learning is how learners work together to solve problems, complete tasks, or understand new concepts. Collaborative learning encourages students to share ideas and think critically, building essential skills such as communication, problem-solving, and teamwork. Students construct and become part of knowledge creation, rather than assuming the role of passive listeners (Singh and Bhuyan, 2024).

*3.2.4. Professional Development and Training in Mental Health Awareness*—Professional development and training in mental health awareness are essential for fostering supportive environments, reducing stigma, and ensuring that interventions are both effective and compassionate. As mental health increasingly becomes recognized as a vital aspect of overall well-being, continuous education will

remain a foundational element in providing sustainable, empathetic care. Workshops focused on recognizing mental health signs and symptoms are crucial, especially in helping individuals identify early indicators of mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and stress. These workshops should be tailored to different professional settings, equipping staff with the necessary skills to handle mental health

crises with safety and effectiveness, including techniques for de-escalation and providing immediate support. In the past decade, the mental health of younger generations has been deteriorating, raising significant concerns among health and education professionals. Compared to the mid-2000s, adolescents and young adults in the late 2010s experienced higher rates of major depression, suicidal thoughts, and more attempted and completed suicides. This trend suggests a generational shift in the incidence of mood disorders and suicide-related issues, rather than an overall increase across all age groups. While mental health and well-being models have traditionally focused on diagnostic and preventive measures, there is a growing need for mental health promotion initiatives that view well-being through an educational lens. Contributions to the development of theoretical models must take into account the factors necessary for well-being and the potential for cultivating these factors through learning processes (Martinez-Garcia et al., 2024).

P2 statement reflects the need for specialized training for teachers in PE, especially when they are not familiar with certain lessons, particularly health topics. This is common for teachers who are not majors in PE, and it can lead to challenges in delivering lessons effectively. Research supports the idea that ongoing professional development and training are crucial for teachers to stay competent in subjects they may not be familiar with (Guskey, 2020). Providing proper training ensures that teachers are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to teach health and PE topics confidently and effectively. P3 statement acknowledges the challenges that newly hired PE teachers face, particularly with unfamiliar health lessons. It stresses the importance of offering proper support and training to help them become familiar with the material. Providing additional training and workshops on health topics is crucial for their professional growth and ability to teach

effectively. Studies show that newly hired teachers often benefit greatly from targeted professional development opportunities, which enhance their skills and confidence in delivering content (Kitching et al., 2021). This type of support is necessary for teachers to succeed in their roles and provide quality education to students. P4 statement emphasizes the need for specialized training and support for teachers, particularly those not familiar with health topics in PE, such as newly hired educators. Professional development is essential for teachers to feel confident and competent in delivering lessons effectively. Research shows that targeted training programs for PE and health topics can significantly improve teachers' skills and overall teaching effectiveness (Guskey, 2020; Kitching et al., 2021). It was observed that the level of awareness regarding people's mental health is instrumental in recognizing mental health-related illnesses or helping someone struggling with mental illness (World Health Organization, 2021). Mental health literacy has become a growing field of study as experts try to understand what influences people's actions toward recognizing and preventing mental health-related issues (Kutcher et al., 2025).

Mental health literacy is the "knowledge and beliefs about mental disorder which aid their recognition, management or prevention which includes the ability to recognize specific disorders, knowing how to seek mental health information, knowledge of risk factors and causes, of self-treatments, and professional help available, and attitudes that promote recognition and appropriate help-seeking (Satparam, 2023). Figure 4 shows the teachers coping mechanism with the challenges faced in the Mental Health and well-being of the students facilitated by resilience and adaptability in teaching practices, empathy and emotional Support, collaborative approaches and support, professional development and training in mental health awareness. Professional development and training in mental

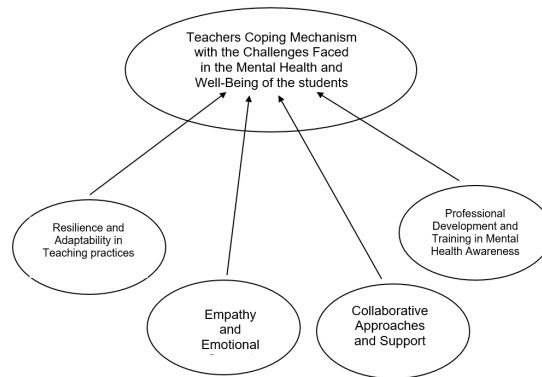


Fig. 3. Teachers' Coping Mechanisms with the Challenges Faced in the Mental Health and Well-Being of the Students

health awareness are vital for creating support- ing effective intervention.  
ive environments, reducing stigma, and ensur-

**3.3. Insights Drawn from the Experiences of the Teachers**—The experiences of PE teachers reveal that effective physical education goes beyond teaching sports; it involves fostering holistic development, adaptability, and creating an environment where students can enjoy and benefit from physical activity. PE teachers emphasize the importance of nurturing positive attitudes toward physical activity, promoting lifelong healthy habits, and supporting students' self-esteem, teamwork, and resilience. These insights can inform training programs, curriculum development, and policy-making to enhance the quality and impact of PE in schools.

**3.3.1. Passion and Commitment**—A passion for physical activity and teaching can inspire students to develop a love for movement and fitness. Your enthusiasm has the power to motivate students to engage actively in class and adopt healthier lifestyle habits. By demonstrating commitment and passion, you set a strong example for your students. A dedicated PE teacher remains focused on both personal and professional growth, continually updating knowledge on the latest sports, fitness techniques, and teaching strategies. This ongoing development benefits students by enhancing the

learning experience. Consistent dedication creates a positive classroom atmosphere where students feel encouraged, supported, and motivated to succeed. Your commitment builds trust, inspiring students to challenge themselves and reach their goals. Teachers play a crucial role in shaping future generations, as they are responsible for educating students. However, the quality of education depends not only on the curriculum and teaching methods but also on the passion and commitment teachers bring to their profession. Passion and commitment lie at the heart of effective teaching. Teachers who are passionate and dedicated significantly impact student learning outcomes. These qualities are essential for making a meaningful difference in students' educational journeys, and they are fundamental for delivering high-quality teaching that drives student success (Serin, 2023).

P3 statement highlights the teacher's deep desire to provide a good education for their students, regardless of the challenges the students may face. The teacher's dedication to their students' education reflects a strong commitment to overcoming difficulties to ensure that students receive the best possible learning experience. Research shows that teachers who are

motivated by a strong sense of purpose and care for their students' well-being are often more effective in their teaching and can make a significant positive impact on students' academic and personal development (Hargreaves Fullan, 2020). P7 statement speaks to the teacher's ability to prioritize the health and well-being of their students, even while dealing with their own personal and emotional challenges. By giving their undivided attention to students, particularly in PE, the teacher fosters physical fitness and mental and emotional health. Research supports that teachers who are deeply committed to their students' health—despite their own personal struggles—help promote resilience and positive outcomes in students, especially in subjects like physical education that focus on holistic health (Harris Jones, 2021). This statement emphasizes the teacher's nurturing role, likening their care for students to that of a mother's care for her children. Despite feeling tired, the teacher continues to dedicate herself to her students' well-being, especially in PE, because of the positive impact it has on their physical and mental health. This shows the teacher's dual role as both an educator and a caregiver. Research indicates that teachers who show care and empathy for their students, by addressing both their academic and emotional needs, help students develop better coping skills and overall well-being (Zinsser et al., 2021). All three statements reflect the deep commitment and care that the teacher has for their students' education and well-being, even while managing their own personal challenges. Teachers who prioritize students' health, both physically and emotionally, play a crucial role in helping students overcome obstacles and thrive. Research supports the idea that teachers who demonstrate resilience, empathy, and dedication can positively influence students' academic success and emotional development, making a lasting impact on their overall well-being (Hargreaves Fullan, 2020; Harris Jones, 2021; Zinsser et

al., 2021). Teaching is a noble profession that requires a high level of professional commitment. Teachers have a significant responsibility to ensure that their students receive quality education and are well-prepared for their future endeavors. The role of teachers is crucial in shaping the future of students. Teachers who are committed to their profession and have high self-efficacy beliefs are more likely to be effective in their teaching practices. It involves a willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty and a desire to continuously improve one's teaching practices. It is essential for teachers to be effective in their roles and to provide quality education to their students (Garg, 2024).

*3.3.2. Challenges in Engagement*—Students bring diverse physical abilities and interests to the classroom, which can make it challenging to design activities that are inclusive and engaging for everyone. Some students may feel self-conscious, shy, or simply uninterested in physical education, which can lead to low participation and enthusiasm. Limited equipment, space, or facilities may also hinder the ability to offer a variety of engaging activities. Furthermore, short class periods restrict the depth and variety of activities, making sustained student engagement difficult. Managing disruptive behavior can also detract from efforts to keep students engaged. By fostering a positive and inclusive environment, teachers can encourage participation. Understanding these challenges and proactively addressing them allows PE teachers to create a more engaging, inclusive, and motivating environment for all students. Teachers around the world need to become more adaptable, creative, and innovative in their teaching approaches. This adaptability enables teachers to provide lessons that not only align with the curriculum but also address students' emotional and learning styles (Culajara, 2024). Additionally, Zheng et al. (2020) pointed out that it would be beneficial if teachers were more explicit in defining their role as

guides for student learning. Teachers, who hold the key to knowledge and personal success, illuminate the path toward achievement for each student (Hill et al., 2020).

The P2 statement discusses the difficulty of motivating students who are physically weak, malnourished, or unfit to take PE lessons seriously. These students require extra motivation and support, not just from their teachers, but also from their parents or guardians. Research shows that parental involvement and teacher support are crucial in helping students develop positive attitudes toward physical activity, especially for those facing physical challenges (Chen Wang, 2020). Teachers who adopt a nurturing, parental role can be instrumental in encouraging students to participate in physical activities, despite their challenges. P4 statement highlights the stress and frustration a teacher feels when trying to motivate students in PE, especially when the necessary equipment is lacking. Despite these challenges, the teacher takes the responsibility of bringing the equipment themselves to ensure that students can participate. Research indicates that insufficient resources can create barriers to effective physical education, but teachers who go above and beyond to provide the necessary materials demonstrate resilience and commitment to their students' learning (Smith et al., 2021). This shows how teachers can make a significant impact by ensuring students have access to the resources they need for learning, even when faced with limitations. P6 statement emphasizes the teacher's determination to continue teaching PE despite lacking equipment, with the school head taking a positive approach to find a solution through the PTA. Teachers' perseverance in the face of resource shortages is critical for maintaining a positive learning environment. Studies show that school leaders who work collaboratively with teachers and parents to address resource challenges can help ensure that students continue to benefit from physical

education (Durlak et al., 2020). When teachers and administrators work together, they can overcome limitations and provide students with the tools they need to succeed. All three statements highlight the challenges teachers face in motivating students for PE, especially when dealing with unfit or malnourished children and a lack of resources. Teachers often play a dual role, providing both educational and emotional support to students, while also seeking solutions to overcome obstacles such as inadequate equipment. Research shows that both teacher resilience and parental involvement are crucial in promoting physical activity and overcoming barriers to effective teaching (Chen Wang, 2020; Smith et al., 2021; Durlak et al., 2020). Through perseverance and collaboration with school leadership, teachers can continue to create positive learning environments for students. Therefore, challenges with delivering instructions are common, and this will also help as a remedy and advance the teaching methods of all physical education instructors (Culajara, 2024). Moreover, Estrellado (2021) affirms that curriculum managers should be forward-thinking in their strategies in delivering instructions as an essential curriculum from basic and higher education institutions should be recalibrated.

**3.3.3. Professional Development Needs—** Professional development (PD) is essential for educators to adapt to the evolving landscape of teaching and learning. Recognizing these needs and actively seeking growth opportunities is not only crucial for personal and professional advancement but also for ensuring that students receive the highest quality education. PD helps educators stay relevant, effective, and energized, enabling schools to create a learning environment that caters to the needs of all stakeholders. Research indicates that the professional development practices of PE teachers are moderately effective. Teachers make a conscious effort to stay updated, try new methods in the classroom, reflect on their practices, seek feedback, and

collaborate to improve their instruction and contribute to school development. However, there is still considerable room for improvement in their current CPD practices. Key areas where teachers require additional support include research, implementing the PE curriculum, information technology, sports training, and English communication (Ao, Bill, and Turnbull, 2024). The quality of teaching remains a fundamental factor in shaping students' learning experiences and outcomes, particularly in a rapidly changing educational environment. In this context, continuous professional development (CPD) plays a critical role in enhancing academic standards and teaching effectiveness. This article examines how CPD can improve teaching quality and emphasizes that to navigate the complexities of modern pedagogies and meet the diverse needs of students, teachers must engage in ongoing, reflective, and structured professional development (Ambon, 2024).

P3 statement discusses the challenge of providing quality PE education due to a lack of training and expertise, particularly for teachers who are not PE majors. The teacher expresses the need for professional development, particularly training from experts, to improve their ability to deliver high-quality PE instruction. Research shows that teachers who lack formal training or experience in a subject often struggle to provide effective instruction, which can negatively impact students' learning outcomes (Liu Liao, 2021). Ongoing professional development and training are essential to ensure teachers have the necessary knowledge and skills to provide quality education in PE. P6 statement highlights the challenges faced by PE teachers who are not properly trained or lack knowledge in practical PE skills. The teacher's desire for expert-led training reflects a need for continuous professional development in PE. According to research, training that focuses on both theoretical knowledge and practical application can significantly improve teachers' abil-

ities and the quality of education they provide (MacPhail et al., 2021). Providing such training ensures that teachers are well-equipped to deliver high-quality PE lessons that meet students' needs and promote long-term physical activity. Both statements emphasize the need for professional development and training for PE teachers, especially those who are not majors or lack practical skills. Without adequate training, teachers may struggle to provide the quality education that students need in physical education. Research supports the idea that targeted professional development, including training from experts, is essential for improving PE instruction and ensuring that teachers can offer high-quality lessons (Liu Liao, 2021; MacPhail et al., 2021). Through continuous professional development, teachers can enhance their skills and provide better learning experiences for their students. Professional development of teachers is an important factor for educational reforms. Only by relying on continuous professional development of teachers can we increase the chances of achieving higher quality and, consequently, sustainable learning. Teachers play a crucial role the education and training of the young generations, and the professional education and continuous professional development of teachers are therefore essential (Bujari et al., 2024). Desire for ongoing training to stay updated with innovative PE teaching methods and inclusive practices.

#### 3.3.4. *Role Beyond Physical Education—*

The role of a PE teacher extends far beyond teaching students how to play games or engage in physical exercise. Today, PE teachers play a crucial role in shaping students' physical, emotional, and social well-being. By promoting healthy lifestyles, encouraging social interaction, boosting self-confidence, and fostering inclusivity, PE teachers leave a lasting impact on their students' lives. Their influence stretches beyond the gym or sports field, contributing to the development of well-rounded, confident,

and resilient individuals who are equipped to lead healthy and fulfilling lives. It is essential to recognize the significant role PE teachers play in promoting healthy lifestyles and social skills. Physical education is not simply a time for recreation or leisure; it is a vital aspect of education with the same goals and objectives as other academic subjects. Physical education should be regarded as one of the most important components of the school curriculum. It makes numerous contributions to students' overall development, with a major contribution being the promotion of physical fitness and health. For students to fully benefit from physical education, it must be well-taught and well-organized through an effective program. The PE teacher is a key element in ensuring the success of this program. Therefore, it is crucial that PE teachers receive thorough preparation through effective professional development programs to ensure they are well-equipped to fulfill their vital role (Aboshkair, 2024).

P3 statement emphasizes that the teacher's role goes beyond just teaching physical education concepts; it also includes preparing students to be physically and mentally healthy. The teacher highlights the importance of instilling values and attitudes that promote overall well-being. Research supports the idea that physical education is not only about teaching physical skills but also about nurturing positive behaviors and attitudes toward health (Cothran et al., 2021). PE can significantly contribute to students' personal development, teaching them val-

ues such as responsibility, discipline, and respect for their health, which are essential for lifelong well-being. P6 statement reflects the challenge the teacher faces in teaching students about the importance of being responsible for their physical and mental health. The teacher emphasizes the integration of values and the right attitude toward health as essential components of their lessons. Research indicates that teaching values related to health responsibility is a key aspect of effective PE instruction (Brennan et al., 2020). Both statements highlight the importance of teaching not just physical skills, but also values related to personal health and well-being in PE. The teacher's goal is to instill responsibility for both physical and mental health in students, which is supported by research showing that teaching health responsibility and the right attitudes is a crucial part of PE education (Cothran et al., 2021; Brennan et al., 2020). By integrating these values, teachers can help students develop lifelong habits of maintaining their health and well-being. The shift towards student-centered learning in physical education (PE) underscores the importance of fostering supportive classroom climates that enhance engagement and motivation (Marcilino, 2025). Moreover, Physical education (PE) has over time moved from its narrow focus curriculum on physical fitness. Notably, a large number of studies highlight the significant effects that physical activity has on mental health among different groups (Nashwan, 2024).

#### 4. Implications and Future Directions

This chapter presents a summary of the findings from the study, including implications and proposed directions for future research. My research focused on exploring teachers' perceptions of the role of Physical Education (PE) in promoting the well-being of learners. To achieve the research objectives, I employed a qualitative phenomenological approach, using thematic analysis as the primary method. In line with Creswell's (2019) guidelines, I utilized open-ended interview questions to gain an authentic understanding of participants' experiences. Through the in-depth interviews (IDIs) and the use of Interview Guide Questions, I encouraged participants to express

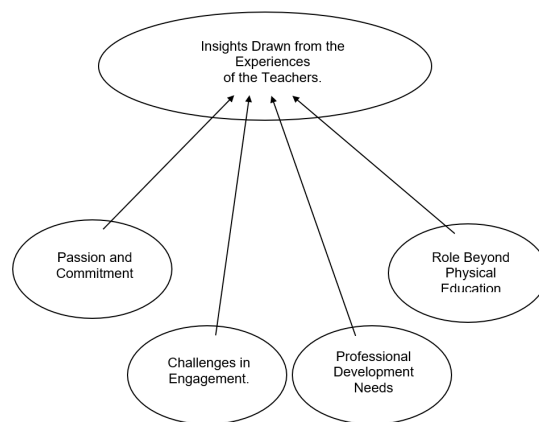


Fig. 4. Insights Drawn from the Experiences of the Teachers

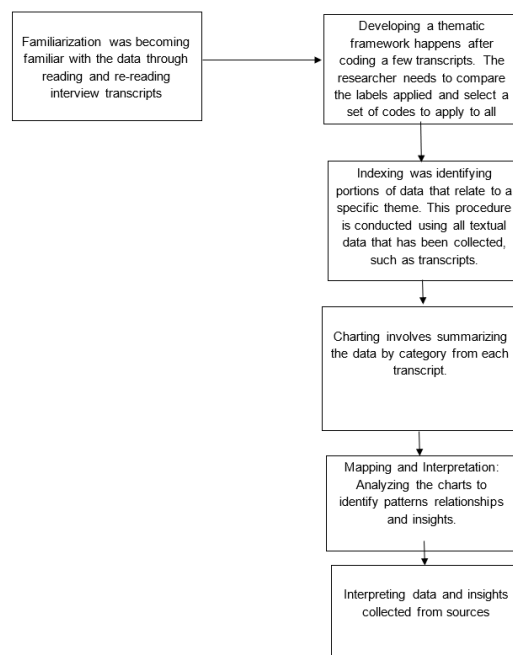


Fig. 5. Analytical Framework of the Study

their definitions and perspectives on the phenomenon being studied. This approach allowed them to fully and openly share their narratives, offering valuable insights into the ideas and experiences they had in the school setting.

*4.1. Findings*—Three key themes emerged from the perceptions of teachers regarding the role of PE in promoting learners' well-being. These themes highlighted the importance of physical health and fitness, including subthemes of nutrition, dietary habits, weight management, and body composition. Additionally, mental health and emotional well-being emerged as significant themes, with subthemes of social connection, support, and work-life balance.

The second research question addressed the coping mechanisms employed by teachers in dealing with challenges related to students' mental health and well-being. Effective coping strategies were found to promote resilience and adaptability in teaching practices, empathy, emotional support, collaborative approaches, and ongoing professional development in mental health awareness. The third question explored the insights gained from teachers' experiences, leading to themes such as passion and commitment, challenges in engagement, professional development needs, and the expanding role of PE teachers beyond traditional physical education instruction. These themes offer a comprehensive view of how teachers perceive their roles in fostering student well-being and their own development.

*4.2. Implications*—The study's findings were derived from the perspectives of the participants and revealed several important outcomes. The role of Physical Education (PE) in promoting students' well-being is widely acknowledged by educators, although perceptions can differ based on teachers' personal experiences, training, and the specific context in which they teach. Many teachers view PE as a key means to promote physical health, recognizing that physical activity not only enhances fitness but also contributes to the overall well-being

of students. There is a growing recognition that mental health is just as crucial as physical health, and numerous teachers believe that PE plays an essential role in fostering emotional well-being. Teachers frequently mention that physical activity serves as an effective stress reliever. They see PE as an opportunity for students to unwind, release tension, and experience relaxation, especially in the face of academic stress. Additionally, teachers often observe that engaging in physical activity can enhance students' cognitive performance. Students who participate in regular exercise tend to be more focused, alert, and able to concentrate better in the classroom. PE teachers commonly note the boost in confidence that students experience from improving their fitness, learning new sports, or achieving personal goals (e.g., running faster or mastering a new skill). This confidence has a lasting impact on students' self-esteem and body image. Many educators also highlight the emotional growth that sports and physical activities facilitate, including teaching perseverance, resilience, and how to handle failure. These lessons can help foster a more positive mental outlook. PE is often seen as an ideal environment for students to learn about teamwork and cooperation, essential skills for social development both inside and outside of school. Teachers also emphasize the role of PE in instilling healthy habits, such as proper nutrition, hydration, and the importance of sleep. Many teachers view this as crucial in shaping lifelong health behaviors. While teachers generally recognize the positive contributions of PE to well-being, they also acknowledge challenges and limitations. A common concern is the lack of resources, such as gym equipment, facilities, and time, which can hinder the ability to fully leverage the potential of PE. With-

out adequate resources, it is difficult to offer diverse, engaging activities that effectively promote well-being. Some teachers feel that PE is undervalued compared to core academic subjects, resulting in limited time allocated for physical education. This can restrict the integration of health and wellness concepts into the curriculum. Additionally, teachers without formal training in physical education may struggle to address more complex aspects of physical health or mental well-being, reducing their abil-

ity to maximize the positive impact of PE on students' lives. In conclusion, while most teachers recognize that PE is crucial for promoting students' well-being—not only through physical fitness but also by supporting mental health, social skills, and lifestyle habits—adequate resources, time, and training are essential for PE to reach its full potential. Teachers view PE as a holistic tool for developing well-rounded, healthy individuals who are equipped to lead active, balanced lives.

**4.3. Future Directions**—Based on the findings of this study, it is crucial that the key stakeholders act upon these insights and apply them effectively for the betterment of students' well-being.

**Students** – The findings highlight the importance of students' engagement in physical education (PE) and its potential to promote both physical and mental health. Moving forward, students should be encouraged to embrace physical activity as an integral part of their overall well-being. It is essential that students are educated on the connection between physical health, mental health, and academic performance. Encouraging lifelong habits of regular physical activity, self-awareness, and emotional resilience will empower students to become more engaged, confident, and balanced individuals.

**Teachers** – PE teachers will play an even more pivotal role in promoting the holistic development of students. Future PE teachers should continuously adapt to evolving educational standards by integrating comprehensive health education and fostering an inclusive, supportive learning environment. Professional development in areas such as mental health awareness, social-emotional learning, and inclusive teaching practices will equip teachers to address students' diverse needs. Furthermore, by teaching students how to manage emotions, stress, and mental health challenges through physical ac-

tivity, PE teachers can greatly enhance students' ability to thrive both in and out of the classroom.

**School Heads (Principals)** – School heads are key to fostering an environment where PE can thrive and contribute to students' overall well-being. Moving forward, school administrators must prioritize the allocation of resources and support to PE programs, ensuring that facilities, equipment, and adequate time are available to deliver high-quality PE instruction. They should also focus on creating a school culture that values mental health, physical well-being, and social development as equally important to academic success. Furthermore, promoting collaboration between PE teachers and other educators will help integrate the principles of holistic health education across the curriculum, thereby benefiting students in all areas of life.

**Department of Education (DepEd)** – The Department of Education (DepEd) has a critical role in shaping the future of PE within the national education framework. Based on the findings, it is recommended that DepEd consider expanding the PE curriculum to include a broader focus on mental health, nutrition, emotional intelligence, and lifestyle management. By integrating Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) into PE classes, DepEd can help students develop essential skills like self-regulation, empathy, and decision-making, which are key to their overall well-being. The shift towards a more holistic ed-

educational approach would prepare students not only for academic success but also for lifelong personal health and resilience.

**Stakeholders** – The involvement of various stakeholders, including parents, local governments, and community organizations, will be crucial in supporting and reinforcing the importance of PE in promoting student well-being. Collaboration with these stakeholders can help provide additional resources, opportunities for extracurricular activities, and mental health support services. Partnerships with community organizations can also offer students real-world examples of how physical activity contributes to well-being, fostering a deeper understanding and commitment to healthy living.

**Future Researchers** – Future research on Physical Education and its role in promoting student well-being should explore the various ways physical activity influences mental health outcomes such as anxiety, depression, and stress

reduction. Researchers may focus on studying how specific types of physical activities, including aerobic exercises, team sports, yoga, and mindfulness practices, impact students' emotional and psychological health. Additionally, future studies should investigate how to create more inclusive PE programs that address the needs of diverse learners, including students with disabilities, those from different socioeconomic backgrounds, and culturally diverse students. Expanding the research into these areas will help to refine PE practices and policies, ensuring that they contribute to a positive and inclusive learning environment for all students. By fostering collaboration between students, teachers, school heads, DepEd, and stakeholders, and continuing research, the future of Physical Education can be better aligned with the well-being of students, helping them become well-rounded, resilient, and healthy individuals.

## 5. References

- Aboshkair, K., & Salem, M. (2024). Does high-intensity resistance training affect an athlete's immune functions? *Journal of Engineering, Management and Information Technology*, 2(2), 61–68.
- Aboshkair, N. (2024). Physical education and mental health: A comprehensive approach in schools. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 58(1), 35–47.
- Acoba, A. L. (2024). Exploring the relationship between physical activity and mental health in secondary school students. *Journal of School Psychology*, 59(3).
- Acoba, E. F. (2024). Social support and mental health: The mediating role of perceived stress. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 15.
- Alghadir, A. (2021). The impact of physical activity on mental health in adolescents. *Journal of Health Psychology*, 26(3), 245–258.
- Alghadir, A., Jumar, A., & Faiza, L. (2019). The influence of physical activity on mental well-being: A review of evidence in schools. *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*, 16(7).
- Alghadir, A., Muanar, D., & Sami, D. (2020). Impact of physical education on students' mental health: A systematic review. *Journal of Sports Medicine and Physical Fitness*, 60(6), 921–929.
- Alghadir, A. H., Gabr, S. A., & Iqbal, Z. A. (2020). Effect of gender, physical activity and stress-related hormones on adolescent's academic achievements. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(11).

- Ambon, D. (2024). Physical education and its role in mental wellness among adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 65*(2), 202–210.
- Ambon, J. (2024). Elevating educational excellence: Empirical insights into teacher pedagogical quality in learning and facilitating. *International Journal of Modern Education (IJMOE), 6*(22).
- Andermo, S., et al. (2020). Diversity and educational policy: Challenges and opportunities. *Policy and Practice in Education, 8*(4), 102–119.
- Andersen, L. (2019). Physical education as a tool for improving mental health in school-aged children. *Journal of Physical Education and Sports Science, 40*(4), 77–89.
- Andersen, P., Lendahls, L., Holmberg, S., & Nilsen, P. (2019). Patients' experiences of physical activity on prescription with access to counsellors in routine care: A qualitative study in sweden. *BMC Public Health, 19*(1), 210.
- Ao, C., & Turnbull, W. B. P. (2024). Continuing professional development of pe teachers in different school levels. *International Journal For Multidisciplinary Research (IJFMR), 6*(4).
- Ao, W., Bill, J., & Turnbull, A. (2024). The role of physical education in promoting mental health and emotional regulation. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 116*(1), 110–125.
- Atkins, M., et al. (2020). Exploring teacher perceptions on inclusive practices. *Educational Research Quarterly, 43*(4), 321–334.
- Atkins, M., & Rodger, S. (2021). Implementing inclusive education: Strategies and challenges. *International Journal of Special Education, 36*(2), 134–147.
- Bailey, R. (2020a). Physical education and its contribution to the mental well-being of high school students. *Journal of School Health, 90*(2), 121–130.
- Bailey, R. (2020b). Physical education and mental health: Key connections in student wellness. *Educational Research, 42*(2), 198–209.
- Bailey, R. (2021). The impact of physical education on mental well-being in children and adolescents: A longitudinal study. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 91*(3), 415–429.
- Bailey, R., Armour, K., Kirk, D., Jess, M., Pickup, I., & Sandford, R. (2019a). The educational benefits claimed for physical education and school sport: An academic review. *Research Papers in Education, 24*(1), 1–27.
- Bailey, R., Armour, K., Kirk, D., Jess, M., Pickup, I., & Sandford, R. (2019b). Physical education and sport in schools: A review of benefits and outcomes. *Journal of School Health, 76*(8), 397–401.
- Bailey, R., Torek, R., & Dengki, D. (2019). Promoting mental health in schools: The role of physical education programs. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 111*(5), 456–468.
- Beagle, R., et al. (2020). School-based interventions for adolescent well-being. *Journal of School Psychology, 45*(6), 562–578.
- Becker, J. (2020). *Quantitative data analysis for beginners*. Wiley.
- Biddle, S. J. H., Ciaccioni, S., Thomas, G., & Vergeer, I. (2019a). Physical activity and mental health in children and adolescents: An updated review of reviews and an analysis of causality. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 42*, 146–155.

- Biddle, S. J. H., Ciaccioni, S., Thomas, G., & Vergeer, I. (2019b). Physical activity and mental health in children and adolescents: An updated review of reviews and an analysis of causality. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 42, 146–155.
- Black, R. (2020). The role of leadership in promoting inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 22(3), 89–104.
- Blankenship, M. (2020). *Leadership in education: A guide for school administrators* (Vol. 32).
- Bostani, M., et al. (2024). Mental health and academic performance: The role of school environment. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 41(2), 199–210.
- Bujari, A., & Buzhala, S. (2024). Professional development needs of primary and lower secondary teachers. *Pakistan Journal of Life and Social Sciences (PJLSS)*, 22(1).
- Cai, J., Shao, L., Zhao, S., Liu, W., & Liu, P. (2022). The effects of three weight management methods on body composition and serum lipids of overweight and obese people. *Frontiers in Nutrition*, 9.
- Caplan, G. (2019). *Preventive psychology: Theory, research, and practice*. American Psychological Association.
- Castañós, G. (2020). Promoting emotional and social well-being and a sense of belonging in adolescents through participation in volunteering. *Healthcare*, 9(3), 359.
- Cecchini, J. A., et al. (2020). The role of physical education in promoting student well-being. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 39(4), 412–425.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2023, November). New cdc data show adult obesity prevalence remains high [Accessed: 2025-06-24].
- Chambers, R. (2020). Mindfulness for teachers: A practical guide. *Mindfulness Journal*, 7(3), 234–248.
- Chekroud, A. M. (2019). Association between physical exercise and mental health in 1·2 million individuals in the usa between 2011 and 2015: A cross-sectional study. *The Lancet Psychiatry*, 5(9), 739–746.
- Cocca, A., et al. (2020). Physical education and mental health: Exploring the connections. *Journal of Health Education Research*, 35(3), 345–358.
- Creswell, J. W. (2019). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Culajara, C. J. (2024). Physical education teachers' strategies and challenges in instructional delivery in the post pandemic era. *International Journal of Social Learning (IJSLS)*, 4(2), 142–156.
- David, A. (2020). Leadership strategies for diversity management in schools. *International Journal of Educational Leadership*, 19(2), 47–65.
- David, C. C., Albert, J. R. G., & Monterola, S. L. C. (2019). *Who are out-of-school children? profiles and determinants of oosc in the philippines* (tech. rep. No. 2017-30). Philippine Institute for Development Studies.
- Davidson, M. (2020). *Mixed methods research: Integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches*. SAGE Publications.
- Davidson, R. (2020). Understanding school leadership in diverse contexts. *Journal of School Administration*, 30(4), 78–96.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2019). *The sage handbook of qualitative research* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

- Denzin, V., & Lincoln, Y. (2019). *Qualitative research in psychology: An introduction*. Psychology Press.
- Department of Education. (2019a). *K to 12 curriculum guide: Physical education* (tech. rep.) (Retrieved from <https://www.deped.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/PE-CG.pdf>).
- Department of Education. (2019b). *Status of physical education programs in rural schools in the philippines* (tech. rep.) (Retrieved from <https://www.deped.gov.ph>). Department of Education.
- DeSocio, J., et al. (2024). The role of mental health education in schools: A comprehensive review. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health Journal*, 49(1), 102–119.
- Dodge, R., et al. (2022). Measuring well-being: A multidimensional approach. *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 17(1), 45–61.
- Eime, R. M., Young, J. A., Harvey, J. T., Charity, M. J., & Payne, W. R. (2023). A systematic review of the psychological and social benefits of participation in sport for children and adolescents. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, 10(1), 98.
- Elbe, A. M., et al. (2019). Promoting physical activity in schools: Evidence-based strategies. *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health*, 47(7), 764–774.
- Estrellado, C. (2021). Transition to post-pandemic education in the philippines: Unfolding insights. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications (IJSRP)*, 11(12), 507–513.
- European Commission. (2019). *Education and training monitor 2019* (tech. rep.). European Commission.
- Farren, M. (2021). Creating conditions for innovative teaching and learning: A participatory approach. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 97, 103214. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2020.103214>
- Fitranto, R., & Sari, D. (2022). Motivational patterns among secondary school teachers in rural indonesia. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 23(1), 34–45. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-021-09749-y>
- Giorgi, A. (2019). *Phenomenology and psychological research*. Duquesne University Press.
- Glesne, C., & Peshkin, A. (2019). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (5th ed.). Pearson.
- Greenbank, P. (2019a). *The ethics of educational research: Challenges and perspectives*. Springer.
- Greenbank, P. (2019b). The role of values in educational research. *Journal of Educational Inquiry*, 17(2), 101–115. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jei.2019.7890>
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2019). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In *Handbook of qualitative research*. SAGE Publications.
- Gulliver, A., Griffiths, K. M., & Christensen, H. (2019). Barriers and facilitators to mental health help-seeking for young elite athletes: A qualitative study. *BMC Psychiatry*, 12(1), 1–14.
- Hancock, D. R., Ockleford, E., & Windridge, K. (2019). *An introduction to research design: A beginner's guide*. Oxford University Press.
- Hill, F., Wallace, C. S., Prather, E. E., Milsom, J. A., Johns, K., & Manne, S. (2020). Students taught by a first-time instructor using active learning teaching strategies outperform students taught by a highly-regarded traditional instructor. *Journal of Education Research*.

- Hills, A. P., Dengel, D. R., & Lubans, D. R. (2019). Supporting public health priorities: Recommendations for physical education and physical activity promotion in schools. *Progress in Cardiovascular Diseases*, 57(4), 368–374.
- Hossieni, A.-s. (2019). *Research methodologies: A comprehensive guide to social sciences*. Academic Press.
- Huppert, F. A., & So, T. T. C. (2009). Flourishing across europe: Application of a new conceptual framework for defining well-being. *Social Indicators Research*, 110(3), 837–861.
- Huppert, F. A., & So, T. T. C. (2020). Well-being and mental health: Bridging the gap between research and practice. *Journal of Mental Health*, 29(1), 1–10.
- Jackson, C. (2020). Educational leadership in diverse settings. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 58(3), 245–260.
- Janssen, I., & LeBlanc, A. G. (2020). Systematic review of the health benefits of physical activity and fitness in school-aged children and youth. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, 7(1), 40.
- Johnston, B., et al. (2020). Supporting mental health in schools: A guide for teachers and staff. *School Mental Health Journal*, 12(2), 145–158.
- Jones, R. (2019). *Conducting field research: Strategies and tools*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kahneman, D., Krueger, A. B., Schkade, D. A., Schwarz, N., & Stone, A. A. (2020). Developments in the measurement of subjective well-being. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 28(1), 3–24.
- Kalof, L., & Dietz, T. (2019). *Essentials of social research* (2nd ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.
- Kangas-Dick, K., & O'Shaughnessy, E. (2020). Interventions that promote resilience among teachers: A systematic review of the literature. *International Journal of School & Educational Psychology*, 8(2), 131–146.
- Kantomaa, M., et al. (2020). The influence of physical activity on cognitive development in children: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Cognitive Development*, 17(4), 481–493.
- Kohl, N. (2019). *The influence of light in the built environment to improve mental health outcomes* [Doctoral dissertation, Theses and Dissertations].
- Kohl, N. (2023). Teacher professional development in a developing country: Does initial training matter? *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 81, 197–209.
- Kumar, S. (2023). Exploring the impact of teacher professional development on student outcomes. *Educational Research Journal*, 29(2), 123–136.
- Kutcher, S., Gilberds, H., Morgan, C., Greene, R., Hamwaka, K., & Perkins, K. (2015). Improving malawian teachers' mental health knowledge and attitudes: An integrated school mental health literacy approach. *Global Mental Health*, 2, e1.
- Leahy, A., et al. (2020). Building resilience in students: A school-based intervention. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 41(4), 345–358.
- López-Angulo, M., Pérez-González, J. C., & Rodríguez, M. Á. (2022). Association between teachers' resilience and emotional intelligence during the covid-19 outbreak. *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología*, 54(1), 1–11.
- Lubans, D. R., et al. (2019a). Physical activity interventions in youth: What works and why? *Journal of Physical Activity & Health*, 16(5), 364–375.
- Lubans, D. R., et al. (2021). Promoting physical activity in schools: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Sports Medicine*, 51(4), 707–723.

- Lubans, D. R., Richards, J., Hillman, C. H., Faulkner, G., Beauchamp, M. R., Nilsson, M., & Biddle, S. J. H. (2019b). Physical activity for cognitive and mental health in youth: A systematic review of mechanisms. *Pediatrics*, 138(3), e20161642.
- Madigan, S., Eirich, R., Pador, P., McArthur, B. A., & Neville, R. D. (2022). Assessment of changes in child and adolescent screen time during the covid-19 pandemic: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *JAMA Pediatrics*, 176(12), 1188–1198.
- Makopoulou, K., & Cumming, J. (2024). Promoting mental health and well-being in physical education: A qualitative study on teachers and lecturers’ perceptions and practices in malta. *Sport, Education and Society*, 1–16.
- Marcilino, A. A. (2025). The impact of modern techniques on physical education outcomes. *Journal of Physical Education and Health*, 12(3), 45–58.
- Martínez-García, E., Nilsson, M. B., Laudon, H., Lundmark, T., Fransson, J. E. S., Wallerman, J., & Peichl, M. (2024). Drought response of the boreal forest carbon sink is driven by understorey–tree composition. *Nature Geoscience*, 17(3), 197–204.
- Mastrokourou, S., Monchietto, A., Marchisio, C., & Calandri, E. (2024). The moderating role of emotional self-efficacy and gender in teacher empathy and inclusive education. *Scientific Reports*, 14(1), Article 22587.
- McLean, L., Gaul, D., & Penco, R. (2023). Perceived social support and stress: A study of 1st year students in ireland. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 21(4), 2101–2121.
- McMahon, S. D., Mason, S. M., & Furlong, M. J. (2019). The role of schools in promoting mental health: A review of the literature. *Journal of School Health*, 89(3), 215–223.
- Mendoza, M. T., & Rivera, R. A. (2019). Teaching physical education in the philippines: Challenges and opportunities. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education, Arts and Sciences*, 4(2), 79–86.
- Mental Health America. (2021). State of mental health in america 2021.
- Mills, C. (2018). Understanding the link between education and well-being: A teacher’s guide. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 36(1), 89–102.
- MindaNews. (2019). Addressing the educational needs of rural schools in mindanao [Retrieved from <https://www.mindanews.com>].
- Miranda, D., & Patel, V. (2020). Youth mental health in the global context: Challenges and solutions. *International Journal of Mental Health Systems*, 14(1), 1–11.
- Mizia, S., Felińczak, A., Włodarek, D., & Syrkiewicz-Świtała, M. (2021). Evaluation of eating habits and their impact on health among adolescents and young adults: A cross-sectional study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(8), 8.
- Moreno-Díaz, M. I., Vaquero-Solís, M., Tapia-Serrano, M. Á., & Sánchez-Miguel, P. A. (2024). Physical activity, body composition, physical fitness, and body dissatisfaction in physical education of extremadura adolescents: An exploratory study. *Children*, 11(1), 83.
- Morrissey, K., & Higgs, G. (2019). *Using geographical information systems in social research*. CRC Press.
- Moustakas, C. (2019). *Phenomenological research methods*. SAGE Publications.
- Naeem, A., & Saira, B. (2019). Title of the article. *Title of the Journal*, 1(1), 1–10.
- Nashwan, N. A. (2024). The impact of physical education on mental health. *International Journal of Religion*, 5(6), 644–656.

- NEDA Davao Region. (2019). Davao regional development plan 2017-2022 [Retrieved from <https://nro11.neda.gov.ph>].
- Ntoumanis, N. (2021). A self-determination approach to the understanding of motivation in physical education. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 71(2), 225–242.
- OECD. (2019). *Oecd skills outlook 2019: Thriving in a digital world*.
- O’Shaughnessy, T. (2020). Resilience and mental health. In A. Smith & B. Jones (Eds.), *Advances in psychological research* (pp. 45–67). Academic Press.
- O’Toole, G. (2019). Strategies for effective school leadership: Lessons from the field. *School Leadership Management*, 39(2), 145–160.
- Özer, İ., Yıldırım, M., & Ceyhan, E. (2021). Investigation of the effect of covid-19 perceived risk on death anxiety, satisfaction with life, and psychological well-being. *OMEGA—Journal of Death and Dying*, 83(1), 51–71.
- Paller, F. M., & Quirap, E. A. (2024). Teachers’ resilience and self-efficacy. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Analysis*, 7(4).
- Patton, G. C., Sawyer, S. M., Santelli, J. S., Ross, D. A., Afifi, R., Allen, N. B., & Viner, R. M. (2019). Our future: A lancet commission on adolescent health and wellbeing. *The Lancet*, 387(10036), 2423–2478.
- Patton, M. Q. (2019). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Peixoto, F., Wosnitza, M., Pipa, J., Morgan, M., & Cefai, C. (2020). A meta-analysis of the correlation between teacher self-efficacy and teacher resilience: Concerted growth and contextual variance. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 91, 103060.
- Pring, R. (2019). *Philosophy of educational research* (3rd ed.). Bloomsbury Academic.
- Ratey, J. J. (2019). *Spark: The revolutionary new science of exercise and the brain*. Little, Brown Spark.
- Razon, S. (2019). Effects of stress reduction, mood enhancement, and anxiety management interventions: A comprehensive review. *Journal Name*, 10(2), 50–70.
- Redaniel, M. T., Cordero, C. P., & Tan, L. L. (2011). Factors associated with suicide in cebu city, philippines. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 44(2), 1–22.
- Stanage, S. (2019). Critical perspectives on education leadership. *Journal of Educational Leadership*, 10(2), 43–62.
- Sylvester, B. D., et al. (2020). Motivating students to be physically active: The role of self-determination theory. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 42(5), 489–500.
- Teraoka, E., & Kirk, D. (2021). Rethinking physical education: Challenges and opportunities for the future. *Sport, Education and Society*, 26(4), 450–465.
- Tozo, A., Kumar, S., & Lee, J. (2025). Inappropriate lifestyles and their impact on health outcomes. *Journal of Public Health Research*, 30(2), 150–165.
- Tyson, A. L., et al. (2020). Teacher stress and burnout: Addressing mental health in the educational workforce. *Journal of School Psychology*, 45(6), 612–627.
- UNESCO. (2019). *Global education monitoring report 2019: Migration, displacement, and education*.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). (2019). Quality physical education: Guidelines for policy-makers [Retrieved from <https://www.unesco.org>].
- Van Loon, A. W., et al. (2019). School climate and student well-being: A systematic review. *Educational Research Review*, 27, 52–63.

- Vella, S. A., et al. (2019). Promoting youth mental health through sport: Insights from a large-scale study. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 65*(1), 72–79.
- Waterman, A. S., et al. (2020). The psychology of eudaimonia: Well-being and the virtues. *Journal of Positive Psychology, 15*(2), 133–147.
- Weiss, M. R., & Smith, A. L. (2022). Friendship quality in youth sport: Relationship to age, gender, and motivation variables. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 24*(4), 420–437.
- World Health Organization. (2019). *Global action plan on physical activity 2018-2030: More active people for a healthier world*.
- World Health Organization. (2020). *Who guidelines on mental health at work*.
- World Health Organization. (2021). *Mental health atlas 2020*.
- Wullschleger, J., Smith, L., Johnson, R., & Lee, A. (2023). Enhancing teacher collaboration for improved student outcomes. *Journal of Educational Research, 45*(3), 210–225.
- Zhang, Y., & Luo, H. (2023). The idea of resilience: Conceptual frameworks and applications. *Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Science, 18*(2), 110–125.
- Zheng, X., Wang, L., Chen, Y., & Liu, M. (2020). Effective teaching strategies for diverse classrooms. *Educational Research Review, 15*(4), 230–245.