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Physical Education Curriculum Implementation Using Hyflex Learning Modality in the New Normal

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ABSTRACT

SDG 2030 Goal No. 3 highlights the importance of good health and well-being. The promotion of this goal cannot be fully realized in basic education without paying attention to physical education. The purpose of this study is to explore the implementation of the physical education curriculum using the hyflex learning modality. This study utilized a qualitative research method using a case study analysis employing focus group interviews. Purposive sampling was used to identify the participants in the study. Hyflex served as a practical modality for teachers to become efficient in responding to the context of the school. There were several opportunities observed such as accessibility and flexibility of class sessions and familiarity on the use of technology. However, challenges were also observed in technological resources, assessment and monitoring of online distance learners (ODLs), and equity and equality in learning needs. The hyflex learning modality is a practical guide for curriculum innovations in physical education and a practical modality in times of disasters or pandemic.

Keywords: distance learning, hyflex learning modality, new normal, physical education

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic created a big impact not just on the global economy but also on the delivery of education in many countries. For many education leaders, the pandemic brought several challenges in the delivery of quality education beyond the demands of pedagogy, instruction, as well as technological resources (Ibanez, 2022). Moreso, the pandemic presented significant difficulties for physical education classes which include the need to modify physical activities to accommodate social distancing and virtual platforms, coupled with the difficulty of maintaining student motivation and physical fitness. Physical distancing was a defining feature of the pandemic, and it has been claimed that this could threaten the unique identity of physical education (Varea & González-Calvo, 2021; González-Calvo et al., 2022).

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2015) emphasized that every human being has the fundamental right of access to physical education and sport, which are essential for the full development of his personality. It is therefore crucial that no matter the circumstance, educational institutions should equally give importance to the integration of physical education into learning environments, ensuring that it remains a core component of the curriculum. This commitment ensures that all students, regardless of external challenges such as COVID-19, continue to benefit from the physical, emotional, and social advantages provided by regular physical activity and sports participation.

However, the challenge to ensuring delivery of quality and equitable physical education during the pandemic remains true. Physical education teachers across different countries and educational institutions have echoed their difficulties in teaching physical education due to certain limitations brought about by the pandemic.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the Philippines, physical education teachers have reported to have concerns on the delivery of physical education instruction and assessment due to lack of technological resources (Belleza et. al, 2021), difficulty in adapting to new pedagogical strategies (Ibanez, 2022), struggle to translate and transfer skills due to mobility-restrictive measures (Monte & Buan, 2021). Similarly, physical education teachers in Brazil found difficulty in complying with pedagogical guidelines set forth by their educational authorities and preparing content for physical education and the use of digital technologies for communication and information (Silva et al., 2021). In the study of Varea and González-Calvo (2021), physical education teachers from Argentina, Spain, and Sweden have shared their

takeaways on teaching physical education during the pandemic which include tailoring the curriculum to adapt to the current needs and context of the students, taking into consideration the limitations in resources and becoming responsible to tasks beyond teaching. On the other hand, in China, the pandemic catalyzed a multifaceted intervention that effectively normalized and promoted home-based fitness, leading to a significant enhancement in the healthy development of students (Li & Cheong, 2022).

The role of physical education in promoting physical activity, healthy habits, and overall well-being among students is critical. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 emphasized the importance of good health and well-being (SDG 3), quality education (SDG 4) and industries, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9). Physical education classes are integral to achieving these goals, as they not only foster physical fitness and healthy lifestyles, but also contribute to the holistic development of students. By incorporating structured physical activities into the educational experience, schools support students' physical health, mental well-being (Rodriguez-Aylon et al., 2019), and academic performance (Mavilidi et al., 2020), thereby advancing both SDGs simultaneously. The use of advanced technologies in teaching physical education also contributes to sustainable and resilient teaching practices. Consequently, the goal of this study is to inform educational institutions on how these SDGs can be achieved through the lens of physical education in the context of the new normal.

One of the major factors that physical education teachers need to consider in delivering lessons in the new normal is the utilization of technology. During the pandemic, technology has evidently made learning possible to continue despite restrictions. And while we are slowly returning to the new normal, it is also true that digital learning will continue to be a part of the present norm, which the connectivism learning theory supports and is the theoretical anchor of this study. Connectivism is a contemporary learning theory that presents technology as one of the major tools in the learning process (Siemens, 2004; Downes, 2005). Connectivism views learning in a network (Siemens, 2004; Downes, 2005) which means that learning is derived from connections and meaning-making between a network of communities. This supports the occurrence of meaningful teaching and learning through digital channels and, in each educational context, learning management systems. Still, it is important to note that technology here is not an end but only a tool to maximize learning in the new normal (Carstens, 2021).

Hybrid flexible (Hyflex) is a learning modality that makes connectivism learning theory possible. Hyflex combines blended learning in a flexible course structure that allows students to attend either in-person sessions in the classroom and online sessions, or both (National Education Association (NEA, 2021). This modality is characterized by synchronous and asynchronous sessions. The former

allows the learner to participate in real-time face-to-face or online classes while the latter allows students to learn at their own time, place, and pace. In both modalities, learning is assisted by digital technology. Learning management systems (LMS) and video conferencing platforms are used to deliver instruction.

Lohmann et al. (2021) suggested that hyflex teachers must provide simultaneous and engaging activities to both in-person and online learners and prepare contingency plans for when technology glitches. To support this, teachers must design supplementary activities with the help of web-based interactive learning tools, especially for online learners whose learning relies mostly by means of technology. Moreover, partnership with parents and/or guardians of online learners is also seen as an important mechanism in ensuring the participation of these learners (Garbe et al., 2020). With all these, it is clear that there is a need for careful planning in the development of the physical education curriculum and its implementation in the new normal.

Previous studies have shown how physical education is implemented during the pandemic and revealed the struggles of physical education teachers in delivering the course remotely. However, there is not much study to reveal how physical education is implemented using hyflex learning modality. Hence, this study sought to determine how the physical education curriculum is implemented in the new normal where hyflex learning modality is employed and look at the challenges and opportunities of the implementation through the lens of basic education physical education teachers. Specifically, this study answers the following questions:

1. What are the teaching practices of physical education teachers using hyflex learning modality in the new normal?
2. What are the challenges and opportunities in the implementation of physical education using hyflex learning modality in the new normal?
3. How do teachers respond to the challenges in the implementation of physical education using hyflex learning modality in the new normal?

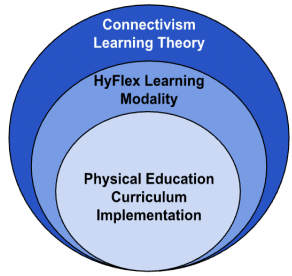

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

Curriculum implementation can be defined as the process of translating written curriculum into practice (Owusu, 2009). The learning modality, though sometimes overlooked, plays an important factor when implementing the curriculum. This study is focused on the context of physical education curriculum implementation using hyflex teaching and learning modality. Teaching practices and learning experiences are designed to suit this modality. Furthermore, hyflex is essentially supported by technology. Connectivism learning theory presents learning in the digital age (Siemens, 2008, as cited in Kropf, 2013). As such, teaching and learning can be facilitated with the use of internet technologies, social networks, and learning management systems, among others. In light of this new learning modality, teaching practices and challenges were identified in order to improve the implementation of physical education.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study utilized a qualitative case study design. This approach is most appropriate for this study because it enabled the researcher to gain in-depth exploration of the nuanced experiences, perceptions, and contextual insights of the participants. The detailed accounts of their experiences including their emotions and reflections helped the researcher to realize the goals of this study. Furthermore, this approach offers invaluable data that will help inform both theoretical understanding and practical implementation of the hyflex learning modality.

An in-depth analysis was conducted by the researcher to obtain multiple data sources such as interviews, written documents, and direct observation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). It explored the teaching practices, opportunities, and challenges of physical education teachers employing hyflex learning modality during the pandemic and the transition to post-pandemic. The participants of this study who were purposively selected were six (6) junior high school physical education (PE) teachers from a private institution in Zamboanga City, Philippines. The participants were selected based on the following criteria:

a. They must be currently employed as a physical education teacher.
b. They must have at least one semester of experience in teaching physical education using hyflex learning modality.
c. They must be based in the same geographical location to ensure that findings are contextually relevant.
d. They should represent diverse teaching experiences (in terms of grade level and number of years in service) to provide a comprehensive perspective and ideas on the use of the hyflex learning modality.

A semi-structured focused-group interview (FGI) via Google Meet was conducted to obtain the viewpoints of the teachers. Due to the geographical distance between the researcher and the participants, conducting the data collection online was the most feasible and practical option. A set of researcher-written interview questions were reviewed and validated by a pool of experts in the field of physical education and curriculum to ensure the efficacy of the interview questions. Permission letters to allow the conduct of the research were then sent to the school principal and the department chairperson. Furthermore, the participants were asked to voluntarily sign an Informed Consent Form to assure them of the confidentiality of their identity in the presentation of the results. To protect their identity, their responses were coded such as T1 for Teacher 1.

The virtual FGI was audiotaped, transcribed, and translated into English to capture and communicate the nuisances and subtleties of the FGI. Thematic analysis was utilized to analyze the transcript of the discussion. According to Braun and Clark (2006), this analysis is used to identify, organize, and provide insights into themes. The researcher familiarized the data and coded significant responses. To analyze the data conceptually, the key themes of the analysis related to the participants' experiences and the purpose of the study were examined. Analytically, these themes were systematically coded and categorized to understand the underlying insights and relationships, providing a detailed interpretation of the data. To ensure the credibility of the findings, the participants were involved in reviewing and validating the accuracy of the findings and interpretations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Teaching Practices of Physical Education Teachers Using HyFlex Learning Modality

The new learning modality calls for innovative teaching and learning delivery of instruction in physical education. Below are the teaching practices employed by physical education teachers with hyflex as the learning modality.

1.1 Team Teaching

Team teaching is described as a collaborative strategy that involves two or more teachers in delivering instruction. Sweigart and Landrum (2015) defined team teaching as a responsibility shared by teachers in areas such as assessment, instruction, and managing student behavior. In the case of the participants, they mutually shared the positive impact of team teaching in the delivery of their instruction. It provided them an opportunity to learn from a colleague and made teaching more efficient, especially in the new learning modality. This is evident in the shared tasks wherein one teacher supervises instruction while the other

oversees the management of students' tasks and performances. Furthermore, this practice is reflected in the development of their curriculum and also in their instruction, particularly in the actual teaching and classroom management. To quote the participants' responses,

"*This strategy is helpful because I get to learn from a colleague especially in topics that are not my expertise.*" [Teacher 1]

"*Team teaching also made classroom management easier because I get to share this task with a colleague."* [Teacher 4]

A study by Cordie et al. (2020) supported the benefits of team teaching as it is proven to develop strategic collaboration and maintain a conducive learning environment among teachers. Moreover, this collaborative teaching strategy also supports productivity as it maximizes the strength and expertise of a teacher, and acknowledges one's capabilities and areas for growth, thereby creating a more harmonious relationship in the workplace (Beninghof, 2020).

1.2 Teaching with Technology

Technology is continuously reshaping our educational landscape. For decades, it has been an aid in creating a more interactive and efficient learning environment through the use of emerging educational technologies. It has only been further institutionalized in the Philippines when COVID-19 forced technology to be adapted as a platform to deliver learning in a more flexible setup. The hyflex learning modality requires the use of technology, further combining blended learning in a flexible course structure that allows students to attend either in-person sessions in the classroom and online sessions or both. Therefore, technology in this learning modality serves as a bridge between teachers and both online and in-person students. However, the use of technology should be carefully integrated into the teaching and learning process as it is crucial to the success of students' learning (Haleem et al., 2022).

As for the participants' experience, they mentioned the essence of undergoing pedagogical and technological workshops in preparation for the said learning modality. A month-long intensive training and workshop was provided by the school administration to help the teachers become more adept at using various educational technologies. Part of their training included curriculum mapping, lesson planning, as well as maximizing educational technologies responsive to the modality. It also included a discussion and hands-on simulation on the use of the school's Learning Management System (LMS). Additionally, they were taught how to navigate online and offline instructional and assessment tools that will help enhance the teaching-learning experiences of the students. According to them:

"We were given training and seminars in preparation for the new modality." [T4]

"Our training sessions also provided us lists of online and offline assessment tools and applications that will help us design a better learning experience especially for our online learners. [T5]
"…we were also taught how eclass (Learning Management System) works as our main (digital instructional) tool." [T2]

A learning management system (LMS) is a tool that provides an avenue for organizing class contents, activities, and assessments (Aldiab et al., 2019). It can provide data for analyzing the learning progress of the students (Saiz-Manzanares et al., 2021). The use of an LMS should be intentional in the sense that teachers must be able to utilize it to benefit both in-person and online students (Sleeman et al., 2020).

In the hyflex learning modality, technology also plays a significant role in communication, especially between teachers and online distance learners (ODLs). ODLs are bonafide students of the school who reside outside of the city or country and only attend online classes. Particularly, the use of social media platforms helped with establishing constant communication with the students. Messenger group chat was the primary form of communication between teachers, learners, and parents. The teachers have also initiated to get the contact number of the parents as an additional option for communication. Further, advanced technology also facilitated collaboration among students allowing them to work together on tasks even if they are not in the same physical location. Participants shared,

"...because of emerging technologies, communicating with students, especially ODLs, is becoming more efficient." [T6]
"Despite the distance and the time difference, we were also able to establish a rapport with the parents and guardians of our online learners… collaboration and communication with them are very essential as they help us, the teachers, monitor the progress of their own children." [T3]

Emerging communication technology enables teachers and students to maintain ongoing communication beyond the traditional classroom setting, fostering new environments for teaching and learning (Sleeman et al., 2020). According to Bello et al. (2022), the use of such platforms as a tool for communication in online or blended classrooms enables collaborative learning through resource sharing, idea discussion, and project collaboration within and outside the classroom.

1.3 Adherence to Health Protocols

The new normal "back to school" campaign imposed health protocols, which included wearing face masks, observing physical distancing, prohibition eating in groups, and providing psychosocial support to learners, among others

(Deped Order No. 34, s. 2022). The participants agreed that these health protocols, though clearly promoting safety for all, have made the delivery of physical education classes more challenging. Physical education requires active engagement in performance, sport, and/or play. To navigate this, the participants had to be strategic in their approaches. Prior to the start of the school year, students were required to get a vaccine to be enrolled. The use of facemasks, however, was not imposed because students echoed their concern about difficulty in breathing when doing physical activities while wearing them. To avoid close physical contact among students, they focused more on individual physical activities. Team teaching also helped ensure that students maintained an appropriate distance from one another. In a class, one teacher is assigned to instruction while the other is tasked with classroom management. Moreover, the students were also asked to bring their own hygiene kit every day which included alcohol, an extra towel and shirt, their own drinking water, and a set of eating utensils. According to one of the participants,

> *"Our PE is done in an open area, in the lobby or open field, so wearing face masks is not mandatory as it affects breathing and performance of students. Instead, we ask them to observe social distancing, bring their own hygiene kit which includes alcohol, extra towel and shirt, and own bottle of water"* [T3]

In the study conducted by Fikenzer et al. (2020), the use of face masks during exercise negatively affected performance in physical activities because it is perceived to block power output and lessen oxygen intake. With these, the use of face masks during PE classes may not be required. Soap, water, alcohol, and hand sanitizers should be made available at all times to venues for physical education classes. Furthermore, teachers should measure the temperature of all students before allowing them to join their classes and maintain a high level of hygiene (World Health Organization [WHO], 2020).

2. Challenges in the Implementation of Physical Education Curriculum Using HyFlex Learning Modality

The teachers have identified several challenges in the implementation of the physical education curriculum using hyflex learning modality, namely: (1) limited technological resources, (2) monitoring of online distance learners, and (3) equity and equality in learning. The teachers expressed their concern that their available technological resources including hardware, software and internet connectivity were insufficient to maximize the use of hyflex effectively. Monitoring of online distance learners, specifically those in different time zones, added another responsibility on the part of the teacher as it required adjustments to accommodate varying schedules and ensure that these learners receive timely feedback and support. Lastly, teachers found it difficult to address equity and

equality in learning materials and facilities in the school due to the limited appropriate technology.

2.1 Limited Technological Resources and Facilities

Hyflex learning modality calls for more than just a laptop as a tool in supporting learning. According to Beatty (2022), a hyflex classroom needs at least a two-way audio stream such as wall-mounted or ceiling speakers, a widescreen monitor that supports incoming views of online distance learners, a "PTZ" (pan, tilt, zoom) camera that allows video streaming from inside the classroom, and interactive educational technologies that will allow both online and in-person learners engage better in classroom activities. However, this is not the case for the participants. The classrooms have insufficient hyflex set up. In fact, the teachers strategized to mimic a hyflex classroom using their available technologies. To broadcast audio and video to online distance learners (ODLs), two devices were used: a laptop and a mobile phone. The laptop recorded in-person classroom activities, allowing ODLs to view the events occurring in the physical classroom. Meanwhile, the mobile phone, held by the teacher, facilitated the transmission and reception of audio between the teacher and ODLs. Both devices were connected to Google Meet, a video conferencing platform, to support these interactions. One participant shared,

> *"...should hyflex still be implemented in the next (school year), I hope the school can invest in technologies because what we currently have cannot support a seamless hyflex PE class."* [T6]

The same challenge can be observed in other schools in the Philippines that employed the hyflex learning modality. In Zambales, the study of Mobo and Garcia (2023) revealed that the lack of appropriate devices was an issue in the modality. Similarly, teachers in Baguio were challenged by technical difficulties, limited interaction, implementing group activities, facilitation and classroom management surveillance and monitoring, lack of training, utilizing traditional tools, and laborious set-up (Kodangos et al., 2023).

The participants also reported facing a challenge with internet connectivity. Limited classrooms in the school have strong internet access. Physical education classes were held at the school's lobby and open field. These areas were reported to have intermittent internet connectivity. Teachers had to bring their pocket wifi and cellular data so that they could still provide online synchronous sessions with the online distance learners. Additionally, the participants reported that local internet service providers sometimes provide strong internet connection access to their users. As shared by one participant,

> *"It is hard to conduct PE classes with the modality because not all areas at school like the lobby and the field have strong internet connection."* [T5]

One of the key elements in the successful implementation of hyflex learning modality lies in a consistently strong internet connectivity. According to Ookla (2023), a global internet testing firm, the Philippines' world ranking in April of 2023 rose to 42nd in fixed broadband internet with 92.09 Mbps download speed and 86th in mobile with 25.27 Mbps in download speed. Despite significant improvement in internet speed, the participants, and recent studies of Manalo et al. (2022), Bahinting et al. (2022), Ibañez (2022), Aguinaldo (2021), and Belleza et al. (2021), still account for internet connection as one of the challenges in the Philippines in delivering learning online especially at the peak of COVID-19 pandemic.

2.2. Assessment and Monitoring of Performance Tasks and Examinations for Online Distance Learners (ODLs)

According to the participants, since the beginning of the school year 2022-2023, the school has catered to Online Distance Learners (ODLs). These learners are bonafide students of the institution who are residing abroad (i.e. Saudi Arabia and the United States of America) and unable to attend in-person classes; therefore, only attend classes online. In the case of physical education, a participant who caters to ODLs shared that he allotted time beyond classroom hours, usually at night or during weekends, to teach these learners because most of them have a different time zone. While this responds to the goal of promoting accessible education, it also added an extra task to teachers who are assigned to these learners as they had to double their preparation and teaching time. Teachers had to manage asynchronous interactions, coordinate individualized instruction with ODLs beyond the prescribed class schedule, and maintain consistent communication across diverse time zones here and abroad, all of which increased their workload and complexity in delivering effective instruction. Two of the participants shared in frustration:

> *"I really hope there are no more ODLs next year because it's tiring.*" [T2]
> "*...during the making of the output we are not that 100% sure if it is really the student who did it because we can't see it face-to-face.*" [T5]

To lessen the burden on the teachers' part, the participants suggested that if this continues, there should be an additional merit or a reduction in the teaching load. Furthermore, studies by Maxwell (2021) and Detyna et al. (2022) suggested that teacher training must introduce new pedagogical approaches and teaching and assessment strategies and implement new structures to lessen teacher's cognitive load. In addition, training on wellness for teachers is imperative. This must be part of the agenda in the next summer or in-service training program for teachers.

2.3. Issue on Equity and Equality in Learning

Equity is defined as providing different levels of support, learning resources, and opportunities. In the hyflex modality, this could mean that teachers need to recognize the unique needs and circumstances of their students and adjust support accordingly. Equality, on the other hand, is described as providing equal support and opportunities to the students. In hyperflex modality, this could mean that all learners, regardless of their chosen modality - online or in-person, be given equal and balanced access to content, learning experiences, and assessment, among others, to achieve equivalent learning outcomes (Binnewies & Wang, 2019).

The teachers mentioned that it was challenging to effectively manage and engage both in-person and online distance learners simultaneously, which led to a disparity in the quality of instruction and interaction. Additionally, limited appropriate technology also contributed to this challenge especially on the part of the teacher. There were instances where teachers exerted extra effort to engage online distance learners in synchronous classes and activities because of intermittent or complete loss of internet connectivity. Disconnection often resulted in disruption of classes that hindered real-time communication and participation, making it difficult for these learners to stay involved and follow the class content effectively. It was only when they started to practice team teaching and assigning student assistants (class beadle) that they were able to address these concerns. However, these experiences of both teachers and students are good learning opportunities for the school to improve technological facilities and infrastructure. They said:

> *"It's very hard for us, teachers, to give our full attention to our students who are attending face-to-face and online… especially during actual PE activities."* [T1]
>
> *"I am worried that there may be times where I have neglected my face-to-face students in order to cater online learners and vice versa."* [T2]

3. Teachers' Responses to the Challenges in the Implementation of PE using Hyflex Learning Modality

3.1. On Limited Technological Resources and Facilities

In order to address the issue of limited appropriate technological resources, the participants collectively shared their initiatives in delivering learning despite using the said learning modality. In transmitting audio and video to ODLs, two devices were utilized, a laptop and a mobile phone. The former is used to record in-person classroom activities so that ODLs can still be able to witness what is happening in the physical classroom. The latter is handheld by the teacher to transmit and receive audio to and from ODLs. Both devices are logged into a video conferencing platform, particularly Google Meet. To mitigate concerns about internet connectivity, the school has provided a monthly load allowance to the teachers which they can use to purchase additional internet connection.

"In cases like the school's internet provider fails to provide connectivity, we use the (load) allowance to purchase loads for our pocket wifi." [T4]

Another strategy that was used to respond to this challenge is developing learning materials such as instructional videos and fitness routines that can be downloaded and accessed offline. This is to ensure that both in-person and online distance learners can benefit from this subject despite technological constraints. Binnewies and Wang (2019) suggested creating video lectures, using interactive assessment platforms, and asking students to write learning journals to engage them beyond synchronous sessions.

The use of learning kits was also helpful to supplement learning. Learning kits or modules are educational materials that reinforce learning. This type of material was particularly known in the Philippines during the pandemic, where educational institutions were forced to adapt to distance learning, where online and modular learning models were employed. These kits contain lesson content, activities, and written formative assessments. Students can access the electronic copy of the module, but there is also a printed module available for those students who wish to use the printed copy. Students have to answer or perform activities as part of their performance task and submit it within the given time period. However, the participants have collectively shared their views regarding the learning kit, particularly on the idea of students being spoon-fed learning. One of the participants explained,

"*Learning kits have lost their meaning because the answers in the written activities are already given… it is written at the back of the learning kits*." [T5]

Evidently, there are advantages and limitations to the use of learning kits. A study participated by state university students in the Philippines, revealed that the struggle that comes with using learning kits includes ambiguity in teaching and learning direction (Torrentira, 2021) and difficulty understanding the module contents and assessment instruction (Bustillo & Aguilos, 2022). These experiences serve as a good learning opportunity for teachers on how to further improve the design and delivery of their learning kits or modules. To do this, the teachers should be able to enhance students' learning by engaging them in enrichment activities after they have accomplished their tasks in the learning kits (Bustillo & Aguillos, 2022).

2.2. On Assessment and Monitoring of Performance Tasks and Examinations for Online Distance Learners (ODLs)

The goal of the hyflex learning modality is to provide a flexible option to online distance learners. While the intention is good, limited resources may add another layer of responsibilities on the part of the teacher. Teachers assigned to these particular learners had to double their preparation and teaching time in order

to cater to the needs of these students. More particularly, teachers allot time beyond classroom hours, usually at night or during weekends, to teach these learners because most of them have a different time zone. Providing feedback was a practical strategy to increase connection with students, especially online distance learners.

"*As a teacher, I make sure to constantly communicate with my online (distance) learners and give them feedback on their performance*." [T3]

Feedback provides the learner with the next steps to correct misconceptions or prompts the learner to refine their knowledge and skills. Samuel and Hinck (2020) cited four dimensions of feedback that should be addressed in order for feedback to be effective. These include timeliness, frequency, distribution, and individualized and content-specific. Individualized and content-specific is the degree to which feedback is specific to the individual learner's goals, strengths, needs, or questions. in some new and novel way. Feedback is not limited to the role of the teacher but it can also be solicited from students. Self and peer evaluation and journals are other forms of feedback that were utilized by the students.

2.3. On the Issue of Equity and Equality in Learning

Team teaching has become an instrument for responding to equity and equality in learning challenges. It was discovered that the participants have been practicing this strategy to monitor both online and in-person learners better and make sure that they are receiving equal avenues for participation. One of the specific strategies in the use of team teaching in the hyflex learning modality is evident in the shared tasks wherein one teacher supervises instruction while the other oversees the management of students' tasks and performances. This practice is not only reflected in the development of their curriculum but also in their instruction, particularly in the actual teaching and classroom management. With these collaborative efforts, the pressure of the task is lessened, and it develops the teachers' self-efficacy and instructional quality. Moreover, assigning student assistants, more appropriately called class beadles, is also one of the initiatives done by the teachers. The class beadles served as an aid for the teacher to assist in monitoring online learners during synchronous sessions. The participants shared:

"*We have responsible class beadles who help us in monitoring ODLs during online classes."* [T1]

"*We had to be more strategic… being able to share the task with my colleague made a huge difference on the efficiency of our PE classes ."* [T2]

Mentzer (2023) suggested that both online and in-person learners should be engaged simultaneously in online interactive activities such as the use of online discussion boards, game-based apps, etc. Designing mini-lectures for online

students should also be given importance. Most importantly, institutions must provide adequate technological resources to both teachers and learners so that learning may be optimized in this modality (Han et al., 2022).

4. Opportunities in the Implementation of PE using Hyflex Learning Modality in the New Normal

Based on the experiences of the teachers and students, there were several opportunities in the utilization of hyflex as one of the learning modalities in the new normal. The identified opportunities are as follows:

On the part of the teacher, professional development and advancement in the use of technology were prioritized to help keep them abreast of the latest educational technologies and practices. It enabled teachers to effectively navigate the complexities of the hyflex learning environment, ensuring they could utilize digital tools, manage hybrid instruction, and engage with students both in-person and online. The hyflex modality also strengthened parent-teacher and home learning partnerships. By involving parents more actively in the educational process, the school enhanced student engagement and support, creating a more supportive and collaborative environment. While observing their well-being, teachers must also be provided with mental health-related support.

On the part of the students, hyflex provided them an opportunity to participate in learning activities with greater flexibility and grit. Students benefited from the ability to learn at their own pace. With access to recorded lectures, digital resources, and asynchronous assignments, students can review material as needed, allowing for a deeper understanding of complex topics and better retention of information. They learned to manage disruptions, adjust to new learning formats, and persevere through challenges, skills that are beneficial in both academic and real-world contexts.

On the part of the school, hyflex promoted resilience to deliver learning despite the pandemic. With limited technological resources, the school can establish partnerships with private companies and other organizations to leverage additional technical support and resources for the teachers and students. The school can also implement policies and programs aimed at reducing disparities in access and providing targeted support to teachers and students who are most affected by technological limitations. It is essential in this modality to promote teachers' and students' well-being by providing appropriate technological support systems and establishing partnerships with non-government organizations (NGOs) and local government units (LGU), and technology and telecommunication companies.

In the current context of the Philippines, internet connectivity remains one of the concerns. The challenge of internet connectivity can drive advocacy for improved technological infrastructure. This includes pushing for government and private sector investments in expanding high-speed internet access to remote areas in the country. Schools and communities can shape partnerships with technology and telecommunications companies to develop innovative solutions. These partnerships can lead to initiatives such as subsidized internet access and expanded network coverage.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the results, it can be inferred that the *hyflex* learning modality answers the call to innovate and sustain teaching and learning in the new normal, thus promoting SDG 2030 Goal No. 3 (ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages), Goal No. 4 (ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all), and Goal No. 9 (building resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation). The results also revealed that physical education faced numerous challenges in adapting to the *hyflex* learning modality due to its nature as a performance-based course. These challenges include limited technological resources, assessment and monitoring of online distance learners (ODLs), and equity in learning. However, learning opportunities have emerged from these challenges and experiences. Teachers have become more adept at using various educational technologies. This hands-on experience has not only improved their technological skills but also fostered greater confidence in leveraging technology to create engaging and effective learning environments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anchored to the theory of connectivism, the results of this study entail that this learning modality is highly reliant on technology; thus, it is recommended that education institutions utilizing this modality should invest in appropriate and practical technologies that will alleviate concerns of teachers in teaching physical education and students' learning. Likewise, taking into consideration a mental health program for teachers is another recommendation that should be investigated as this new learning modality could affect teachers' mental health. Education administrators can use this study to provide them with a practical guide in curriculum innovations in physical education to improve the delivery of the course.

There are certain limitations that this study recognized, such as the participants, setting, and the approach used. The nature of this study does not

generate findings that represent the experiences of all schools that employ the *hyflex* learning modality. Future studies are enjoined to explore the same interest but must be conducted in different contexts, including public schools and/or universities in basic or higher education in the Philippines that implement the *hyflex* learning modality.

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