

Challenges Encountered by Bachelor of Physical Education Students of Ifugao State University Potia Campus on Physical Activities towards Health and Fitness: Basis for Intervention Program

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the challenges faced by Bachelor of Physical Education (BPEd) students of Ifugao State University Potia Campus in engaging in physical activities towards health and fitness. Using a descriptive research design under a quantitative framework, supplemented by qualitative interviews, the study involved 123 BPEd students as participants. Data was collected through surveys and interviews, focusing on equipment availability, facility adequacy, time management, physical health, and instructional quality. The study identified five primary challenges: limited resources, outdated facilities, poor time management, health-related issues, and instructional barriers. The project AKTIBO, (Active Knowledge, Through Indigenous Based Outdoor Activities). A proposed intervention program aims to intensify these challenges by enhancing facilities, providing tailored fitness routines, promoting effective time management strategies, and incorporating mental health support. The study recommends implementing targeted intervention programs to improve student engagement, health, and academic performance in physical education.

Keywords: Physical education; Challenges; Intervention program; Health and fitness; Student engagement.

INTRODUCTION

Physical activities play a crucial role in maintaining health and fitness by reducing the risk of illness and improving overall well-being. However, despite these benefits, students particularly those enrolled in the Bachelor of Physical Education (BPEd) program often face various challenges that hinder their participation in physical activities. These include limited facilities, lack of equipment, academic pressures, and mental and socio-economic barriers, all of which negatively affect their performance in physical training and overall physical health. In the Philippines, physical education is essential in shaping future educators who are expected to promote active and healthy lifestyles. Yet, many students, especially in rural areas such as Ifugao, struggle to meet the expectations of their program due to the compounded effects of environmental, cultural, academic, and psychological constraints (Tan & Peralta, 2020).

Rural communities in the Cordillera region often value traditional labor, such as agricultural work, over structured fitness activities, which may further reduce students' engagement in organized physical education (De Guzman, 2016). Moreover, BPEd students experience substantial academic demands that make time management difficult, leaving little room for personal health and fitness routines. Navarro and Reyes (2019) emphasized that this imbalance undermines students' ability to sustain physical activity. Similarly, Smith and Hossain (2021) observed that the stress associated with academic responsibilities in physical education programs contributes to decreased physical exercise among students, making them more vulnerable to poor physical and mental health outcomes.

One of the significant barriers to consistent physical activity is socioeconomic status, which often limits access to sports equipment, transportation, and training facilities (Salvador, 2019). Tiongson et al. (2022) found that

students from lower-income households are less likely to participate in fitness activities outside the academic setting, even when enrolled in physical education programs. Furthermore, the lack of sufficient health and fitness education exacerbates this issue. Gomez and Bayani (2020) noted that students in rural areas may engage in improper or unsafe training practices due to a lack of awareness about exercise physiology, sports nutrition, and injury prevention.

The psychological burden of physical education is another major factor. Cordero and Medina (2021) reported that anxiety, depression, and self-doubt are common among BPED students due to the competitive nature of sports and the academic expectations tied to physical performance. Cultural body image standards also affect participation in activities that require physical exposure, leading to lower self-esteem and disengagement (Campos & Santiago, 2017). To address this, Fernando (2023) emphasized the importance of integrated intervention programs that combine psychological support with physical fitness education. These programs have been shown to increase students' confidence and overall wellness.

Structured fitness programs embedded in the academic curriculum can help students develop discipline, time management, and social bonds while improving their health (Santos & Mendoza, 2020). Talavera and Padua (2021) highlighted that when students are provided with individualized workout plans and access to professional guidance, they are more likely to achieve their fitness goals. Additionally, peer and community support further enhances participation, especially in rural areas. Ramos and Reyes (2019) and Chavez and Lobo (2018) both emphasized the motivational benefits of social reinforcement and group engagement in physical activities.

Scholars such as Nwachukwu et al. (2020) and Agunwa and Chukwudi (2019) have explored the emotional toll of balancing physical and academic demands, reporting burnout and decreased motivation as common results. In rural Philippine settings, such as Ifugao, this is made worse by inadequate infrastructure and financial difficulties (Soriano, 2018). Time constraints, low motivation, and psychological barriers like fear of injury or negative self-image are prevalent among BPED students (Boakye et al., 2017; Barton et al., 2019; De Leon et al., 2021). Garcia and Casimiro (2020) also observed that despite the requirement to maintain high levels of fitness, some students fall behind due to the absence of structured, consistent support systems.

Intervention programs tailored to students' specific needs have demonstrated effectiveness in improving both health outcomes and academic performance. Cruz et al. (2022) advocated for integrating fitness into academic schedules with proper guidance to avoid overwhelming students. Studies by Martinez and Quinto (2018) and Somera and Ilagan (2021) affirmed that well-rounded programs incorporating physical training, mental health support, and health education enhance resilience and performance. For such interventions to be successful, they must be accessible, culturally appropriate, and flexible (Ramos & Lopez, 2023; Dela Cruz et al., 2020). Furthermore, research continues to confirm that physical activity supports mental health by reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression and promoting psychological resilience (Davis & Williams, 2021; Tang & Liu, 2022).

The Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), particularly the province of Ifugao, presents a unique context for this study due to its topography and cultural practices. The Ifugao State University Potia Campus, located in Alfonso Lista, serves students training to become physical educators. These students face considerable limitations, including lack of access to fitness facilities, mental health support, and financial resources. The region's rural setting adds another layer of difficulty to regular engagement in physical activity. Understanding the specific challenges in this setting is necessary to develop targeted and effective intervention programs that will support students' physical, mental, and academic well-being.

This study aims to investigate the challenges encountered by Bachelor of Physical Education (BPED) students of Ifugao State University Potia Campus in engaging in physical activities. Specifically, it seeks to determine the specific challenges that hinder BPED students' participation in physical activities; to explore possible solutions that may help improve student engagement in physical education programs; and to utilize the findings as a foundation for designing an intervention program that enhances the health, fitness, and academic performance of BPED students in this rural academic context.

METHODOLOGIES

This study utilized a descriptive quantitative research design, supported by qualitative techniques such as interviews, to explore the challenges encountered by Bachelor of Physical Education (BPED) students at Ifugao State University Potia Campus in engaging in physical activities towards health and fitness. The quantitative part aimed to describe patterns across a broad group of respondents, while the qualitative data provided context and depth to the students' lived experiences.

This theoretical framework examines the challenges faced by Bachelor of Physical Education (BPED) students at Ifugao State University Potia campus in engaging in physical activities that promotes health and fitness. The following theory provide a foundation for understanding the dynamics at play:

Resource Dependence Theory, This theory posits that organizations (in this case, schools) are dependent on resources to function effectively. Limited resources in physical education (such as equipment, facilities, and trained staff) may hinder the quality and variety of programs offered, affecting student engagement and learning outcomes.

The study's conceptual framework followed the IPO model Input, Process, and Output. Inputs were defined as the specific challenges students face in physical activity engagement. The process involved collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data, while the output focused on recommending appropriate interventions based on the findings.

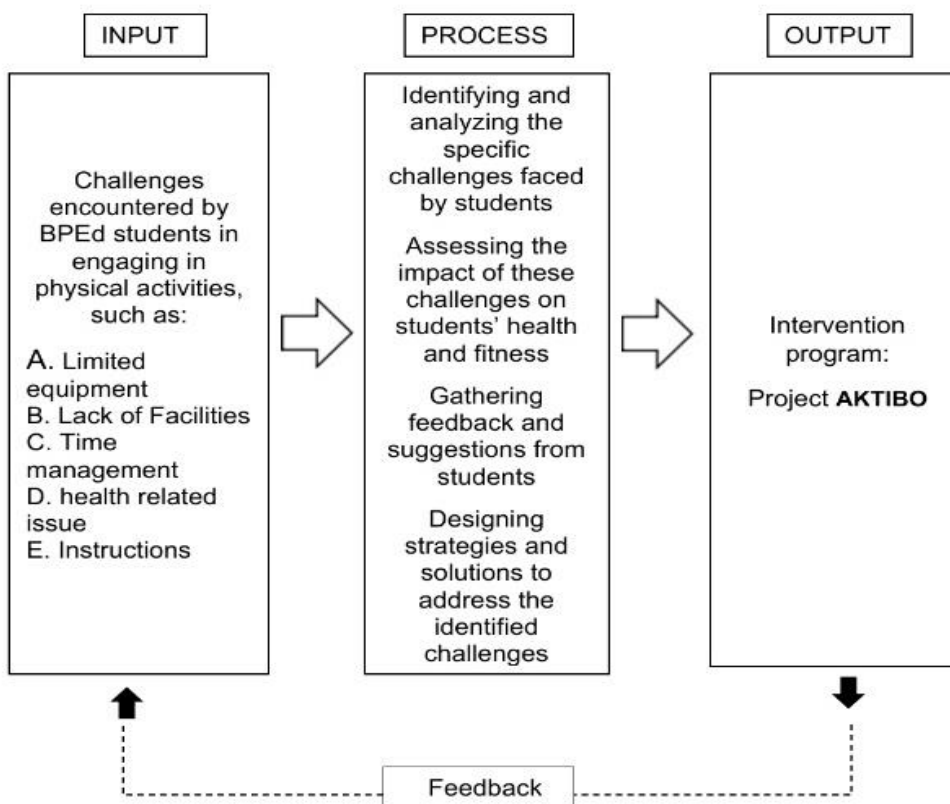


Figure 1. Paradigm of the study

A survey questionnaire was used as the main data gathering instrument, crafted in alignment with the study's objectives. It consisted of 50 Likert-scale items assessing issues related to equipment, facilities, time management, physical health, and instruction. To ensure clarity and reliability, the tool was pilot-tested and revised accordingly. Interviews were also conducted to gather qualitative insights that deepened the understanding of the students' lived experiences.

A total of 123 students across the first to third years of the BPED program participated as respondents, selected through total population sampling.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Respondents by year level

Year level	Frequency	Percentage
First year	35	28.46%
Second year	47	38.21%
Third year	41	33.33%
Total	123	100.00%

The research was conducted within the College of Education at IFSU–Potia Campus. Ethical standards were strictly observed: informed consent was obtained, confidentiality was maintained, and participation was voluntary.

Data were tabulated using Microsoft Excel and analyzed through statistical methods such as frequency distribution and mean computation. These procedures enabled the researchers to derive meaningful insights from both the quantitative data and qualitative responses, ultimately leading to the formulation of an intervention program tailored to the students' needs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To begin, this study explored students' experiences regarding the availability and adequacy of equipment used in physical education classes. The following table presents their responses on this issue.

Table 2. Average Mean of Challenges in Physical Education in Terms of Equipment

Statement	Mean	Qualitative Description
1. I often feel frustrated because there isn't enough equipment for everyone in class to participate fully.	3.11	Agree
2. The lack of adequate facilities (e.g., gym space, fields) limits the types of activities we can do in PE class.	3.29	Agree
3. I feel like I miss out on learning new skills because of limited equipment and facilities.	3.05	Agree
4. It's difficult to stay motivated in PE class when we have to share equipment or wait our turn for a long time.	2.96	Agree
5. I believe having more resources would make PE class more enjoyable and beneficial for everyone.	3.56	Strongly Agree
6. The limited resources in PE class make it difficult for me to reach my full potential in physical activity.	3.10	Agree
7. I feel like the quality of my PE class is compromised due to the lack of resources.	3.08	Agree
8. I would be more likely to participate in physical activities if there were more equipment and better facilities available.	3.38	Agree
9. I believe that schools should invest more in PE resources to ensure that all students have a positive and enriching experience.	3.48	Agree
10. Limited resources in PE class make it difficult for teachers to provide individualized instruction and support.	3.30	Agree
Overall Mean	3.23	Agree

This table presents the challenges students face due to insufficient or poor-quality equipment.

Students generally agree that the lack of equipment in PE classes hinders their ability to fully engage in and enjoy physical education. With a high mean of 3.56, students strongly believe that additional resources would improve their experience. The consistent agreement across all items confirms that equipment shortage is a significant barrier. This supports Lounsbury and McKenzie (2015), who emphasized that adequate PE resources boost student motivation and engagement.

After examining equipment-related concerns, the study then looked into challenges associated with physical facilities. These include gym spaces, fields, and specialized areas for various PE activities.

Table 3. Average Mean of Challenges in Physical Education in Terms of Facilities

Statements	Mean	Qualitative Description
1. Increased funding for physical education has the potential to significantly enhance student health and academic performances.	3.43	Agree
2. The school's overall budget priorities often put physical education resources at a disadvantage.	3.01	Agree
3. Lack of awareness about the importance of physical education contributes to limited resources.	3.21	Agree
4. The school's facilities (e.g., gym, field) are outdated and in need of repair or renovation.	3.18	Agree
5. Limited access to specialized equipment for specific activities (e.g., swimming, dance) is a challenge.	3.32	Agree
6. The school's size and student population make it difficult to adequately equip the physical education program.	3.27	Agree
7. The lack of qualified physical education teachers contributes to resource limitations.	3.14	Agree
8. The physical education facilities are well-equipped and adequately maintained.	2.99	Agree
9. The facilities are safe and conducive to physical activity.	3.12	Agree
10. The cleanliness of the facilities is satisfactory.	2.99	Agree
Overall Mean	3.17	Agree

The results show students' views on the condition and availability of school facilities.

The findings indicate that while students believe in the value of improved facilities, they recognize the systemic issues, such as outdated equipment and funding neglect. The data supports Bailey et al. (2020), who affirmed that school investment in physical resources correlates with better health and academic outcomes. Despite general agreement, the lower ratings for facility upkeep and cleanliness suggest the need for infrastructure improvement.

In addition to equipment and facilities, time management was another major concern for students. The table below presents how students balance physical activity with academic responsibilities and personal commitments.

Table 4. Average Mean of Challenges in Physical Education in Terms of Time Management

Statement	Mean	Qualitative Description
1. I struggle to create and stick to a realistic schedule that incorporates both academics and physical activity.	2.97	Agree
2. I find it difficult to prioritize my time effectively between academics and physical activities.	2.95	Agree
3. I utilize time management tools and techniques (e.g., planners, to-do lists, apps) effectively	3.10	Agree
4. The program's structure and scheduling make it difficult to manage my time effectively.	2.98	Agree
5. I find it hard to say "no" to commitments that interfere with my training schedule.	2.99	Agree
6. I underestimate the time required for both academic study and physical activity sessions.	2.89	Agree
7. I procrastinate on academic work, which then impacts my time available for physical activity.	2.93	Agree
8. I lack effective time management strategies for juggling academic studies and physical training	2.99	Agree
9. I have difficulty balancing my physical activity training schedule with other personal commitments.	2.92	Agree
10. I often feel overwhelmed by the demands of my academic workload and physical activity requirements.	2.93	Agree
Overall Mean	2.96	Agree

This table reflects students' difficulties in balancing academic demands with physical activity.

The overall mean indicates a moderate struggle in managing time. While students employ tools to organize their schedules, many still feel overwhelmed. This aligns with Sevari and Kandy (2017), who emphasized the benefits of structured scheduling. The results suggest that time management training may help students better balance academic and physical commitments.

The next set of findings focuses on physical health. This includes discomfort, injuries, or existing health conditions that may limit student participation in PE activities.

Table 5. Average Mean of Challenges in Physical Education in Terms of Physical Health

Statements	Mean	Qualitative Description
1. I experience physical discomfort or pain that limits my physical activity.	2.75	Agree
2. I have health concerns that prevent me from engaging in certain activities.	2.52	Agree
3. I have pre-existing health conditions that affect my ability to exercise.	2.49	Agree
4. I have injuries that make it difficult to participate in physical activity.	2.34	Agree
5. I experience fatigue or exhaustion that makes it difficult to exercise.	2.48	Agree
6. My current health status significantly impacts my ability to engage in physical activity.	2.63	Agree
7. I feel physically well enough to engage in the required physical activities.	3.03	Agree
8. The program provides sufficient support for students with health concerns.	2.88	Agree
9. I have access to adequate healthcare resources to address any health concerns.	2.96	Agree
10. I experience physical discomfort or pain that limits my participation in physical activities.	2.57	Agree
Overall Mean	2.67	Agree

This table outlines health-related obstacles that affect student participation in PE.

Although many students feel physically well, a notable portion experiences health barriers. The lowest mean, related to injuries (2.34), reveals the impact of physical limitations on participation. According to Sallis et al. (2017), self-perceived health significantly affects PE participation. These results call for better accommodations for students with physical challenges.

Finally, the study examined challenges related to instruction. This includes how students perceive their PE teachers in terms of clarity, fairness, support, and engagement during class.

Table 6. Average Mean of Challenges in Physical Education in Terms of Instruction

Statement	Mean	Qualitative Description
1. The instructions for activities were clear.	3.11	Agree
2. The instructor provided sufficient demonstrations.	3.09	Agree
3. The teacher was encouraging and supportive	3.20	Agree
4. The teacher treated all students fairly.	2.81	Agree
5. The teacher was approachable and helpful.	3.08	Agree
6. There was enough time for questions and clarifications.	3.13	Agree
7. The class started and ended on time.	2.95	Agree
8. The instructors provide adequate support and guidance.	3.08	Agree
9. The instructors provide sufficient feedback on my performance.	3.07	Agree
10. The curriculum provides a variety of physical activities.	3.20	Agree
Overall Mean	3.07	Agree

This table explores how students perceive their instructors' clarity, fairness, and supportiveness.

Students generally agree that instruction in PE is positive, with strong scores in encouragement and activity variety. However, the relatively lower mean for fair treatment (2.81) suggests inclusivity issues. These findings align with Miller and Thompson (2024), who stressed that instructional clarity and fairness enhance engagement and learning outcomes.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the primary conclusion is that Bachelor of Physical Education (BPEd) students at Ifugao State University Potia Campus face significant challenges in engaging in physical activities that promote health and fitness. These challenges, which include limited access to equipment and facilities, health-related constraints, instructional gaps, and time management difficulties, hinder their full participation in physical education. These factors collectively reduce the effectiveness of PE programs and limit the ability of students to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle.

Specifically, students expressed agreement that the shortage of PE equipment and facilities limits their opportunities for diverse physical activities. Time management struggles, influenced by overlapping academic responsibilities, impact their consistency in participating in fitness routines. Health concerns, such as injuries and pre-existing conditions, further restrict involvement. Moreover, instructional issues—especially the perceived lack of fairness and clarity—diminish motivation and inclusivity. Addressing these challenges through context-specific and culturally responsive interventions, like Project AKTIBO, is essential for improving both student engagement and health outcomes.

To ensure the long-term success of Project AKTIBO, a comprehensive scalability and sustainability plan is essential. The program will expand through a guidebook detailing procedures, safety measures, and cultural context, enabling replication across IFSU campuses. A train-the-trainer model will empower PE instructors and student leaders, while collaboration with curriculum developers may embed the project in relevant subjects. Sustainability will be achieved by integrating AKTIBO into institutional events like Wellness Week and Heritage Month, supported by student councils and the use of low-cost indigenous materials. Minimal budget requirements can be met through LGU support, school funds, alumni donations, and sponsorships. Community partnerships with barangay leaders, elders, and NGOs will enhance cultural authenticity and provide additional resources. Through careful planning, resourcefulness, and strong community ties, Project AKTIBO can thrive and expand while fostering student wellness and cultural appreciation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the identified challenges faced by BPEd students at Ifugao State University Potia Campus—such as limited equipment and facilities, inadequate time management skills, physical health issues, and instructional gaps—it is recommended that the institution prioritize improvements in these areas. Schools should allocate sufficient funding for the maintenance and upgrading of sports facilities, ensure the availability of adequate and appropriate PE equipment, and consider the hiring or training of qualified PE instructors who promote fair and inclusive instruction. In light of the time-related constraints and physical health concerns observed among students, the integration of wellness programs and time management workshops is also advised. Additionally, the development and implementation of context-sensitive intervention programs, such as Project AKTIBO, are proposed to address these limitations in culturally relevant and resource-efficient ways. These strategic improvements may lead to better student participation, physical fitness, and academic outcomes in physical education.

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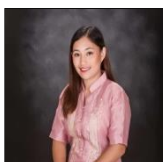
AUTHORS' INFORMATION



James Harrison B. Attaban is a third-year Bachelor of Physical Education student at Ifugao State University-Potia Campus. Their previous research was successfully presented at a university-level conference at Ifugao State University-Potia Campus. His academic focus centers on promoting health and wellness through physical activity and fitness education. For this study, he wrote the introduction, discussion, conclusion, and recommendations. He also played a vital role in the data gathering process, ensuring the reliability and accuracy of the collected information.



Herminio C. Orpricio Jr. is an instructor at Ifugao State University-Potia Campus and serves as the research instructor for the Bachelor of Physical Education program. With his expertise in academic research, he provided valuable guidance and mentorship throughout the development of this study. He assisted the researchers in refining their methodology, analyzing data, and enhancing the overall structure and clarity of the paper. His dedication to academic excellence and commitment to student learning played a crucial role in ensuring the quality, coherence, and integrity of the research output.



Jovelyn A. Buway is an instructor at Ifugao State University-Potia Campus. She served as a research adviser for this study, providing consistent guidance and academic support throughout the research process. Her expertise in physical education and research methodology greatly contributed to the development of the study's structure, from the formulation of objectives to the refinement of data collection tools. She also offered critical feedback on the analysis and interpretation of findings. Her mentorship played a vital role in ensuring the overall quality, coherence, and academic integrity of the research output.



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involvement in the research process reflects her growing interest in promoting physical education through evidence-based academic work.



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