Understanding Inclusive Pedagogy from the Perspectives of Primary and Elementary Physical and Health Educators

By © Matthew Patey A Thesis submitted

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Abstract

Living a life within inclusive environments is a human right (Canadian Human Rights Commission, 2013), and these environments must exist across several domains of one's everyday life. Physical and health education (PHE) is important to improve a child's well-being physically, socially, cognitively, and spiritually (Kilborn, 2016). Accordingly, these benefits of PHE should be equitably accessible to all children. Teachers play significant roles in students' inclusive learning experiences. However, the perspectives and practices of teachers in establishing inclusiveness within PHE contexts are not fully explored in the research literature. Furthermore, there is a lack of empirical knowledge regarding primary/elementary educators' understandings of inclusive pedagogy and their day-to-day pedagogic practices. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to understand the ways in which primary/elementary PHE teachers understand the inclusive pedagogy and their ways of engaging in inclusive pedagogy in day-to-day PHE contexts. Specific research questions were "How do primary/elementary PHE teachers understand inclusive pedagogy" and "What do primary/elementary PHE teachers do day-to-day to promote inclusiveness in their pedagogic practices?"

An explorative qualitative research design was employed. 11 primary/elementary PHE teachers participated in one-on-one interviews. Thematic analysis was performed to highlight primary/elementary PHE teachers' perspectives and practices of inclusive pedagogy. According to participants, inclusive pedagogy is "for everyone," "but mission impossible"—considering the diverse backgrounds of students and teachers, as well as the current constructions of the educational system. They also perceived that inclusive pedagogy is "to create a safe place" for everyone within PHE contexts. In order to create

and maintain inclusive environments, participants highlighted what they do in their day-to-day pedagogic practices: (1) planning from the beginning using a universal pedagogical design; (2) sharing ownership of teaching and learning with students by providing students leadership roles and responsibilities, and by ensuring students' choices in learning and; (3) building rapports and positive relationships with students and maintain affirmative partnerships with co-educators; (4) being responsive and flexible by mindfully implementing adaptation strategies, and engaging in critical reflections on their own inclusive pedagogic practices in PHE.

This study has provided empirical knowledge regarding the complex processes and mechanisms of providing inclusive pedagogy within primary/elementary PHE from the perspectives of teachers, for further cross-cultural comparisons with those of administrators, parents, and children. Furthermore, this study has highlighted teachers' understandings of inclusive pedagogy, as well as actions they take to ensure the establishment and sustainability of inclusion in their PHE program, which may encourage other teachers to be reflexive about their own pedagogic practices in promoting inclusion.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

"Human rights define what we are all entitled to—a life of equality, dignity, and respect. A life free from discrimination" (Canadian Human Rights Commission, 2013). Living a life within inclusive environments is a human right, and these environments must exist across several domains of one's everyday life. Levels of inclusion are present in the built and social environments people experience daily (Layton & Steel, 2015; Richmond & Saloojee, 2005). Whereas, levels of exclusion marginalize ones' presence from social aspects of one's life, which could lead to physical, social, and emotional isolations (Macdonald & Leary, 2005; Salenius, 2016).

Inclusion in primary/elementary physical and health education (PHE) is important for children. PHE can improve a child's well-being physically, socially, cognitively, and spiritually (Kilborn, 2016). Primary/elementary aged children are in a pivotal developmental stage with regards to their motor skills. Lakusić (2015) states these skills are "responsible for the efficiency of human movement" (p. 200). This efficiency in movement aids young learners to be confidently involved in physical activities and provides opportunities for holistic childhood developments (Bunch & Berger, 2011; Kirk, 2005), including "social skills of planning and decision making, interpersonal skills, cultural competence, resistance skills and peaceful conflict resolution" (Barnes & Rochester, 2011, p. 18). Accordingly, these benefits of PHE should be equitably accessible to all children. Providing inclusive learning opportunities in primary/elementary PHE thus is a critical act of ensuring human rights for these young learners.

Children develop at varying rates and levels with respect to the physical, social, cognitive, and spiritual domains (Cools, De Martelaer, Samaey, & Andries, 2009). This should be celebrated by having an inclusive PHE program in all schools (Block, 1999; Lieberman, James, & Ludwa, 2004; Sherrill, 2003). If students are excluded (directly or indirectly) from meaningful participation in their PHE, they could cultivate an aversion towards PHE and/or physical activity, and subsequently decrease the likelihood of adopting a healthy and active lifestyle (Beltrán-Carrillo, Devís-Devís, Peiró-Velert, & Brown, 2012; Carlson, 1995).

Policies (Cooper, Greenberg, Castelli, Barton, Martin, & Morrow, 2016; Petrie & Hunter, 2011) and built environment of schools (Arbour-Nicitopoulos & Ginis, 2011; Bergstrom, Elinder, & Wihlman, 2014; Rimmer, Wang, Rauworth, & Jurkowski, 2004), as well as societal attitudes (O'Connor & Graber, 2014) interplay in creating inclusive environments in PHE contexts. As such, pursuing inclusive PHE can be understood as engaging in a set of actions to enhance policies and built environmentsof schools, as well as maintaining positive value and belief systems and attitudes towards inclusion (Tripp, Rizzo, & Webbert, 2007). If these components are not carefully considered, the level of inclusiveness within PHE contexts (Block, 1999; Lieberman, James, & Ludwa, 2004; Sherrill, 2003) and the experiences of students could be negatively affected (e.g., experiences of not meaningfully participating, failure and social isolation within PHE contexts) (Bredahl, 2013; Farley, 2007; Goodwin & Watkinson, 2000).

Inclusive learning environments in primary/elementary PHE are established through the interactions amongst teachers, administrators, parents, and students (Ladda, 2016; Willis, 2009). Amongst these parties, teachers play significant roles as they plan,

design, and implement inclusive learning opportunities for their students (Ko & Boswell, 2013; Lingard & Mills, 2007). Due to the interactive nature of inclusion in PHE contexts, teachers are involved in complex pedagogic processes in promoting inclusiveness, that might not be foreseen (e.g., including learners from different cultural backgrounds, which is culturally sensitive and safe) (Bentley-Williams & Morgan, 2013; Hardman, Pitchford, & Shire, 2013). However, the perspectives and practices of teachers in establishing inclusiveness within PHE contexts are not fully explored in the research literature. Furthermore, there is a lack of empirical knowledge regarding primary/elementary educators' understandings of inclusive pedagogy. Compared to the empirical knownledge known from pre-service teachers (e.g., Yuknis, 2015; McCormack & O'Flaherty, 2010; Bosse, & Spörer, 2014), and junior and senior high school teachers (e.g., Short & Martin, 2005; Hodge, Ammah, Casebolt, Lamaster, & O'Sullivan, 2004; van Reusen, Shoho, & Barker, 2001).

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to understand (1) the ways in which primary/elementary PHE teachers understand inclusive pedagogy and (2) their ways of engaging in inclusive pedagogy in day-to-day PHE contexts. Specific research questions were "How do primary/elementary PHE teachers understand inclusive pedagogy" and "What do primary/elementary PHE teachers do day-to-day to promote inclusiveness in their pedagogic practices?" The potential contributions of this study would be to provide empirical knowledge regarding the complex processes and mechanisms of providing inclusive pedagogy within primary/elementary PHE from the perspectives of teachers, for further cross-cultural comparisons with those of administrators, parents, and children. Furthermore, this study has highlighted teachers' understandings of inclusive pedagogy,

as well as actions they take to ensure the establishment and sustainability of inclusion in their PHE program, which may encourage other teachers to be reflexive about their own pedagogic practices in promoting inclusion.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter will present the review of literature in the area of inclusive pedagogy within PHE contexts. Historically, inclusion in PHE has evolved over time from medically-oriented practices to more socially and culturally-oriented approaches which acknowledge the importance of students' experiences and perspectives. The main body of literature reviewed in this thesis is conducted primarily through the lens of disability research (i.e., conducting research for, about, and with people with impairments[1]), instead of using a diversity lens that appreciates the individuality amongst people (e.g., cultural backgrounds, religions and belief systems, abilities, gender orientations, educational needs, preferences, and aspirations).

History of Inclusive Approaches in PHE Contexts

Ways of understanding inclusive environments has drastically evolved over time, shifting from *facility-based* approaches (early 1900's), to *service-based* (1950's), and *supports-based* (1980's), and then *empowerment* and *self-determination* (1990's) approaches. The *facility-based* approaches, encompasses the point in history where people with impairments were typically found in various institutions, residential programs, and/or special schools (Polloway, Smith, Patton, & Smith, 1996; Reid, 2003). These facilities often isolated the residents from society. For example, persons with cognitive impairments were deemed to be dangerous to the society at that time, thereby

[1] The person-first term "people with impairments" are used hereafter, as a way of highlighting the context-specific nature of disability experiences (Spencer-Cavaliere & Peers, 2011). For example, people with a medical condition does not necessarily experience disability when built environments, policies, services, and supports are inclusive and accessible; and societal attitudes are supportive for accommodating the needs of those individuals. Thus, the term "people with disabilities" could be incorrect in some circumstances.

isolating them was viewed by many to be protective for the society (Bouffard, 1997). Such institutions thus had a hospital-like construction, and treated residents as patients. There was little to no established educational or recreational physical activity programs: the focus of those institutions was to cure or treat the ailment of the residents, and therefore offered little priority for physical education (PE) (Reid, 2003).

Another facility, known as a special school, grouped school-aged children and youths together by their medical conditions (e.g., school for students with cognitive and/or intellectual impairments) (Reid, 2003). These facilities indeed provided educational opportunities for those students, but designed such opportunities in a segregated way. During the time, people perceived students with impairments as *abnormal*. People understood that they were "very different from 'normal'" and for this reason, "they were unable to profit from PE [physical education]; in fact, they might be harmed by vigorous activity" (Reid, 2003, p. 13). This medically-centered perspective reflected the societal values of that time—People with impairments were viewed as sick people who had bodily conditions that needed to be cured (Polloway et al., 1996; Reid, 2003), thereby "grouping children with disabilities together, and isolating them from others, seemed to make sense" (Reid, 2003, p. 13). Due to such medically-centered views around that time, PE for students with impairments focused on *corrective therapy*, which attempted to address physical issues (e.g., correcting posture through use of physical exercise) (Sherrill, 2003).

The *service-based* approaches emerged as a solution to the publics dismay with the over-crowding of segregated institutions and facilities. After World War II, veterans returned with various impairments (e.g., amputations and spinal cord injuries). At the

time, there was a shift in the way persons with impairments were viewed—Respect toward people with impairments was enhanced because of those veterans' sacrifices for their country (Polloway et al., 1996; Reid, 2003). Various out-of-facility physical activity programs were developed to aid in their (re)integration into society (Reid, 2003). With these societal changes, people with impairments could use those services, instead of remaining within specialized facilities for the duration of their life (Polloway et al., 1996; Reid, 2003). This new paradigm was also used for students with impairments in PE settings by providing educational services to those student (later evolved into a form of adapted physical education (APE) (Reid, 2003). APE was defined at the time:

> A diversified program of developmental activities, games, sports, and rhythms suited to the interests, capacities, and limitations of students with disabilities who may not safely or successfully engage in unrestricted participation in the vigorous activities of the general PE programme. (Committee on Adapted Physical Education, 1952; in Reid, 2003, p. 15)

APE moved beyond the medically-centered approaches to PE. However, this educational approach still focused on the limitations of the students by categorizing them by medically-oriented diagnosis (Reid, 2003). Furthermore, Canadian school systems did not fully adopt APE programs in schools. As a result, certain students with impairments were simply excused from the participation in PE (e.g., remaining in the classroom instead of participating in PE, as teachers believed that the program would be unsafe for certain students with impairments) (Reid, 2003).

The *supports-based* approaches emerged after it became evident that people with impairments were remaining in the specialized facilities and/or programs, instead of being included fully in the society (Polloway et al., 1996; Reid, 2003). Service-based approaches emphasized naively the *integrated placement* of people with impairments without appropriate supports. Practitioners who provided services had a lack of experiences, skill sets, and/or resources to provide quality services (Polloway et al., 1996; Reid, 2003). The supports-based approach, whereas, aimed to address such lack of preparations within service programs by providing educational opportunities and resources to the practitioners.

Following these trends, various ways of supporting students with impairments within PE settings were developed (e.g., equipment, teacher assistant, and instructional manuals) to help them to be included in regular PE and interact with their peers within inclusive settings (Goodwin, Watkinson, & Fitzpatrick, 2003; Polloway et al., 1996; Reid, 2003). Within this educational approach, students with impairments were no longer needed to showcase certain abilities to attend regular PE, but rather all were welcomed in an inclusive PE setting (Goodwin et al., 2003; Reid, 2003). Specialized and/or segregated PE programs began to disappear due to the decrease in demand (Reid, 2003). Understandings of APE began to shift within this paradigm, from being known as a separate PE program/service for students with impairments, to being viewed as an inclusive program/service for those students alongside all other students with appropriate supports systems (Goodwin et al., 2003; Lieberman, & Houston-Wilson, 2009; Sherrill, 2003).

Empowerment and *self-determination* approaches are dominant in recent practices (Reid, 2003). The three previously mentioned approaches focused more on placing people with impairments in an environment where they are dependent on service providers who made decisions and provided services on behalf of them (Polloway et al., 1996; Reid, 2003). People with impairments were categorized and grouped by diagnosed medical conditions within these approaches (Polloway et al., 1996; Reid, 2003). Whereas, the empowerment and self-determination approaches promote the independence and dignity through ownership and personal responsibility of one's own life (Reid, 2003). These person-centered approaches are accomplished by changing the dynamic of the ways in which services and supports are offered to persons with impairments. In this paradigm, people with impairments are assisted (by services or supports) only when they are needed, and such decisions would be made by autonomous choices from people with impairments (Goodwin et al., 2003).

The empowerment and self-determination paradigm promots one's independence within current PHE contexts by providing opportunities for students' choices on educational needs, preferences, and aspirations (Goodwin et al., 2003). For example, appreciating the needs of students with impairments, segregated/specialized PE programs could also be provided for those students upon request (Goodwin et al., 2003). In this paradigm, therefore, the focus of PE programs and supports would be placed on the abilities of students with impairments, instead of their limitations (Reid, 2003). More recently, this empowerment and self-determination paradigm is widely employed in various other educational contexts within PHE in interacting with diverse students (e.g., immigrants or refugee students, students with various body sizes and shapes, students

who follow specific cultural/religious restrictions, students from unique cultural backgrounds such as Indigenous students from rural/remote communities) (Casey & Kentel, 2014; Palla-Kane & Block, 2016).

Students' Perspectives and Experiences of Inclusive Pedagogy in PHE Contexts

The research literature highlights the experiences and perspectives of inclusive pedagogy within PHE contexts from the perspectives of students with impairments. First, Bredahl (2013) investigated the barriers in PHE experienced by 20 Norwegian adults with various physical impairments. The participants recalled that the negative experiences were "not being included," "experiences of failing," and "experiences of not being listened to." Notably, participants who were experiencing minor degrees of medical conditions, along with the least visible impairments, most often reported negative experiences in their PHE. The findings suggest that bodily limitations and impairments were not the only factors contributing to negative experiences in PHE; The ways in which the students were viewed by the teachers, as well as the teachers prepared instructional strategies for adaptation and modification, also contributed those adverse experiences. The findings also support the claim that teachers should build rapports and get to know their students to foster positive experiences in inclusive PHE.

A study by Farley (2007) examined and documented narratively the experiences of inclusion and exclusion among students aged 13 to 18 within PHE contexts. Female participants' narratives highlighted that they would need some forms of leadership and ownership within their learning (e.g., having their voices in the programs). Other participants reported that they would appreciate PHE teachers' teaching practices that promote sense of belonging and self-identity in learning. Male participants' narratives

highlighted that they had strong personal associations with PHE, which contributed to a sense of belonging and self-identity. These findings offer insights on how students perceive PHE based on teachers' inclusive pedagogy. This empirical knowledge suggested that the ways in which PHE teachers construct their program to include all students in pedagogic practices should be further examined.

Goodwin and Watkinson' study (2000) also highlighted how students with impairments experienced in their PHE programs. Participants reported that they have experienced "good days" and "bad days." Positive experiences (i.e., good days) were identified when "sense of belonging"—that is, feelings of perceived supportive interactions with teachers and peers within their PHE program; "skillful participation"—that is, taking part in PHE programs with intrinsic motivation and the heightened sense of self-efficacy; and "sharing in the benefits"—that is, achieving educational outcomes together with peers in PHE programs—were presented. Whereas, negative experiences (i.e., bad days) were identified when "social isolation"—that is being rejected, neglected, or marginalized by peers within their PHE programs; "questioned competence"—that is, the state occurring when peers were questioning their abilities in PHE due to the preconceived notion of their disability; and "restricted participation"—that is, the circumstances where reduced opportunities were provided to those students due to a lack of teacher support, infrequent interactions with peers, and/or restrictions from the built environments of schools—were observed. These findings are pertinent for PHE teachers to be cognizant about inclusive environments in planning and delivering their PHE programs, thereby the occurrence of students experiencing of good days can be promoted and sustained.

Additionally, Spencer-Cavaliere and Watkinson (2010) investigated the experiences of inclusion in physical activity contexts from the perspectives of children with impairments. Three themes were identified: (1) “gaining entry to play” by being invited or accepted in participation of physical activity, (2) “feeling like a legitimate participant” by having opportunities for meaningful contributions during the participation, and (3) “having friends” that would create opportunities to engage in physical activity with peers. The study highlighted the situations that contribute to the inclusiveness within children’s physical activity contexts. These findings suggested that inclusive environments in PHE contexts could be complex and multi-faceted in nature, due to these relational aspects among participants, thereby teachers would require continual communications with participants in creating such environments.

Various other studies have also been completed to highlight the experiences and perspectives of inclusive pedagogy from the perspectives of students with diversity. For example, a study by Dagkas, Benn, and Jawad (2011) explored Muslim female students’ experiences of inclusive pedagogy in PHE and sport contexts. Participants stated that there was a lack of recognition in religious requirements within PHE contexts, such as revealing their body parts in public during the programs. Poor communication, inflexible dress codes (e.g. wearing of the hijab), culturally-inappropriate programming and practices (i.e., grouping with and the use of public swimming pools with male students) were identified as negative aspects for inclusive pedagogy. Whereas, flexibility in teaching practices, shared decision-making, and situation-specific policies were identified as contributing factors for successful inclusion in PHE. The findings of this study

highlighted the importance of acceptance and appreciation of cultural/religious diversity in planning and delivering inclusive PHE programs.

Constantinides (2013) examined the perceptions of elementary students who are diagnosed as obese, regarding their experiences in PHE. Participants indicated that they do not value PHE, because they do not feel valued in the program. They also reported that they felt uncomfortable revealing their bodily differences in front of their peers during the program. The study called to an attention for PHE teachers to be cognizant in creating safe learning environments for those students within their PHE programs. A study by Li, Rukavina, and Foster (2013) further reported that those students perceived that they are cared-for when PHE teachers made appropriate instructional adaptations for students to work at their own rates and abilities. Building positive interpersonal rapports between PHE teachers and those students, as well as encouraging positive peer interactions among students, were also suggested to create motivational climates within their PHE programs.

Teachers' Perspectives and Experiences of Inclusive Pedagogy in PHE Contexts

The perspectives and experiences of PHE teachers were also explored in various research articles. First, Block, Klavina, and Davis (2016) reported that there were common PHE teachers' perspectives on inclusive pedagogy for students with severe medical conditions or impairments. Participants of this study revealed that teaching those students in inclusive PHE programs would be considered as an out-of-comfort task, and they might develop negative perceptions toward inclusion in PHE, or inclusion in general. Those participants, however, reported that they were motivated and engaged in educating themselves to pursue inclusive pedagogy. They indicated, finally, that professional preparations, practical experiences, instructional supports, and educational environments

were inadequate to fully include those students in their PHE programs. The findings of this study suggest that establishing supports systems for PHE teachers are also essential in promoting inclusive pedagogy.

Zitomer (2017) investigated the perceptions of elementary school dance teachers, with regards to their inclusive pedagogy. The themes arose were: valuing uniqueness of students, establishing supportive relationships with them, being pedagogically aware of their needs, and having high expectations for their learning. The author suggested that how teachers in different facets of PHE perceive and practice inclusive pedagogy should be continually examined and shared with larger audiences for knowledge exchanges amongst PHE teachers.

Doolittle, Li, Rukavina, Manson, and Beale (2016) explored middle school PHE teachers' perspectives on overweight and obese students, and how they included them in their PHE programs. Findings uncovered that those students are "same but different," meaning that PHE teachers should attempt to treat these students in a same manner to other students, while trying to accommodate the educational needs among those students. Participants specifically noted that avoiding obesity stigma and employing caring approaches in teaching practices would promote the inclusiveness in their PHE programs. With such devoted extra time and effort, PHE teachers believed that those students could participate in the PHE programs safely and successfully. These findings highlight the need for careful approaches within PHE for more diverse populations such as students with various bodily sizes and shapes.

A research study by Hodge, Murata, and Kozub (2002) investigated the attitudes of pre-service PHE teachers on inclusive pedagogy. Findings suggest that PHE teacher

education contribute to shaping pre-service PHE teachers' preconceived notions and biases against inclusion in general PHE programs. Accordingly, PHE teacher education should be designed to build prospective PHE teachers' capacity and perceived competence, as well as the acceptance and appreciation of inclusive PHE. A study of Martin and Kudláček (2010) echoed this sentiment by highlighting that prospective PHE teachers' heightened perception of competency in inclusive teaching would be foundational for their prospective PHE practices. Exposure to interacting with people with impairments within PHE contexts (e.g., through experiential learning in adapted physical activity courses) was thus suggested as a practical pedagogic strategy in post-secondary PHE teacher education. Furthermore, Chow and Fry (1999) examined pre-service PHE teachers' perspectives about the characteristics of an ideal PHE teacher. The results highlighted that pre-service PHE teachers' deep learning experiences of sensitivity and caring for students are important aspects in creating safe PHE environments in the future. Safe environments were also identified as a fundamental aspect of inclusive pedagogy in order to properly include all students within PHE contexts.

Rationale for the Study

Interactions between PHE teachers and students are the major components of inclusive pedagogy within PHE contexts. The reviewed research literature indicates that inadequate professional preparation, a lack of experiences in inclusive pedagogy, insufficient support systems and educational environments, unfavorable attitudes of the teachers and students on inclusion all interplay as barriers to inclusive pedagogy in PHE. Whereas, positive experiences and attitudes toward inclusive pedagogy, individualized instructional strategies for adaptation and modification, caring and relational approaches

in teaching, perceived safety in learning environment, and well-prepared and sufficient supports systems and built environments of schools were identified as opportunities for inclusive pedagogy. The literature also highlighted that pursuing inclusive pedagogy in PHE contexts involves complex and multi-faceted processes because of the diverse educational needs, preferences, and aspirations among PHE teachers and students.

Due to such complex processes and mechanisms in establishing inclusiveness within PHE contexts, the literature suggests that the ways in which PHE teachers construct their inclusive pedagogy should be continually examined and shared with larger audiences for knowledge translation. The acquired knowledge from the suggested studies would then help policies and actions to include PHE teachers' voices from the field. Furthermore, this empirical knowledge would be useful for cross-cultural comparisons among the perspectives of parents, administrators, and students in relation to inclusive pedagogy in understanding such complexity in pursuing inclusive PHE pedagogy. This study, therefore, examined how PHE teachers understand inclusive pedagogy and what they do to improve this teaching practice. Considering the lack of voices of primary and elementary PHE teachers in the current research literature, this study specifically aimed to investigate the perspectives of those teachers.

Chapter 3: Methodology

An explorative qualitative research design was employed in this study (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Lichtman, 2010; Patton, 2015; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The goal of this methodology was to gain new insights and in-depth understandings of the phenomena and understand perspectives of people whose voices are limited in current empirical research (Lichtman, 2010; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). This design helps to explore an issue or concept comprehensively and thoroughly, in effort to fully understand it and to encourage dialogues for further investigations (Lichtman, 2010; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003).

Researcher's Lens

The researcher of this study has completed a Bachelor of Physical Education and a Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary), and is enrolled in a Master of Physical Education program. He currently works as a substitute teacher in the public school system, teaching both classroom and PHE at all grade levels. He also works within a youth corrections facility where he has observed the role that PHE can play in a troubled youths' life. Additionally, he is involved in the sport of freestyle wrestling at a provincial level. After years of competing, he has stepped into a leadership role in this sport as a coach and administrator.

The researcher views PHE as an important component of anyone's life. As he worked through his post-secondary degrees, he became more interested in primary/elementary PHE as he felt that the foundational skills acquired in the early years of PHE are important building blocks, for more complex skills in a students' later life. In addition, he believes PHE can have an important role in shaping students' attitude,

thoughts, and feelings toward healthy and active living, which can last throughout students' life-course.

Prior to the completion of his undergraduate degrees, he worked at an afterschool program. After witnessing an exclusive practice by an instructor leading a game with a group of children, as well as the unfavourable results of this approach, he was left unsettled and questioned the prevalence of exclusionary pedagogy in PHE. This event, coupled with foundational education garnered from an adapted physical activity course acted as the catalyst for his desire to pursue graduate school in the area of inclusive PHE, hoping to ultimately contribute to the assurance of a quality PHE that caters to all students with diverse backgrounds, needs, and aspirations in PHE.

Participants

Ethics approval was obtained from Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research at Memorial University of Newfoundland (ICEHR approval # 20171345-HK) prior to the recruitment of participants. To increase the variability of participants' characteristics (e.g., gender/sex, education levels, years in teaching, and status as a teacher) and transferability of research findings (i.e., the idea that the diversity of the participants would be representative of other PHE teachers), a purposeful maximum-variation sampling strategy was used. Snowball sampling strategy (i.e., a sampling technique where existing participants recruit future participants from their acquaintances) (Creswell & Poth 2017; Patton, 2015) was also utilized to increase opportunities to include information-rich participants (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Patton, 2015). This strategy helped to reduce researcher's bias in recruitment (i.e., selecting participants within proximity of the researcher's social and professional circles) (Creswell

& Poth 2017; Patton, 2015). Participants were selected if they (1) were a current, past, or substitute primary/elementary PHE teacher; (2) earned a Bachelor of Physical Education degree; and (3) were recommended by representatives of their school district. Overall, 11 PHE teachers (six males, and five females) participated in the study. The participants completed signed consent forms, and identifiable information was removed to protect their confidentiality. All names appeared in this thesis are pseudonyms. Participants were from various points in their careers as PHE teachers: seven participants were under 10 years of experience, and four participants were over 10 years of experience. Geographically, eight participants taught in an urban setting, and three particioants taught in a rural setting. These participants held a total of 28 university degrees (23 undergraduate and five graduate degrees) among them. There were 10 in-service teachers (three substitute/replacement teachers and seven permanent position teachers) and one recently-retired teacher. Detailed descriptions are presented in Table 1.

Data Collection

Face-to-face semi-structured interviews, field notes, reflective journal entries, and email correspondences were used as data to explore the perspectives and practices of inclusive pedagogy in PHE (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Patton, 2015). Interviews lasted between 60 to 90 minutes and were conducted in one-on-one setting (Fontana & Frey, 2005). The participants were asked open-ended questions such as "How would you describe inclusive pedagogy in PHE contexts?" "How do you understand inclusive pedagogy in your PHE program?", "What does an inclusive pedagogy look like in your PHE program?", and "What do you do to ensure inclusiveness in your day-to-day teaching practices? (See Appendix 1. Interview Guide). During the interview, the

researcher was free to explore, probe, and ask questions that would elucidate and illuminate the phenomena of day-to-day inclusive PHE pedagogy (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Fontana & Frey, 2005; Patton, 2015). Interviews were carried out at quiet and convenient locations for participants (e.g., their work place, their home, and researcher's office). All interviews maintained empathic neutrality throughout the entire duration (e.g., showing openness, sensitivity, respect, awareness, and responsiveness to participant in body language and response) (Pedersen, 2008). Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, and the transcriptions were checked with the participants (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Patton, 2015). Respondent validation (member checks) is the process where participants were given the opportunity to review the transcription to check the accuracy and to provide feedback, make changes, corrections, and/or clarifications on their transcription (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Patton, 2015). The participants were informed that they could have an opportunity to withdraw their participation at any time during the study.

Field notes were taken during and immediately after each interview (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Patton, 2015). Field notes included the contexts of interviews and preliminary observations about interviewees' responses, including the emotional state, body language, and other non-verbal cues of the participants (i.e., the contexts and settings of interviews), as well as the researcher's initial analysis of any phenomena that may of arose (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Patton, 2015). Reflective journal entries summarized researcher's personal thoughts and feelings on an event or experience during the research processes (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Patton, 2015). This journal broadly documented researcher's personal thoughts, insights, and feelings about the research. As a follow-up, email contact was

selectively made to clarify any details or further questions that have emerged during data collection and analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Patton, 2015). Field notes, reflective journal entries, and email correspondences were used as evidence supplementary to the interview data.

Data Analysis

A thematic analysis technique employing *data analysis spiral* (Creswell & Poth, 2017) was used to identify, analyze, and report themes within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The five steps of the data analysis processes were: (1) managing and organizing the data, (2) reading and memoing emergent ideas, (3) describing and classifying codes into themes, (4) developing and assessing interpretations, and (5) representing and visualizing the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Following the initial organization of data (i.e., assigning appropriate file names and locations, anonymizing participants' identifiers), thorough readings of the transcriptions commenced. Memoing of relevant ideas occurred during this initial phase of data analysis. Sets of codes were identified through the repeated processes of readings, and then codes were expanded by categorizing and adding relevant codes. Codes were continually modified and revised to ensure that there was no overlap or redundancies. Finally, codes were grouped into themes. Each theme or key concept was organized under the research question it applied to, and acted as the voices of the participants on inclusive pedagogy in PHE.

Trustworthiness

To increase the trustworthiness, *transferability, reflexivity, credibility, resonance, significant contribution, ethics*, and *coherence* was considered as quality criteria (Zitomer & Goodwin, 2014). To ensure *reflexivit*y (i.e., researcher's own critical reflections on

experiences, assumptions, and reactions throughout the research process), a reflective journal was kept, and referd to throughout the data analysis. To promote *credibility* (i.e., the strength of research findings), data triangulations (i.e., using multiple data sources) and member checking was performed (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Patton, 2015). To ensure *resonance* (i.e., impacts of the study on readers), research participants' quotes were presented verbatim in the results. To make a *significant contribution* (i.e., contributions to a deeper understanding and generation of insights to the field of study), research questions were developed to understand inclusive environments from teachers' perspectives. To maintain *ethics* (i.e., values and moral principles in research process), participants made aware of all stages and procedures of the research process. An open and respectful line of communication was maintained, between the participants and the researcher. Ethics clearance was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of Memorial University to ensure the ethics quality. *Coherence* (i.e., following a consistent, clear, and concise research paradigm) was established by carefully attending the underpinning philosophies and processes of explorative qualitative research design, and this process was reviewed by an expert (i.e., the researcher's, master's supervisor) (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Patton, 2015).

Chapter 4. Results

How Primary/Elementary PHE Teachers Understand Inclusive Pedagogy

Participants highlighted that inclusive environments in primary/elementary PHE are not limited to only accommodating students with impairments within PHE class. They understood that inclusive pedagogy is for everyone. While discussing their understandings of inclusive environments in PHE, however, participants perceived that inclusive pedagogy can be mission impossible—considering the diverse backgrounds of students and teachers, as well as the current construction of the educational system. They also acknowledged that creating a safe place would be a fundamental aspect for inclusive pedagogy in PHE.

For everyone. Each participant described their understandings of inclusive pedagogy in their own words, drawing from their personal experiences to frame their understanding, resulting in various articulations about the term. However, most participants described inclusive pedagogy concisely: inclusive pedagogy should be "for everyone." For example, Dean articulated, "Inclusion would be providing opportunities for all students regardless of ability." He continued with this sentiment by describing how inclusive pedagogy might look like through the eyes of an onlooker: "If a stranger were to walk into the gym and were able to justly identify a variety of challenges both physical and perhaps mental, they would say that is an inclusion, because everybody is active and everybody is doing something."

Notably, most participants' perceptions of inclusive pedagogy were not limited to only including students with impairments. According to Finn, "Inclusion will be more so adapting your current curriculum to suit those who are in need of alternate settings, or

alternate means of learning, so everyone is able to participate in the classroom with other students." Several participants, however, pointed out that some primary/elementary PHE teachers tended to think that inclusive pedagogy would be required merely for students with impairments. For example, Charles mentioned:

> A lot of people would not think about ESL [English as a second language], or ethnic diversity, or LGBTQ. They think about the ones [i.e., students with impairments] that have been talked about for years. They do not think about the child who is transgendered, or the child who is very bright, but who can only speak English at a grade two level, but he is a Grade six. We have a lot of Aboriginal students, we have white people, and then we have children who are of Innu descent and children who are Métis, and we are all here in the same class. Inclusion is much more than that.

Barnaby also noted that this "limited or narrow diverse perspective" and "old-school [i.e., out dated] and obsolete pedagogy" in PHE still exist, because some teachers "never had education about inclusion" and "had segregation at the beginning of their careers." However, he predicted that "this mentality, kind of the missed potential and even the lack of respect in a lot of ways, will die off with the teachers who are coming out fresh and want to teach it with more diverse manner." Kacy also expected that, "Newer teachers may have a better understanding where we have been exposed to it from the beginning of our career."

With such anticipation, these participants perceived alternatively that, as articulated by Charles, "Everything and anything that falls under diversity" should be

considered in inclusive pedagogy, including the aspects of diverse backgrounds, needs, abilities, and aspirations. James and Helen further explained:

> Inclusion is that, regardless of where they come from, based on their own perspectives and their own strengths and weaknesses, everyone is involved as much as they are capable of being involved and working to the best of their ability. The environment is not geared towards one group of students over another, or it is not aimed at students with certain strengths to the exclusion of groups with other strengths or weaknesses (James).
>
> I guess when I think of inclusiveness, I think of the general classroom, where you actually need to look at each child, and [observe] who is not performing as well as the others and then you try to gear it to meet the needs of every student (Helen).

For this reason, according to these participants, inclusive pedagogy in PHE can be understood as a broader meaning: a pedagogy of interacting with students with *diversity* (instead of merely working with students with *disability*) in PHE contexts.

Some participants further discussed that promoting an “equal” or “same” opportunity for everyone does not always promote “equity” in inclusive pedagogy in PHE. They argued that some students would need extra supports to meaningfully participate in PHE and might require an alternative setting to fully participate in certain circumstances. For example, Charles addressed this notion, “They can all still learn, they can all still meet the curriculum outcomes, but they do not have to do necessarily what everyone else is doing.” As such, these participants articulated that inclusive pedagogy in

PHE involves a practice of ensuring *equity* for everyone (instead of merely promoting *equality* of learning opportunities).

But mission impossible. Participants understood that inclusive pedagogy would be a critical aspect for ensuring students' human rights. They thus acknowledged that it should be practiced fairly and equitably for all students in their classroom. Nevertheless, participants also perceived simultaneously that creating and sustaining inclusive environments could be "very hard"—considering the diverse backgrounds of students and teachers, as well as the current construction of the educational system. Charles highlighted the difficulty of being inclusive, considering the diverse educational needs, preferences, and aspirations within his PHE classroom:

> You might have a class where there is a language barrier, there is a child with autism, there is a child with a physical disability. It is not always possible to do an activity that includes all three of them. You might be doing something to try to accommodate the child with autism, but sometimes for every action, there is an opposite reaction. You might be sort of making it more difficult for a different child of diversity, a completely different unique challenge within the same activity. So, the actual concept of diversity often can be a negative influence on inclusion.

Alice also explained such complexity within inclusive pedagogy using an example about the potential implications of cultural/religious backgrounds on inclusive PHE teaching practices:

> Well I have had with religion, with Jehovah's witness for example. You are doing activities you put on Christmas music, you add a Christmas theme to a game, and I mean that is part of the common general culture. But you know they do not participate. There are the religious sides, cultural things, people and children not speaking the language. Culture, this is interesting, because I say physical education is a lot to deal with social interactions. Sometimes there are attitudes toward females from certain cultures, like I had certain students who did not listen to me, because they sort of disregard females in that kind of authoritative position. Sometimes, they treat other people very physical and aggressive. I had one student hit another student, and I took him aside to talk to him while the game continued. When I spoke to him, his response was, "Miss, in my country, brother kills brother."

Given this complex nature of inclusive pedagogy in PHE, however, participants perceived that there was a lack of opportunities for professional development in the area of diversity and inclusion within PHE contexts. According to Finn,

> This year I had a one PD [professional development] session, and that was it, you know I have not had the opportunity to get out there and really talk to other Phys Ed teachers, especially primary/elementary. I was definitely at a disadvantage in that sense, I guess I was left to my own, and I tried as many things as I could, but I do not think I have mastered it by any means.

Participants thus called to an attention for adequate diversity education opportunities for primary/elementary PHE teachers to improve inclusiveness in their pedagogic practices. For example, Charles stated that, "I think the most important thing is to continually educate our teachers on everything that falls under diversity and inclusion and then just trying to provide them with as many possible resources and tools as we can." James also stated that, "If teachers have more positive experiences with the properly supported inclusive environments run by people with some experience and can see an inclusive environment run well, they will have more confidence in their own abilities to implement these."

Additionally, some participants identified that the current construction of the educational system could negatively influence inclusive pedagogic practices in PHE. James stated that, "I try to make my space in my program as inclusive as possible, but I do not think that it is feasible for a teacher to have a truly inclusive program in the way that the school system is currently set up." Kacy further noted that the problem could not only be with the teachers' preferences and willingness about inclusive pedagogy in their PHE, but also be with the larger educational system:

> The big issue with our inclusion is that it is promoted, but it is not backed up. In the school system, they want us to provide a fully inclusive environment which we do not have a problem with. But we do not have enough resources to do so.

Most participants pointed out that they are often assigned with extra responsibilities as a PHE teacher, which lead them to experience a "burnout." Dean described such situations: "I had the jogging club, I had the gardening club, I had all the

intramural groups and ski group, and I was burning out. It is very hard when that is the expectation from your school." For this reason, participants perceived that inclusive pedagogy is a desirable ideal, but it can be beyond a teacher's capacity, feeling pessimistic that inclusive pedagogy in PHE can be mission impossible. Dean articulated that, considering such circumstances, inclusive pedagogy can be "mission impossible, perhaps you have to pick your situations. Maybe, you have to limit yourself. It is really unfortunate that it has come down to that, but you have to be a realist too."

Some participants also highlighted that limited time and supports could make inclusive pedagogy in PHE mission impossible. Finn clearly stated that "If you do not have the support, there is always going to be students that are going to suffer." James echoed this sentiment:

> You have limited time with students. We do not always get the full timeframe. Sometimes students with diversity need extra time to get acclimated to a setting. You cannot just tell kids to do something. You cannot have an inclusive classroom without a few supports involved. You need people. You need time, equipment, and supports. You need all those things together to have an inclusion.

Participants also described their concerns about current construction of the educational system in pursuing inclusive pedagogy. For example, "class sizes were getting bigger" to address all students' educational needs, and teachers, "did not have the opportunity to work one-on-one with some students who need it" due to the bigger class size. Insufficient resources such as having only "three student assistances for 750 kids," limited space where "40 to 50 sometimes up to 55 students were in a gym at a time," and

inaccessible built environments of schools where “students were struggling to get in and out of the gym on their own” were also identified as factors negatively influencing their inclusive pedagogy in PHE. Sarah, therefore, called to attention to reform the construction of the current educational system and provide PHE teachers to have “the wherewithal to have an inclusive environment,” thereby inclusive pedagogy becomes a “mission possible.”

Create a safe place. Participants perceived that promoting “safety” within PHE contexts would be a fundamental aspect for inclusive pedagogy. Kacy articulated that a safe PHE environment can be described as a place where “Everyone feels welcome and is treated with dignity.” Dean perceived that a lowered sense of safety within PHE contexts could negatively contribute to the motivation in PHE participation: “If you are not comfortable in that environment, you are more likely to do less, and it becomes an afterthought as opposed to something first and foremost in your mind.” According to participants, engaging in inclusive pedagogy thus involves an establishment of a place where students can develop a heightened sense of belonging. James also described such environment:

> It is a place for students, and that this area is a place where they can go, and they feel like they are part of something, and where they try to get the meaningful product out of it, try to get enjoyment, try to be better themselves, and try to learn a few new things along the way.

Charles further described this place by highlighting the welcoming atmosphere of this environment:

> The most important part is making them feel comfortable and welcomed. I try to always promote acceptance, and how it is okay to make mistakes, or it is okay to not be the best. If it is a game where you score a goal, there are other ways to do that, there is other ways you can contribute, there is other ways that you can develop skills or you can participate in activity regardless of what the challenge is. So just trying to make the gym a place of comfort for everybody, so they feel included and welcomed in the gym.

For this reason, participants understood that a broadened idea of safety—that is, understanding safety by considering various areas within PHE contexts such as physical, emotional, spiritual, and cultural domains—should be considered in pursuing inclusive pedagogy in PHE. Dean explained this holistic notion by highlighting that teaching in PHE should be practiced based on the appreciation and acceptance of students' individual differences within various domains:

> It is a space where it does not matter what comes between the doors. You allow students to come in and participate in a meaningful way and enjoy a variety of experiences. It does not matter about physical limitations, mental limitations, or cultural limitations. All who come should be welcomed.

Participants further pointed out that inclusive pedagogy should employ "students-tailored" approaches based upon such awareness on diversity and safety, as Helen stated: "Tailor it to the child, so they can get to different levels, so that they can actually achieve success, and that is the ultimate." Then, according to James, inclusive pedagogy involves

creating safe space where the educational focuses are not on students' deficits or weaknesses, but on strengths:

> If you know you have a population of students that have some strengths in one area, I think really inclusion means gearing your program towards strength the students have and highlighting the strengths, instead of always try to correct deficits, or focusing on what students cannot do, or are not able to do. We need to switch our focus, so students have success in their own way to participate a lot more or have a lot more fun.

Several participants indicated that welcoming and safe environment in PHE can be created by students themselves, thereby creating and encouraging those opportunities are important in pursuing inclusive pedagogy in PHE. Charles observed this aspect during his PHE class: "When there is an uneven number, someone is left out. My students say, 'You can join our group,' and calling them in and say, 'We will work in a triangle [group of three, instead of pairs].' They reached out and they have included other students in that way." Charles further discussed the importance of encouraging students to be welcoming and inclusive to each other to foster a "trickle-down effect from teacher"—that is, a positive educational outcome, that inclusive culture becomes a norm within PE program. He articulated that "You can see that even within students that there is teaching and learning happening, and there is inclusion amongst themselves."

Some participants highlighted that creating safe environments can be a complex task, considering the diverse upbringings or situations among students. Alice provided an

example of exclusionary attitudes among students, that were created by unfamiliar and intimidating factors:

> Sometimes, students are intimidated by other students so they do not want to work with certain individuals in the gym. Sometimes, students are not very clean, and they come from a certain background where hygiene is not something that is dealt with properly. Sometimes, students do not work with other students because of physical appearance or body odor.

Due to this complexity, according to these participants, inclusive pedagogy often involves dealing with students who have negative experiences in PHE and inclusion, such as: students with a lack of competencies in PHE, and saying "I cannot do it. I am not good at it;" students who are "not comfortable with their body shape or size" and "feel body-shamed and judged;" students who "always feel like an outsider" due to a perception that PE teachers "do not talk to them" or "do not seem to care to push them for improvement;" and students who are embarrassed and "othered" by peers due to the perceived differences in appearance and abilities in relation to PHE.

According to participants, exclusive practices in PHE could also happen at various levels and contexts within PHE, thus difficult to create safe environments. James provided an example—that is, the hidden and "invisible" consequences of current policy on PHE attire:

> Clothing is a social justice kind of stuff. Kids do not need to be, or do not need to feel bad about themselves, if they need to change. I think we really need to get away from the need to wear "gym clothes" to gym. I grew up in an economically

depressed area. Most students did not change to go to gym class, because you only had two or three pairs clothes anywhere. We need to do a better job of saying, 'Come as you are,' if the kid wants to wear jeans in the gym. It is not going to stop them. They do not need to be submitted to stigmatization.

He continued to articulate that the potentially harmful effect from the current policy on PHE attire can threaten the comfort level of the child, thereby serve as an exclusionary factor within PHE contexts: "The change room is a hard place for a lot of students, and getting changed in there for different reasons, like body-image reasons. There are students who come in with different experiences from home. Some kids could have traumatic experiences." As such, participants understood that inclusive pedagogy in PHE involves having "cultural sensitivity" in teaching practices to maintain safe environments, as Emile remarked: "Halloween-based activities, Christmas-based activities, Easter-based activities, some students are not allowed to participate in those. So, you got to be mindful. This is where you need to know your students and their culture, their race and what not." Finally, Charles noted that the complex nature of inclusive pedagogy makes it "very open-ended process," thereby fostering students' well-being and safety in and through teaching practices "is a continual work in progress."

What Primary/Elementary PHE Teachers Do to Ensure Inclusiveness

In order to create and maintain inclusive environments in PHE, participants highlighted what they do in their day-to-day pedagogic practices: (1) planning from the beginning using a universal pedagogical design; (2) sharing ownership of teaching and learning with students by providing students leadership roles and responsibilities, and by

ensuring students' choices in learning; (3) building rapports and positive relationships with students and maintain affirmative partnerships with co-educators; and (4) being responsive and flexible by mindfully implementing adaptation strategies, and engaging in critical reflections on their own inclusive pedagogic practices.

Plan universally from the beginning. According to participants, planning for inclusion in PHE should not be an after-thought. They stated that they plan inclusive PHE lessons "from the very beginning" with the careful considerations on students' needs and preferences in learning. Finn provided an example of an individualized PHE plan that is prepared ahead of time to accommodate one student's educational need.

> I had a student in grade 6 who just moved here, and she was from Philippines, so she had never seen snow before, until she came here. I planned it ahead of time to take her outside on good days so that she could get as much time [to explore snow]. She was very thankful for going outside before going snowshoeing.

Participants also stated that they plan their PHE lessons ahead of time, with the manner of "universal" pedagogic design. Charles explained this concept:

> It is trying to do an activity that is appropriate for all students, considering students' skill levels, knowledge, capabilities. It can be modified or adapted for people who have physical or mental disabilities, or learning disorders, or even like low confidence or low self-esteem. It is putting something in an activity that everybody can take part in at the same time.

Participants mentioned various ways of engaging in universal pedagogic design in PHE. For example, they prepared a "protocols" during the planning phase for likely supports, modifications, and/or adaptations during the delivery of their PHE lesson, as Alice noted, "I have protocols. Some students who are not capable of listening to instructions, I have a plan, so the student assistant is there." Charles also provided an example of using a planned protocol as a form of a social story on the wall for a student with an anxiety disorder in his PHE class: "If the student ever had an outburst of frustration of losing, the student assistant would take him to the story on the wall" to relieve the student's anxiety. Some participants also used similar strategies such as "routinization" and "heads-up announcement" to share their lesson plans and protocols ahead of time with the students. According to James, having a "routine is big" when "a lot of students are wary of trying new things or are fearful." He explained that, "when there is no surprise" by making routines and sharing information about the planned protocols, "they feel secure and safe and happy, and they are more likely to try new things." James also noted that, "build-up anticipation makes it something to look forward to, by preloading the activity and getting someone prepared for that." He continued,

> You can do almost the lead-up to it. Some students will want to know about that beforehand, and get them to mentally prepared for that. We got a couple of really fearful children, so if they know what is coming for them, it is better, because they can prepare for that. That is because surprises are tough for them.

Participants also highlighted that they universally plan and mindfully vary modification/adaptation ideas to include all learners. For this reason, they pointed out that

their planned activities are easily modifiable, as James noted: “I bring in more easily modifiable games, so everybody can do a certain way.” He also noted that he prepares “simple” and “familiar” activities, thereby those activities can be easily altered during the delivery of the lesson:

> Students struggle with loud noise, students with hearing difficulties, English as second language students, and there’s something going on across the gym. One thing that I try to do is plan things as simple and as familiar as possible, even when we’re introducing new activities and new things.

For these participants, therefore, preparing alternative equipment and resources were essential for inclusive pedagogy in PHE. Alice articulated that “There is no one left out because of their ability and equipment. Different equipment should be available to meet different needs: lighter, heavier, bigger, smaller.”

Some participants noted that they also plan variations in delivery methods at the outset. For example, Charles planned a visualized delivery method for his PHE class. According to him, “There are a lot of First Nations and Aboriginal Peoples, so sometimes there is somewhat of a language barrier.” Therefore, he prepared visualized materials (e.g., a layout of the gym set-up and rules of the activities) to “allow the kids to visualize it and see how it works.” Using a modeling instructional stratgey (i.e., students observe the teacher demonstrating the the task or skill, prior to engaging with it themselves) was another example. Alice stated that preparing materials and plans for this delivery method would be especially helpful for students “who may or may not get the verbal instructions, but follow the physical cues of the demonstration” to fully participate in the planned

activities. Charles also explained a benefit of preparing this delivery method in his universal PHE lesson plans:

> If you have someone that has a language barrier, may be an ESL student, they may not understand everything that is in a verbal explanation. But, that is where you could use modelling and examples. They may learn visually even though they do not necessarily understand the language. That also works very well for students with autism or learning disabilities. It is a very good way to include them.

Share ownership with students. According to participants, pursuing inclusive pedagogy in PHE involves the sharing of ownership with students in learning, as Emile remarked: "I get kids involved. Get the kids to be the teachers, where they get to create their own games. It gives the kids a chance to kind of get up and involved." Emile continued that she provides this leadership role and responsibility to the students to enhance their sense of ownership in learning: "It puts them in a position to lead themselves and have their own say in the program." Barnaby echoed this sentiment by highlighting the potential benefit of providing students opportunities to take part in the teaching and learning process in PHE:

> They feel like they are in charge. Just give them leadership and a little bit of responsibility, and the input I found was huge. Keeps them interested, and that keeps them motivated to come in and participate, and motivated in being diverse in trying all the people's ways.

Participants pointed out that students' voices are foundational information for planning, delivery, and evaluation in inclusive PHE program. To enhance the sense of students' ownership in learning, therefore, participants were actively involved in identifying the "first-hand perspectives" from their students. Finn stated that "I look at it in the sense that like I was a student in their position, what would I like and how would I want to be included in this activity." Charles also articulated that:

> Your best resources are the kids. They are going to be honest with you. I will say, "Hey, how did you find that activity today?" You can tell right away if they hesitate. Then, "Okay, so you did not really like it that much. If we were going to do that tomorrow, if you were teaching the class, what would you do?" They might say, "I would have lowered the net, I would have used two balls, I would have allowed the ball to do this." They teach me just as much as I teach them.

Participants also stated that they use students' opinions as a source of knowledge in planning and delivery of their PHE program. According to Barnaby: "I like hearing opinions that the students have. I like hearing their input, and so it helps me facilitate the next sessions." Finn also used such conversations with students to understand the educational needs of students and the culture amongst them within PHE contexts.

> I would ask them how they would want me to do it, so what I would do is just ask for permission or ask them about their culture. What is different than what we do, and they will tell me, maybe three things to suit their needs more so than the other children. It is going to get them out of their comfort zone, as well to get me to come to understand their culture.

Some participants also actively communicated with the students about the aspect that teachers were listening to students' voices, as a way of recognizing and encouraging students' participation in the teaching and learning process, as Charles communicated with his students in a class: "I said to the class. 'Hey, they made up a game the other day at recess, and it looks like it could be a lot of fun, so we are going to try it today.' And now those kids feel like they are the coolest people in the world."

Participants also remarked that providing students "choice" in learning in PHE is imperative to enhance the sense of ownership in their PHE programs. As highlighted by James:

> Choice is important in inclusion. Even if someone can do something, they might not always want to do it at that time. If you give them the choice to pick between three activities, they will find one that speaks to them. Anytime if you can give choice, it is better, because if students feel that they have ownership of what they are doing, or they get to pick, the buy-in is way better.

Finn also articulated that his efforts in providing choice promoted students' reception of PHE. He observed: "When you start giving children opportunities to pick and choose, I think they become a little more willing. Putting a little bit more the power into the kids' hands in a restricted way, they will be 110% in, because they had a choice." Notably, he alerted concurrently that PHE teachers should carefully consider the potential implications of providing students choices and leadership roles on the curriculum outcomes:

> You give them opportunities and choices to make their own, and you limit it and tailor it, so it covers the curriculum right. I guess narrowing the options—giving them options, but narrowing—so that they cover the curriculum.

In addition, some participants highlighted that they share ownership with students in co-creating inclusive PHE learning environments by "being open about inclusion and talking about it with the kids on a daily basis." Charles continued:

> I think young students do a very good job of being inclusive when the environment is set up that they can do so. If they feel they can help their friends, and they can help everybody in the class, if they are encouraged to include everybody, if they are encouraged to make to modify games, to change the rules, they will do that. A lot of students will guide each other through activities, if you give them the ownership to do so and the skills to do that.

Charles also described the ways in which the enhanced sense of ownership and leadership could make students to be motivated in creating inclusive environments in PHE:

> I went to that student [who included another student without being asked], and I said, "You took it upon yourself to go and include that child, he had a lot of fun. That meant a lot to him more than you know." Now, next time because that made them feel good, maybe in the next class, that child would be thinking "Ok, what can I do, anything to help?"

Finally, he pointed out that providing students' leadership role in an early age would promote the sustainability of such motivation of students:

> Starting at a young age. If you foster inclusion into your kindergartens, you kind of have it. You start them young, and as they move up, they will continue to be inclusive. But not only that they are going to understand it more, and they are going to learn better how to be inclusive as well. You can kind of build, then as they move up to be more inclusive, and then it just becomes second nature. That is one way that you could put in for the long term.

Make positive relationships and partnerships. Participants stated that they make endeavors to create positive relationships with students as a way of pursuing inclusive pedagogy in their PHE programs. Finn remarked that making his extra efforts to "know students" on a personal level contributed to enhance students' comfort level within his PHE program, thereby increased students' motivation and reception of PHE:

> They see Mr. Finn who is a gym teacher and who likes sports, but he also asks me about my weekend or whatever, how is their grandmother. If I can build trust and that rapport with the students, they would eventually thrive in not only the Phys Ed class, but they would also thrive in the hallways and outside of school. I try to go see hockey games for the kids or a figure skating show, so they can see that I care, and if they see my efforts, they are more receptive.

Charles pointed out that "Every single kid is a completely different case, and it's not like one-size-fits-all," and they communicate with teachers about these differences upon the

built rapports. According to him, making a positive relationship with students would thus be a critical aspect for inclusive pedagogy: “Especially children with diversity, they have lived it their whole life. They know what they are comfortable with, and if they are comfortable with you, they will tell you. They have to feel comfortable around you.” He further articulated that having positive relationships with students helped him to engage in individualized and caring approach within his pedagogic practices in PHE: “Once you understand those things, you know who is the outgoing one, who is the one that does not like getting singled out. It actually changes the way you teach.”

Participants described several ways to build rapports with their students. Charles used outside of classroom time to build rapports with students: “Unstructured time, like recess and lunch time, I will try to pick a group of kids or a kid every day, and I will go over and take part in whatever they are doing.” In addition, Finn spoke about his efforts in getting rapports at the early stage in the program:

> What I have done this year was to get the trust of the students early, and find activities early that gain trust so that when I asked students to do something, and if it is not a comfort zone, I asked them to trust me. If they know me and they say yes, it makes much easier to approach the certain activities.

Finn further described that he tried to create a sense of safety and trust with the students prior to providing activity tasks in his PHE program: “A lot of inclusion aspects of my program had to do with trust and safety. One thing that I do is to reassure my students getting that rapport before I want them to get to a certain stage.” Some participants noted

that they also put an extra effort to build rapport with students who might have a lack of motivation, interest, and competency in PHE. According to Finn:

> I would say building a rapport with the athletic kids was easy. It was the other students, the ones who did not like Phys Ed or [who] went to Phys Ed and did not care for the sport aspect of it. Knowing this, I went out of my way to talk to them to learn what kind of things they like. I certainly make an extra effort instead of always gravitating towards the other kids, I try to make myself more available to those who are a little more hesitant to be part of the class.

Several participants stated that they try to make relationships with parents/guardians as a strategy to promote inclusive pedagogy in their PHE programs, acknowledging the influences of students' "home life" on their behaviors and attitudes at school. Charles experienced that "If the kids are not being taught, or they are not practicing inclusion at home, you already have an uphill battle right away. You are fighting against their home life. Those things always negatively impact inclusion." For this reason, he deliberately communicated with parents/guardians about students' positive learning experiences in PHE to promote the engagement of parents/guardians in inclusive pedagogy.

> I included the parents more. Just touching base with them on how their kid is doing. Try to tell them something good that their kid has done. Or something that their kid learned, something that their kid has progressed on. And that makes the kid feel good, because mom and dad gives them some attention and some praise.

> It makes mom and dad feel good that the teacher is continuing to look at their children, and their child is doing well, it is a win-win for everybody.

Participants highlighted the importance of making positive partnerships with educational practitioners within school (e.g., classroom teacher, student assistant, and administrator) in pursuing inclusive pedagogy in PHE, anticipating the negative consequences of "disconnections" amongst them. Charles articulated that "If we are not all on the same page, or one co-worker does not really think inclusion is important, well that is going to cause an issue." He then continued, articulating that:

> Consistency between teachers can have a positive effect.… Sometimes if I am struggling with the child, or if the child is off a bit, the first thing I do is go to the classroom teacher after and say, "Hey, what is on the go with so and so" or "I am having trouble with so and so" or I might say "so and so is having trouble with this certain concept."

James also remarked that he tried to have "time to collaborate with classroom teachers," "common prep time with other teachers," and "time for information sharing" with teachers in the school to enhance the inclusiveness in his PHE program: "I share strategies that I use in the gym. I go and tell the classroom teacher, 'I do this, and it's been working wonderful. I don't know if it would work in here, but you can give it a shot.'" In addition, Emile commented that she particularly valued the inputs and supports from student assistants who work with students with special needs. She experienced that "They know the students more than I do, they are with them all day long, so they always give me

some good ideas" to accommodate their educational needs and preferences in her PHE program.

Whereas, several participants pointed out that there is a lack of connections, generally, between teachers and administrators in creating inclusive PHE environments. Sarah remarked that "Administration generally has very little influence on the inclusive pedagogy in PE. They will be like, if you follow this, great, if you don't follow this, still great." Gabe further described this situation: "They check in every now and then to see how we are doing things like that, but for the most part, it is our own way." Exceptionally, one participant provided an example of an effort by school administration to increase the inclusive culture within school in relation to PHE. The event was held as a form of unified PHE. Alice described the enhanced sense of community of the student body, because of the administration's support in providing such opportunity for cross-grade interactions among students within the school:

> The grade sixes are the leaders. They are student leaders. They have been given that role, and they look out in particular for the kindergarteners, so they will take the kindergarteners by the hand when we do team activities. There is a sense of community.

Be flexible and reflexive in teaching. Participant highlighted the complex and temporal nature of inclusive pedagogy in PHE. According to Charles, "Every single class, every single student is different. Every teacher has a certain style, and you are continually manipulating and modifying and adapting that every day, every class, every lesson." Emile also described this complexity within inclusive PHE contexts: "It has got to be

based on the student, the teacher, and other students in the class, environment. A lot of factors have got to come into play." Recognizing such complexity, she further described that inclusive pedagogy in PHE is, "not set in stone, but everything is trial and error." For this reason, the quality of "flexibility" and "responsiveness" in teaching was emphasized within participants' pedagogic practices in PHE. According to Barnaby:

> Every day is a little bit of trial and error. Some of these strategies work with some classes, and they have not worked in other classes. Trying different strategies are a big part of adopting a diverse inclusive outlook. So, everything needs to be on the fly.

Kacy also described her inclusive pedagogic practices in her PHE program, acknowledging the importance of flexibility and responsiveness in teaching: "You just do it on the go. You adapt to the needs of that specific moment."

Participants further described the ways in which they were engaged in such "flexible" and "responsive" pedagogy in their PHE programs. Alice stated that adjusting learning outcomes based on students' abilities provided a flexibility in her teaching: "Adjust your expectations. Sometimes you adjust what they are doing, if they are not able to do one thing, you adjusted it to something that may be a lead up to the next thing." Charles shard that he could be flexible in teaching by providing different meaningful roles to the students in his PHE program:

> Giving them a different role within the activity that still has them involved. They may not be able to do everything that is required in that activity, but you can still

> get them a different role that they take ownership of, and they still feel included, just like everybody else in the class.

Emphasizing the importance of the “flexibility” and “responsiveness” in pursuing inclusive pedagogy within PHE programs, participants also identified that the quality of “reflexivity” would be a fundamental aspect for the success of inclusion in PHE. Charles described this quality by providing his teaching philosophy in PHE: “My philosophy as a teacher is that I never stop being a student.” Participants noted that they are engaged in reflexive pedagogy by continually assessing and re-assessing their own pedagogic practices; and being critical and reflective about their own teaching. Emile also described the kind of expectations that PHE teachers should pursue in their teaching to be inclusive:

> There is always a room for improvement. I think that the biggest thing that teacher should be doing is that they should be reviewing themselves as a teacher. They should be going over what they did, how it worked, how they can improve.

Participants offered insights into the ways of engaging in reflexive practices that would help the promotion of inclusiveness in their PHE programs. For example, Charles remarked that critical reflections about their own teaching should be conducted as a continual and ongoing manner. “I think, as a teacher, every class, every lesson, every day, we need to take a five or ten-minutes to reflect back and say, ‘Was it the best it could be? Was it effective?’” He further stated that these reflexive practices could be expanded through other experiences in daily conduct: “You just pick up on things all the time. If I

am at a conference or a tournament, I watch other teams and other coaches. Through reflecting and talking to people and experimenting, you figure out what works."

Participants also highlighted that they were engaged in reflexive practices collaboratively with other PHE teachers within their school. Typically, these opportunities occurred as a form of an informal meeting. Finn described such moment as an "afternoon chat in my office with my fellow PE teachers." According to him, he could "bounce ideas off other teachers and see what they did, what worked, what did not work." Kacy also described this type of casual conversations with other PHE teachers as an opportunity for improving her inclusive pedagogy in her PHE program: "We do very informally, nothing like sit down. We just reflect on what we did and just change it or make improvements for next time." She further described that her reflexive practices also occurred as a form of observation on other teachers' inclusive PHE pedagogy: "I see their strategies that they use, and then I will use them or modified them. Not everything in the textbook works in the real-life. At least that way you are getting real-life experiences." Similarly, Barnaby also mentioned that critical observations on experienced PHE teachers' inclusive pedagogy helped him to generate ideas for his prospective teaching practices in his PHE program:

> I swiped inclusion ideas from experienced teachers, because I saw them in action. I saw how they work. Nitpick and see which ones I like, and then implement them or tweak them a little bit to do my own thing. I got a lot of mine from watching other teachers use them.

Some participants noted that they were engaged in reflexive practices with other PE teachers outside of their schools to enhance their inclusive pedagogy in PHE. For example, Gabe described an affirmative group he co-created with other PHE teachers to share ideas about inclusive pedagogy:

> It is through our own efforts that we form the group. We formed a committee that hosted a conference, and we just wanted to keep that group together after the conference. We basically just pulled all the teachers together, usually once a year for PD session, and what we discussed is basically just a big sharing session about how to do Phys Ed inclusively.

Charles also provided an example of engaging in collaborative reflexive practice with his online "Google Doc" PHE teacher reflection group on inclusive pedagogy:

> There is always more research and new ideas. We are continually communicating with each other to discuss what works best. It kind of gives you as many options or resources as you can possibly have, and it keeps you educated on it. You can never have too many strategies or too many ways of being inclusive.

Several participants also stated that they continually sought self-driven and self-directed educational opportunities to improve their inclusive pedagogy. According to Dean:

> If I did a course on inclusion during my degree, and I never ever look back at that. There are always new strategies and new things coming up. If I just say I know what that is, well, what I learned five years ago might not be the best strategy any

> more. You do not just get your degree, and you know everything. There is a million ways you can reflect and manipulate and modify and adapt to make things better or change.

Sarah also echoed this sentiment hoping that other PHE teachers "take it upon themselves to do some research" on inclusive pedagogy within PHE contexts. She continued, "If you are not sure about something, call a colleague or check online, or something along those lines, rather than just going through the motions." Lastly, Finn further discussed the need for continual self-education on diversity aspects in PHE contexts as a way of increasing teachers' cultural sensitivity and ensuring students' cultural safety:

> There was a severe amount of diversity students shown the various shapes and sizes, and various religious beliefs, and so on and so forth. You always have to be very careful that you do not cross any boundaries. So I find that I need to broaden my horizon and keep up-to-date with all the diversity.

Chapter 5. Discussion

The perspectives of participants have revealed insights on inclusive pedagogy within primary and elementary PHE contexts. Participants described their understanding about inclusive pedagogy, as well as specific practices and approaches they utilized to establish and sustain inclusive environments in their PHE programs. This chapter will discuss those insights from the participants along with the current knowledge base in the field of study.

Primary/Elementary PHE Teachers' Perspectives on Inclusive Pedagogy

The findings of this study add to the iterature a broadened view of inclusion from a diversity and equity lens. They also perceived that inclusive pedagogy can be "mission impossible" tasks, considering the diverse and complex nature of this teaching practice, as well as the unsupportive realities within the educational contexts. They also understood that pursuing inclusive pedagogy involves creating social acceptance and cultural safety within their teaching practices.

Broadened view of inclusive pedagogy: Disability vs. diversity. The findings of this study clearly revealed that inclusive pedagogy should not be limited to focusing merely on working with students with impairments. All students in PHE contexts arrive with different personal experiences that shape their identities and worldviews. This subsequently means that students' value systems, social and cultural backgrounds, and identities are not all uniform (Dagkas et al., 2011; Doolittle et al., 2016; Flintoff, Dowling, & Fitzgerald, 2015; Li et al., 2013; Rukavina & Doolittle, 2016; Reid, 2003). For this reason, as noted by the participants, PHE is for all students, and inclusive pedagogy should thus be focusing on everyone in the PHE programs. Alberta Education

(2016) also notes that "Inclusion is not just about learners with special needs. It is an attitude and approach that embraces diversity and learner differences and promotes equal opportunities for all learners" (para 1).

The findings further suggest that inclusive pedagogy involves celebrating the various cultural landscapes of students and their individual differences, and accommodate such diversity in the PHE program (Casey & Kentel, 2014; Reid, 2003). Several authors also have claimed that quality PHE is characterized by having inclusiveness within the programs, and this can be exemplified by offering PHE programs that are respectful and representative of all students (Goodwin & Watkinson, 2000; Reid, 2003; Sherrill, 2003; Vickerman, 2007). Inclusive pedagogy in PHE should thus be understood as a broader meaning: a pedagogy of interacting with students with *diversity*.

Broadened view of inclusion: Equality vs. equity. *Equality* refers to "the quality or state of being equal" (Merriam-Webster, 2017), whereas *equity* refers to "giving value to, and celebrating social and cultural differences of individuals and in society" (Penney, 2000). Ensuring equality within PHE contexts thus refers to providing equal educational opportunities in the programs. For example, *integrated* PE was provided for students with impairments under the service-based paradigm, which focused on the placement (i.e., placing all students in regular PE programs to provide equal opportunities for all) without careful considerations on the support systems (Goodwin et al., 2003). Such equality-based approach thus categorized, grouped, and placed students with impairments in the same PHE programs and generalized the supports, which did not guarantee the implementation of appropriate educational aids (Stainback & Stainback, 1992; Kerzner-Lipsky, & Gartner, 1992). Whereas, equity within PHE contexts refers to providing fair and

equitable opportunities for all students to learn and participate in PHE programs with appropriate educational supports (e.g., equipment, built environments of schools, instructional resources, and individualized education plans), which was emphasized under the support-based paradigm in adapted PE (Goodwin et al., 2003). According to Goodwin and Watkinson (2000), *inclusiv*e PE within the support-based paradigm can be defined as:

> Providing all students with disabilities with the opportunity to participate in regular physical education with their peers, with supplementary aides and support services as needed to take full advantage of the goals of motor skill acquisition, fitness, knowledge of movement, and psycho-social well-being, toward the outcome of preparing all students for an active lifestyle appropriate to their abilities and interests.

The findings of this research also highlighted that focusing on providing equitable, fair, and supportive opportunities in PHE programs—moving beyond from providing merely the equal placement opportunities—is more appropriate for the establishment and sustainability of inclusion. Inclusive pedagogy in PHE should thus be understood as a practice of ensuring *equity* for everyone.

Frustration: Working with diverse students. All students in PHE programs have their own backgrounds and individualities. Statistics can extend on this notion and help describe the diversity of people. Canada for example, nearly 20% of the population was foreign-born in 2006, and is projected to increase to over 25% by year 2030 (Statistics Canada, 2016). Approximately 20% of Canadian population is belonging to a visible minority group and over 65% of the total population reported as being affiliated

with a Christian religion, whereas 33% of population reported as being either affiliated with a non-Christian religion or no affiliation to any religion (Statistics Canada, 2016). Estimated 10% of the entire population reported as having some type of impairments and diagnosed medical conditions without including the *invisible disabilities* (i.e., medical conditions that are not immediately observable such as fibromyalgia and diabetes) (Statistics Canada, 2016). Approximately 4% of population reported as having Indigenous identities (i.e., First Nations Peoples, Métis, and Inuit) and 16% of people in Canada are from lone-parent families (Statistics Canada, 2016). As briefly highlighted in the statistics, all people are different in nature, and such diverse nature would also be presented in PHE contexts (Giangreco & Doyle, 2007; Jacobsen, Frankenberg, & Lenhoff, 2012; Lieberman et al., 2004; Molina, 2007).

The findings of this study displayed PHE teachers' frustration in creating and sustaining inclusive pedagogy, associated with having to accommodate the diverse backgrounds of students in their PHE programs (e.g., diverse religions/belief systems, mother tongues/languages, genders/sexual orientations, sizes and shapes of body, and socio-economic status). Nevertheless, PHE teachers perceived that there is a lack of educational opportunities to improve their awareness of diversity and build capacity for appropriate practices. This finding suggests that adequate diversity education opportunities should be provided for primary/elementary PHE teachers, as well as pre-service PHE teachers (Casey & Kentel, 2014; Palla-Kane & Block, 2016).

Frustration: Working within realities. The results of this study highlighted that the current construction of the educational system could negatively influence inclusive pedagogy in PHE. Morgan and Hansen (2008) also argues that establishing inclusive

environments may be hindered due to systematic barriers and/or realities of current PHE contexts. According to Kasser and Lytle (2013), these factors can be categorized as *context-related* and *person-related* barriers. *Context-related* issues refer to external barriers such as inappropriate built environments of schools, as well as a lack of educational resources and administrative supports. Participants of this study identified that those factors could be: overburden tasks as a PHE teacher, limited time, a lack of funding and administrative supports, inaccessibility, overcrowding in PHE programs, and limited education personnel.

Person-related barriers refer to PHE teachers' internal aspects such as limited knowledge, as well as a lack of perceived value and motivation in inclusive PHE pedagogy (Kasser & Lytle, 2013). Block and Obrusnikova (2016) states that these person-related barriers can be developed from PHE teachers' negative previous experiences in inclusive PHE, as well as insufficient pre-service teacher education and professional development opportunities; and can be intensified by the interactions with context-related barriers. Hodge et al. (2002) also note that these educational opportunities can shape PHE teachers' preconceived notions and biases against inclusive pedagogy. As such, PHE teacher education and professional development opportunities should focus on enhancing PHE teachers' knowledge, competency, behaviours, and attitudes comprehensively to move beyond "old school and obsolete pedagogy."

Inclusive pedagogy: Ensuring social acceptance. The built environment of schools and support systems are important to establishing inclusive environments. The findings of this study, however, clearly revealed that promoting and sustaining positive societal attitudes within PHE contexts are another fundamental aspect for inclusive

pedagogy. Participants stated that socially unwelcoming environment can evoke students' feelings of marginalization in PHE programs and even unenthusiastic receptions against PHE.

Hay (1998) states that a persons' *sense of place* can be describes as a collection of meanings associated with an area. In PHE contexts, this concept can be shaped by the social and physical atmosphere of the program (Block, Klavina, & McKay, 2016). As observed by participants of this study, a sense of place can be enhanced when students feel welcomed in their PHE programs. Furthermore, the participants highlighted that perceived social acceptance within PHE contexts can develop a heightened *sense of belonging.* This concept refers to the extent that people feel personally accepted, included, appreciated, and supported in a social context. Such feeling can be promoted in PHE contexts when students perceive that they are the part of the learning community (Bredahl, 2013; Farley, 2007; Goodwin & Watkinson, 2000).

This study also highlighted that such enhanced sense of belonging can safeguard and promote students' *dignity* in PHE contexts. *Dignity* refers to an indispensable human right and a valued quality for human beings (Nordenfelt, 2004) and can be described as respected and appreciated, and is "realized through individual freedom that is brought to bear in the course of the self's participation in meaningful decision making and exercise of individual responsibility" (Shannon, 2007, p. 17). Johnston, Goodwin, and Leo (2015) note that experiences of socially supportive environments and sense of community can promote persons' dignity. Accordingly, pursuing inclusive pedagogy involves ensuring social acceptance within PHE programs.

Wilson and Lieberman (2000) discuss further that enhancing students' awareness and acceptance of inclusive PHE can be achieved through *exposure* (e.g., introducing diverse abilities, backgrounds, and belief systems to students), *experience* (e.g., providing opportunities to experience different ways of pursuing movement tasks such as playing wheelchair basketball), and *ownership* (e.g., encouraging students to be advocates in accommodating other students' educational needs). The findings of this study also suggest that creating and encouraging those educational opportunities for students are important for the establishment and sustainability of inclusive pedagogy, highlighting that such inclusive culture and social acceptance could become a norm within PHE programs through this intentional pedagogic approach.

Inclusive pedagogy: Ensuring cultural safety. The findings of this study highlighted that promoting a sense of cultural safety is an important aspect of inclusive pedagogy in PHE contexts. Participants understood the meanings of safety as a broadened idea—that is, understanding safety by considering various areas within PHE contexts such as cultural and spiritual domains. Such holistic notion emphasizes the appreciation and acceptance of students' social diversity and cultural pluralism within PHE contexts (Block & Horton, 2016; O'Connor & Graber, 2014).

The literature suggests that promoting cultural safety can be achieved by having *cultural competence.* According to Whaley and Davis (2007), *cultural competence* refers to:

> A set of problem-solving skills that include (a) the ability to recognize and understand the dynamic interplay between heritage and adaptation dimensions of culture in shaping human behavior; (b) the ability to use knowledge acquired

about an individual's heritage and adaptational challenges to maximize the effectiveness of assessment, diagnosis, and treatment; (c) internalization (i.e. incorporation into one's clinical problem-solving repertoire) of process of recognition, acquisition, and use of cultural dynamics so that it can be routinely applied to diverse groups. (p. 565)

Culturally-competent practices in PHE would involve, for example, increasing cultural literacy (e.g., acquiring a deeper understanding of students' cultural backgrounds such as gender-specific restrictions of certain culture in participating PHE), transforming current teaching methods (e.g., altering current pedagogies to be more conducive to different learning styles of different cultures such as using a visual aid to explain a movement instead of using instructional techniques requiring body contacts), and communicating continually to address the culture-specific needs (e.g., communicating with students' families to gain more insight about cultural restrictions in PHE contexts).

Cultural appropriateness and *relevancy* within PHE teachers' pedagogy should also be ensured (Block & Horton, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 1997; O'Connor & Graber, 2014). The findings suggest that creating culturally-safe environments can be a complex task, considering the diverse upbringings or situations among students. Furthermore, culturally inappropriate and irrelevant practices in PHE could happen at various levels and contexts (e.g., implementing a Christmas theme into lessons – for certain students with specific religious background this is inappropriate; changing into PHE attire in a public change room – for a student who follows religious restrictions, this can be inappropriate). To promote cultural appropriateness and relevancy, Ladson-

Billings (1995, 1997) suggests that PHE teachers continually review and modify their programs to value students' cultural landscapes and maintain their cultural identities consistently. Reid (2003) also notes that PHE teachers need to provide opportunities for students to experience and be educated on multiple cultures and other diverse backgrounds, thereby they can positively interact each other in the PHE programs.

Furthermore, to make PHE programs appealing to all populations, and to ensure that all students have the opportunity for positive experiences, PHE teachers were encouraged to employ student-centered approaches in their pedagogy (Halas, 2003, 2011; Harvey, 2014; Gagnon, 2016). Harvey (2014) further identifies that PHE teachers should (1) reflect continually on ways to establish equitable and respectful relationships with students, (2) try to understand students' cultural landscapes and personal histories, (3) create appealing learning climate to all students by employing various teaching methods and styles, and (4) revise curriculum to make it relevant and meaningful to all student.

Primary/Elementary PHE Teachers Ways of Engaging in Inclusive Pedagogy

The findings of this study highlighted primary and elementary PHE teachers' various inclusive pedagogic approaches in their day-to-day PHE teaching practices. Participants identified that using universal designs for learning, as well as employing student-directed, relational, transformative, and reflexive pedagogy would promote inclusiveness in their PHE programs.

Universal Pedagogy. The findings of this study revealed that primary and elementary PHE teachers plan their lessons at the outset of their programming with the careful considerations on students' needs and preferences in learning. According to Barber, Lorayne, and Leo (2016), trying to include all students without preparation is an

injustice, recognizing that every student has the right to participate in a positive and fully accessible experience in PHE. Lieberman, Lytle, and Clarcq (2008) also note that not planning for accessibility in the beginning phases can cause an inadequate or incomplete effort in offering accessible PHE. Accordingly, employing universal pedagogic designs from the very beginning of the program has been emphasized for inclusive pedagogy.

Universal design for learning refers to planning ahead for the inclusion of all students, employing a lens which embodies accessibility that is universal for all participants and all educational circumstances (Getchell & Gagen, 2006; Lieberman & Houston-Wilson, 2009; Lieberman ea al., 2008). McGuire, Scott, and Shaw (2006) further outlined nine principles of universal design within PHE context: (1) equitable use (i.e., designing programs with all students' diverse educational needs in mind), (2) flexibility in use (i.e., designing to accommodate an array of individual abilities), (3) simple and intuitive programming for easy modifications and change, (4) easily accessible and understandable information, (5) open-minded atmosphere for trial and error, (6) developmentally and culturally appropriate educational challenges for students, (7) use of various instructional materials to accommodate students' different needs, (8) enhanced sense of community of learning (i.e., creating learning environments where students appreciate and accept peers' differences in learning), and (9) teachers' welcoming and responsive attitudes.

Participants of the study also pointed out that planning PHE lessons with flexibility in mind are an important aspect for inclusive pedagogy (e.g., developing simple and familiar activities for easy modification; making variation in curriculum outcomes, delivery methods, and information sharing; and preparing alternative

equipment and resources). Several models have been used in the field of PHE to increase such flexibility in teaching. For example, *differentiated instruction*—that is, providing students different options in learning by offering choices to three areas of instruction and learning: content, process, and outcome of learning—has been widely employed (Block, Klavina, & Davis, 2016; Tomlinson, 2001). Various teaching styles such as *reproductive* (i.e., providing students tasks through direct commands and instructions) and *productive* (i.e., facilitating students' self-discovery in learning through guided-discovery commands or individualized tasks) teaching styles have also been utilized (Block, Klavina, & Davis, 2016; Mosston & Ashworth, 2002). For enhanced flexibility in universal design, various information sharing methods have also been employed in PHE pedagogy (e.g., verbal instructions, demonstrations, visual schedules, use of communication devices, checklists, visual timers, and visual behaviour supports) (Block, Klavina, & Davis, 2016; O'Connell, Lieberman, & Petersen, 2006).

Student-directed pedagogy. The results of this study highlighted that providing students leadership roles and responsibilities in PHE programs can enhance their sense of ownership in learning. The participants also indicated that students' enhanced sense of ownership can promote their motivation, attitudes, and receptions of PHE. Sherrill (2003) further notes that such ownership in PHE learning can also improve students' self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-perception. Some practical ways of providing students' opportunities to take part in the teaching and learning process in PHE have been identified. For example, providing opportunities to be a small group leader, serving as a demonstrator, assigning a role to set-up and take-down equipment, and providing opportunities to lead warm-up and cool-down stretches have been suggested (Lieberman,

Arndt, & Daggett, 2007; Lieberman & Houston-Wilson, 2009). Providing choices and options in learning was also identified as imperative to enhancing students' sense of ownership in PHE. Morphy and Goodwin (2012) echo this sentiment and further note that voice and choice of participants in physical activity contexts are fundamental knowledge for programming, thereby active engagement should be endeavored to identify their needs and preferences. Furthermore, literature indicate that *democracy* in teaching practices (i.e., students being invited to employ their opinions in learning in PHE) should be ensured to engage students in PHE pedagogic practices (Azzarito & Ennis, 2003; Chen, Martin, Sun, & Ennis, 2007; McMullen, van der Mars, & Jahn, 2014).

The findings of this study also indicated that PHE teachers should provide students opportunities to co-create inclusive learning environments as a way of enhancing their teaching practices. According to Hellison (2003), as well as Parker and Hellison (2001), by teaching personal and social responsibility in and through a PHE program, students can learn ways of respecting the rights and feelings of peers, appreciating equitable participation and peers' efforts, being resilient to the challenges, helping others, and being a caring and inclusive leaders. Co-created inclusive environments in PHE then can enhance the inclusive culture within PHE programs.

Relational pedagogy. The findings of this study revealed that making a positive relationship with students is a critical aspect for inclusive pedagogy in PHE contexts. Ladson-Billings (1995, 1997) note that schools can be hierarchical establishments where teacher and student interactions exist with unequal positions of power. Accordingly, establishing equitable and fluid relationships with students can be challenging (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 1997). Bergum and Dossetor (2005) argue that relational ethical

framework can create positive relationships in such contexts. *Relational ethics* is built on four interconnected constructs: *mutual respect, relational engagement, embodiment,* and *rational environment* (Bergum & Dossetor, 2005). *Mutual respect* refers to an acceptance, recognition, and acknowledgment among individuals (e.g., PHE teachers' appreciation and acceptance of students' abilities in movement). *Relational engagement* refers to moments when individuals work collaboratively to address ethical issues and circumstances (e.g., collaboratively planning PHE lesson by incorporating students' voices). *Embodiment* refers to recognizing and incorporating individuals' unique histories and differences within a practice (e.g., incorporating students' specific needs in PHE lesson plan). *Rational environment* refers to a space where individuals make ethical actions and decision through social interactions (e.g., PHE class contexts). By valuing uniqueness of students, establishing supportive relationships with them, and addressing their educational needs by incorporating their opinions in the programs, PHE teachers would thus be able to create inclusive environments within their programs (Zitomer, 2017).

The findings also reveal that making positive relationships with parents/guardians are important aspect for inclusive pedagogy. According to Block, MacDonald, and Foley (2016), conferencing with parents/guardians can offer holistic view and insight on their students and help design supports that can be carried between school and their home. Strategies for working with parents/guardians were also suggested. For example, preparing comfortable meeting environments, allowing parents/guardians time to prepare for the meeting, and using professional manner in communicating to provide an

atmosphere where parents/guardian feel they can contribute (Block, MacDonald, & Foley, 2016).

The results of the study also highlighted the importance of making positive partnerships among educational practitioners within school. Collaboration could occur when these members interact, share ideas and information, and set goals for the progression of students collaboratively (Kasser & Lytle, 2013). Possible collaborative team members may involve school administrators (e.g., principal), classroom or generalist teachers, special education teachers, consultants (e.g., physical therapist, occupational therapist, recreational therapist), and paraprofessionals (e.g., student assistants, teacher assistants, and individualized learning assistants) (Kasser & Lytle, 2013; Block, MacDonald, & Foley, 2016). Classroom or generalist teachers and paraprofessionals in primary and elementary schools can be effective partners, because they have a deeper insight on the students in their classroom, being that they interact with them more often than the PHE teachers (Kasser & Lytle, 2013; Block, MacDonald, & Foley, 2016). Special education teachers usually are the most informed personnel in the school on students with diversity (Block, Macdonald, & Foley, 2016). Thus, enhanced partnerships amongst those members are integral for successful inclusion in PHE (Block, MacDonald, & Foley, 2016).

Transformative and reflexive pedagogy. The findings of this study revealed the temporal nature of inclusive pedagogy in PHE. Participants highlighted that inclusive pedagogy is “a very open-ended process,” “a continual work in progress,” and “not set in stone.” Fletcher, Temertzoglou, and Forsberg (2014) also state that PHE pedagogy is continually trial and error. Connelly and Clandinin (1999) note the idea of *teachers as*

knowers (i.e., teachers in the midst of knowing about themselves, subject matters, pedagogies, as well as their students and related contexts and situations). This notion encapsulates the idea of teachers being aware of multiple facets of their teaching, and being able to adjust their teaching practices timely, accordingly, and competently in appropriate moments. Given this temporal nature of teaching practices, the importance of *flexibility* and *responsiveness* in PHE pedagogy has been emphasized for positive *transformation* in inclusive PHE pedagogy (Halas, 2003; Gagnon, 2016; Lieberman & Houston-Wilson, 2009). Lieberman and Houston-Wilson (2009) also state that the success of inclusive pedagogy is based on the teacher's flexibility in the delivery of instruction. *Responsiveness* refers to a positive characteristic of PHE teachers who are physically and cognitively present during the class, continually communicate with students to accommodate their educational needs, and constantly assessing potential issues that may arise during the class (Halas, 2003; Gagnon, 2016).

The findings of this study also identified the importance of *reflexivity* in promoting inclusive PHE pedagogy. Teachers' *reflexivity* refers to a practice of teachers' critical self-reflection, as well as continual assessment and re-assessment, on their own teaching in effort to enhance their pedagogic practices. Freire (2007) simply states that reflexivity is a reflection and action for transformation. Phelan (2011) extends on this notion, stating that engaging in critical reflexivity involves questioning current ideology and attempting positive changes against the taken-for-granted ideology.

According to Schön (1991), being reflective teachers requires embodying two important notions, *reflection-in-action* (i.e., being reflexive in the midst of teaching practices) and *reflection-on-action* (i.e., being reflexive on the past events) to positively

transform their teaching practices. Participants of this study also indicated that they were involved in reflections-in-action (e.g., continual modification and adaption during the PHE class by recognizing students' educational needs) and reflection-on-action (critical reviews on their own teaching upon the conclusion of lesson, either individually or with colleagues).

As Fletcher et al. (2014) state, revisiting previous pedagogic experiences can help PHE teachers to understand their own assumptions, knowledge, and beliefs in PHE teaching. Furthermore, such critical approaches of teachers can challenge societal norms, as well as their own biases and assumptions in teaching, to better include all students. Critical pedagogy accounts for "social justice, marginalized groups of people, inadequacies of power relationships, and various influences that impact the production of knowledge and teaching practices in schools" (Harvey, 2014, p.192). With regards to inclusive pedagogy, critical pedagogy can "challenge the status quo and defend the ideals of democracy and the empowerment of individuals" (Harvey, 2014)

Korthagen, Loughran, and Russell (2006) note that teachers' learning could occur through self-reflection on their own teaching and through interaction and sharing with other teachers. As participants noted about collaborative reflexive practice through in-person or online communications, Fletcher et al. (2014) further explain that learning from other PHE teachers' experiences (e.g., critical observations on experienced PE teachers' inclusive pedagogy) can be beneficial as their experiences occurred from different lens, thereby it could offer alternate perspectives on PHE pedagogy. Kasser and Lytle (2013) also suggest practical strategies to engage in reflexive practices in promoting inclusiveness within PHE programs. These are: being prepared for inclusive pedagogic

practices prior to the lesson (i.e., *ready*), reflecting critically on the PHE programs and students for improvement (i.e., *rethink*), and revisiting the revised program again for another improvement (i.e., *retry*)

Finally, Fletcher et al. (2014) state that the completion of post-secondary degree in PHE does not mean the end of learning for teachers, but rather it invites the opportunity for teachers to be a lifelong learner. They remark that continual learning in formal (e.g., professional development opportunities offered by school administration) and informal (e.g., learning occurring through reading books, communicating with peer PHE teachers, and receiving student feedback) settings are essential for re-invigorating teachers and enhancing their knowledge base in PHE. Participants of this study were also actively seeking self-driven and self-directed educational opportunities to improve their inclusive pedagogy.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

"Inclusion is an umbrella term where there are an infinite number of ways to get to it, it is the path that is most appropriate for you and your students." (Charles)

The purpose of this research was to understand the ways in which primary/elementary PHE teachers understand inclusive pedagogy and their ways of engaging in inclusive pedagogy in day-to-day PHE contexts. Participants addressed the research questions "how do primary/elementary PHE teachers understand inclusive pedagogy?" and "what do primary/elementary PHE teachers do day-to-day to promote inclusiveness in their pedagogic practices?"

Participating primary/elementary PHE teachers understood that inclusive pedagogy can be beneficial and appropriate for all students in diversity contexts, and not limited to only disability contexts. Furthermore, they claimed that the benefits of PHE need to be accessible to all students equitably and fairly. A heightened sense of safety was seen to contribute to students' receptiveness of the PHE program. Although, participating teachers declared that the establishment of inclusion and inclusive pedagogy were integral to an equitable PHE program, they did admit that complex nature of diversity and inclusion, as well as the current construction of the educational system were not conducive to such an ideal.

Even though participants reported that it is "mission impossible" to establish and/or sustain inclusive pedagogy within PHE contexts, this notion did not prevent them from developing numerous pedagogical practices to induce and support (to the best of

their ability) inclusive environments within their PHE program. The use of universal pedagogical design (i.e., ensuring pedagogy is inclusive to all students) from the outset of planning. Sharing of ownership with students, by providing students leadership roles and responsibilities. Providing students' choices in learning, helped the establishment of inclusive learning environments within their PHE programs. Building rapport and positive relationships with students and maintaining affirmative partnerships with co-educators, moreover, helped them promoting their inclusive pedagogy in PHE. Being responsive and flexible in the delivery of lessons, engaging in continual reflections on their own teaching practices, and seeking self-driven and self-directed educational opportunities, finally, helped to build their capacity in pursuing inclusive pedagogy. Although, administration support and the built environment of schools can not be directly impacted through these practies. These inclusive pedagogic practices which are all interconnected, would enhance the other practices as a synergy.

This research captured the perspectives of primary/elementary PHE teachers and provided an outlet for them to voice their perspectives on inclusive pedagogy in their PHE programs. These shared insights from teachers would encourage other PHE teachers to reflect upon their own practices to ensure inclusiveness in their own PHE programs. Furthermore, findings from this study would be useful for the field of inclusive PHE as a practical knowledge. This study also provided an empirical knowledge regarding the complex processes and mechanisms of inclusive pedagogy in PHE, which can help policies and actions to include teachers' voices. Lastly, the insights provided by the participating teachers would be utilized in various teacher education programs (e.g. PHE teacher education and professional development) as a vivid voice from the field.

This study captured primary/elementary PHE teachers' voices from Canadian education system. In future research, various other contexts should be considered to fully understand the perspectives of teachers on inclusive PHE pedagogy (e.g., schools in remote areas or areas with limited resources). Further studies should be conducted to understand the perspectives of parents, administrators, and students in relation to inclusive pedagogy in primary/elementary PHE, as well as to synthesize those findings through cross-cultural comparisons. Notably, several studies in this context have been completed. However, those voices from the field should be updated continually to represent the understandings that are reflective to the current educational environments. Finally, this study highlighted the combined perspectives amongst diverse teachers at various points in their careers. Following research should be conducted to investigate the teacher motivation to persue self-driven and self-directed educational opportunities, in the context to better serve their diverse students, as well as the perspectives of teachers in different stages and roles of careers (e.g., pre-service, supply/substitute, and permanent teachers; permanent teachers with different years of experiences in teaching).

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Table 1. Description of Participants (n = 11)

Pseudonym	Gender	Years of Teaching	Education	Teaching Status
Alice	F	15	Bachelor of Physical Education, Bachelor of Education (Intermediate/Secondary)	Permanent
Barnaby	M	5	Bachelor of Physical Education, Bachelor of Education (Intermediate/Secondary), Bachelor of Recreation, Master of Physical Education	Substitute
Charles	M	4	Bachelor of Physical Education, Bachelor of Education (Intermediate/Secondary), Diploma of Technology	Permanent
Dean	M	30+	Bachelor of Physical Education, Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary)	Retired
Emile	F	6	Bachelor of Physical Education, Bachelor of Education (Intermediate/Secondary), Master of Physical Education	Permanent
Finn	M	7	Bachelor of Physical Education, Bachelor of Education (Intermediate/Secondary)	Substitute
Gabe	M	6	Bachelor of Physical Education, Bachelor of Education (Intermediate/Secondary), Master of Physical Education	Permanent
Helen	F	22	Bachelor of Physical Education, Bachelor of Education (Intermediate/Secondary), Master of Physical Education	Permanent

James	M	5	Bachelor of Physical Education, Bachelor of Education (Intermediate/Secondary)	Permanent
Sarah	F	11	Bachelor of Physical Education, Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary), Master of Education	Permanent
Kacy	F	5	Bachelor of Physical Education, Bachelor of Education (Intermediate/Secondary), Diploma of Technology	Substitute

Appendix 1. Interview Guide

Understanding Inclusive Pedagogy from the Perspectives of Primary and Elementary Physical and Health Educators

Research Questions

1. How do primary/elementary physical and health education teachers understand inclusive pedagogy?
2. What do primary/elementary physical and health education teachers do day-to-day to promote inclusiveness in their pedagogic practices?

Demographic Information

Name: ____________________________________ Date: ________________________

Address: _______________________________________ Postal Code: _____________

Phone: _________________________ Email: __________________________________

Gender: _____________ Years of teaching experience: ________________________

Education: ____

Teaching Status (Circle one): Substitute Permanent Retired

1. **How would you describe inclusive pedagogy in physical and health education contexts?**
    - **a.** What words would you use to describe inclusive pedagogy?
    - **b.** If you could describe students as being included in the physical and health education contexts, how would you describe those students? (e.g., characteristics, attributes, qualities)

2. **How do you understand the meanings of inclusive pedagogy in your physical and health education program?**

3. **How would you describe inclusive pedagogy from the "diversity" perspectives?**

4. **What does an inclusive pedagogy look like in your physical and health education program?**

5. **When were you first introduced to the idea of inclusive pedagogy?**

6. **How do you feel about the inclusiveness of your physical and health education program in general?**

7. **On a scale of 1-5 (1 being not inclusive, 5 being fully inclusive), how would you rate the inclusiveness of your class in relation to physical and health education?**

   - **a.** What criteria did you use to make your rating?
   - **b.** How would you rate the physical environment (e.g., doorways, changing room, and equipment)?
   - **c.** How would you rate the social environment (e.g., awareness of diversity)

8. What do you do to ensure inclusiveness in your day-to-day teaching practices?
   - **a.** How did you learn these?

9. Tell me about your school policy on inclusion/diversity in relation to physical and health education.
   - **a.** How does it guide your activities (resource allocation, planning, and program evaluation)?
   - **b.** If any, what revisions do you feel are needed?

10. Describe your experiences working with students with diversity in physical and health education settings.
   - **a.** What challenges do/did you face?
   - **b.** How did you manage those challenges?
   - **c.** Tell me about times you felt uncomfortable
   - **d.** Tell me about times you felt other people were uncomfortable

11. What do you think positively influence the establishment of inclusive pedagogy in physical and health education settings?

12. Some circumstances cause students to experience an inclusion or maintain their sense of belonging in their participation in physical and health education. Recall a time when this occurred in your school.
   - **a.** What could be done to enhance these experiences in the future?
   - **b.** What changes would you make within your school to enhance inclusiveness?
   - **c.** What would be the impact of your suggested changes?
   - **d.** What might be done to improve inclusive pedagogy in physical and health education settings in the long term?

13. What do you think negatively influence the establishment of inclusive pedagogy in physical and health education settings?

14. Some circumstances cause students to experience exclusion or marginalization in their participation in physical and health education. Recall a story when this occurred in your school.
   - **a.** What could be done to avoid these experiences in the future?
   - **b.** What is preventing you from making these suggested changes, if any.
   - **c.** What suggestions/advices would you provide in creating inclusive physical and health education environments within your school?
   - **d.** What suggestions/advices would you give to an in-service professional about creating inclusive physical and health education environments?

e. What suggestions/advices would you give to a policy makers or other community stakeholders about creating inclusive physical and health education environments?

15. What final comments would you like to make? What question should I have asked, but didn't?

Generic Probes:

- Tell me more.
- Do you have a story that illustrates that idea?
- I'm not clear, can you tell me another way?
- How would you explain your idea to someone else not familiar with…

Appendix 2. Informed Consent Form

Title:	**Understanding Inclusive Pedagogy from the Perspectives of Primary and Elementary Physical and Health Educators**
Researcher:	Matthew Patey, BPE, BEd, School of Human Kinetics and Recreation, Memorial University of Newfoundland, b62mjp@mun.ca

You are invited to take part in a research project entitled "Understanding Inclusive Pedagogy from the Perspectives of Primary and Elementary Physical and health Educators."

This form is part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. It also describes your right to withdraw from the study. In order to decide whether you wish to participate in this research study, you should understand enough about its risks and benefits to be able to make an informed decision. This is the informed consent process. Take time to read this carefully and to understand the information given to you. Please contact myself, if you have any questions about the study or would like more information before you consent.

It is entirely up to you to decide whether to take part in this research. If you choose not to take part in this research or if you decide to withdraw from the research once it has started, there will be no negative consequences for you, now or in the future.

Introduction:
Physical activity is now understood as a critical aspect of promoting lifelong health and wellness. In Canadian contexts, students are formally introduced to physical and health education (PHE) throughout their first years of schooling. Primary/elementary aged children are in a pivotal developmental stage with regards to their motor development. Inclusive learning environments in PHE aid children developing at varying rates with respect to psychomotor, cognitive, affective, and spiritual growth through physical activity. Therefore, establishing inclusive environments in PHE are critical to ensure equity for all students' educational rights and access to learning the ways of active lifestyles in their early years.
When students are excluded (directly or indirectly) from meaningful participation in their PHE, they could cultivate an aversion towards PHE and subsequently decrease the likelihood of living out active lifestyles. Inclusive learning environments in

primary/elementary PHE are established through the interactions amongst teachers, administrators, parents, and children.

What you will do in this study:

You will have an opportunity to have your voice heard in relation to understanding inclusive pedagogy in physical education. You are invited to participate in one 60 to 90-minutes individual interview. After the interview process, you may receive email questions in effort to clarify or follow up on anything from the interview.

All interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed (typed out) verbatim upon your consent. All transcribed interview and written documents will be used as a study data. You will have opportunities to review your transcribed interviews and final research findings to provide feedback and make changes, corrections, and/or clarifications.

Length of time:

Total time commitment is approximately 2 hours (interviews = 1.5 hours; review of transcription and email correspondence = 30 minutes)

Withdrawal from the study:

If you decide to withdraw or not participate in certain aspects of the study you will be free to do so at any point in time (e.g., time of recruitment, during the interview, after the interview) without penalty of any sort. If you request a withdrawal (verbally or in writing) the researcher will accept the request immediately. You do not need to provide any reason and are free to omit any question(s) that you do not wish to answer. You can choose to withdraw after data collection has ended, your data can be removed from the study up to one month after the completion of your review of research findings. If you wish to withdraw please contact Matthew Patey by phone or email.

Possible benefits:

Participation in this study gives you the opportunity to have your voice heard and a potential impact on better understanding how physical educators perceive inclusive pedagogy, and what are barriers to and opportunities for establishing inclusive learning environments. Findings could also be valuable for you to prioritize aspects for future actions with regards to inclusive service delivery within your physical and health education program.

Possible risks:

Participants will not be subjected to any physical risk, but there may be minimal emotional discomfort as a result of discussing issues surrounding participant perceptions, understandings, and experiences in relation to their perceptions of inclusive learning environments. Given that there is very minimal chance for any risks, and the sharing of

personal perceptions and understanding has the potential to benefit the individual, community, broader society, and academic community, it is fair to say that the benefits far outweigh the risks.
In the unlikely event that a participant would like the support of a mental health professional, they will be encouraged to contact Provincial Mental Health Crisis Line, The Mental Health and Addictions Division, Department of Health and Community Services NL (1-888-737-4668). In case of an emergency please contact 911.

Confidentiality:
The ethical duty of confidentiality includes safeguarding participants' identities, personal information, and data from unauthorized access, use, or disclosure.

The following steps will be taken to protect your confidentiality on the verbatim transcripts for the interviews, (a) names or other identifying particulars will not be discussed or made public outside of the research, (b) pseudonyms will be substituted for all names that appear on the data transcripts and materials for publication, (c) the audio tapes will be identified by code number only, (d) the data codes and this consent forms will be stored separate from the data (consent form will be stored in a locking filling cabinet in the principle investigator's office), (e) the codes which link the data to the participants will be destroyed upon completion of the study. Quotes may be used to illustrate the themes. However, every effort will be made to protect the identity of the participants in any printed text. All names, locations, or personal identifiers will be removed from the quotes. Your confidentiality will be held paramount at all times.

Anonymity:
Anonymity refers to protecting participants' identifying characteristics. While your interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed upon your consent, all identifying information (e.g., names, community organizations) will be removed and codes/pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity. Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure your anonymity; and you will not be identified in publications.

Recording of Data:
Your permission on audio-recording is required for you to participate in the study (checkbox is provided at the end of this form). Two audio-recorders will be placed on the table to record interviews.

Storage of Data:
Matthew Patey and his Master's thesis supervisor will have direct access to the data during the study and after the completion of the study. They will assume the responsibility for data storage. All hardcopy data (e.g., transcripts) will be deemed

confidential material and will be held in a locked filing cabinet within the supervisor's office at MUN. All electronic files (i.e., digital audio recordings, researcher notes) will be password protected and stored on an external hard drive that will be locked in a filing cabinet within the supervisor's office at MUN. The digital recordings and transcripts will be stored separately from the master sheet identifying participant names, pseudonyms, and code numbers. If hardcopy data have electronic version, the data will be completely deleted after the completion of the study. Data will be kept for five years, as required by Memorial University's policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research. After five years, all electronic data will be permanently removed from the external hard drive. Hardcopy data will be shredded by Matthew Patey.

Reporting of Results:
The data will be presented as common themes across participants that emerge from the transcripts. Quotes from your interview will be used to illustrate the themes. Your permission on using quotes is required for you to participate in the study (checkbox is provided at the end of this form). However, all names, locations, or personal identifiers will be removed from the quotes. The research findings will be presented in academic conference presentations and published in scholarly journals.

Sharing of Results with Participants:
You will have an access to the research findings without having to contact the researcher.

Questions:
You are welcome to ask questions at any time before, during, or after your participation in this research. If you would like more information about this study, please contact any member of the research team.

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Informed Consent Form

Consent:

Your signature on this form means that:

- You have read the information about the research.
- You have been able to ask questions about this study.
- You are satisfied with the answers to all your questions.
- You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing.
- You understand that you are free to withdraw participation in the study without having to give a reason, and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.
- You understand that if you choose to end participation **during** data collection, any data collected from you up to that point will be destroyed.
- You understand that if you choose to withdraw **after** data collection has ended, your data can be removed from the study up to one month after the completion of your review of research findings.

I agree to be audio-recorded	☐ Yes ☐ No
I agree to the use of direct quotations	☐ Yes ☐ No

By signing this form, you do not give up your legal rights and do not release the researchers from their professional responsibilities.

Your signature confirms:

☐ I have read what this study is about and understood the risks and benefits. I have had adequate time to think about this and had the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered.

☐ I agree to participate in the research project understanding the risks and contributions of my participation, that my participation is voluntary, and that I may end my participation.

☐ A copy of this Informed Consent Form has been given to me for my records.

____________________________ ____________________________

Signature of participant Date

Researcher's Signature:

I have explained this study to the best of my ability. I invited questions and gave answers. I believe that the participant fully understands what is involved in being in the

study, any potential risks of the study and that he or she has freely chosen to be in the study.

____________________________ _______________________________

Signature of Principal Investigator Date