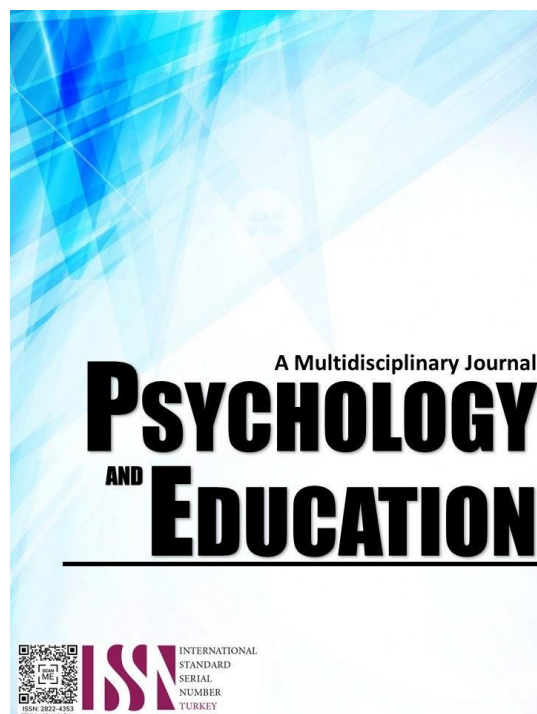


LIVED EXPERIENCES OF PHILIPPINE EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT TEST (PEPT) PASSERS IN MATHEMATICS: BASIS FOR REMEDIATION



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Lived Experiences of Philippine Educational Placement Test (PEPT) Passers in Mathematics: Basis for Remediation

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Abstract

This study described the lived experiences of Philippine Educational Placement Test (PEPT) passers in the Division of Bataan for the School Year 2023-2024, specifically focusing on their Mathematics experiences. The primary objective was to identify these students' challenges and propose a remediation program based on the findings. The research was descriptive and concentrated on PEPT passers residing in the second district, specifically within the District of Limay, as it had the highest number of passers. The study employed narratology as its research strategy, using interview-guided questions developed from a comprehensive review of related literature and preliminary data gathering. The findings revealed that PEPT passers encountered significant difficulties in Mathematics due to knowledge gaps in foundational concepts. Despite these challenges, the students exhibited resilience and determination to succeed. Support networks, including family, friends, and teachers, played a crucial role in their academic and emotional well-being. The study also highlighted the effectiveness of self-directed learning, with students benefiting from online resources and independent study strategies. However, additional support, particularly in remedial classes and targeted interventions, was identified as essential for helping these students reach their full potential. Based on the findings, the study concluded that accelerated learning presents unique challenges, primarily stemming from gaps in foundational knowledge. Educational institutions must implement strategies to identify and promptly address these gaps. Additionally, strong support networks are vital for the success of accelerated learners, and schools should foster a supportive environment that encourages collaboration and mentorship. Technology and self-directed learning also emerged as practical tools for enhancing the learning experience of these students. The study recommended implementing tailored remediation programs focused on foundational skills and concepts to address the identified challenges. These programs should be small groups or individualized to provide targeted support. Schools should also create a culture emphasizing collaboration, mentorship, and emotional support, encouraging peer tutoring and mentoring programs. Furthermore, the study suggested using online platforms and digital resources to supplement learning and equip teachers with the necessary skills to support accelerated learners. Regular assessments of the effectiveness of remediation programs were also recommended to ensure continuous improvement.

Keywords: *PEPT passers, accelerated learning, remediation program*

Introduction

The Philippine Educational Placement Test (PEPT) serves as a pivotal mechanism within the Philippine educational system, offering learners in unique circumstances an opportunity to align their academic standing with formal schooling standards. Designed to assess and validate the competencies acquired through non-formal or informal education, the PEPT facilitates learners' reintegration into the formal education system at appropriate grade levels. This initiative underscores the Department of Education's commitment to inclusive education, ensuring that all learners, regardless of their educational background, have access to formal schooling and the potential to achieve academic success.

Globally, educational systems recognize the necessity of alternative assessment mechanisms to accommodate diverse learning experiences and backgrounds. In the United States, for instance, the General Educational Development (GED) test provides individuals who did not complete traditional high school an opportunity to certify their proficiency in standard high school-level academic skills. Similarly, the United Kingdom offers the Access to Higher Education Diploma, enabling those without formal qualifications to pursue a university education. These programs reflect a broader international trend towards flexible educational pathways, acknowledging that learning can occur outside conventional classroom settings and that assessments should adapt to validate such learning experiences. Research indicates alternative credentialing systems like the GED can significantly impact individuals' socio-economic mobility. A study by Smith and Gorard (2021) found that obtaining such credentials often leads to improved employment opportunities and access to higher education. However, the study also highlights challenges, including societal perceptions and the need for support systems to aid learners in transitioning to further education or the workforce. Similarly, in Australia, the Tertiary and Further Education (TAFE) system offers vocational education and training, providing practical skills and qualifications recognized across various industries. According to Wheelahan and Moodie (2021), TAFE is crucial in supporting lifelong learning and workforce development, particularly for individuals seeking to upskill or reskill in response to changing economic demands. Despite the availability of these alternative pathways, challenges persist. Internationally, learners often face barriers such as limited access to preparatory resources, financial constraints, and a lack of awareness about alternative assessment options. Moreover, the recognition and acceptance of alternative credentials by employers and higher education institutions can vary, influencing the efficacy of such programs in facilitating socio-economic advancement. Therefore, continuous efforts are necessary to enhance the accessibility, quality, and recognition of alternative

educational assessments worldwide.

Uncertainty about the appropriate course of action in a given situation buffers their brain neurons. Due to the lack of mastery, students must stay at their current grade level. Some individuals may not be eligible for promotion and may require an extended period to comprehend the curriculum. The Department of Education has provided a program that helps those students who cannot be promoted to the next grade level. The Philippine Educational Placement Test is under the Accreditation and Equivalency Program stated under Executive Order No. 733 s—1981 for retrieving out-of-school youth (OSY) and placing them in a formal school system. This program aims to reduce the number of OSYs in the country to zero.

The spiral curriculum in Junior High School is parallel to the goal of the PEPT. Every grade level includes the various branches of mathematics. Adjustment is less for the student if they are enrolled. The seventh-grade curriculum includes fundamental mathematical concepts that must be mastered to effectively apply the skills acquired at the next grade level. Once a student needs to gain competency, it will be easier for them to advance to another competency. Recent studies have explored the experiences of PEPT passers within the Philippine educational landscape. Castro, Saldajeno, and Nollan (2022) conducted a phenomenological study revealing that PEPT passers often face adjustment challenges in formal schooling, including gaps in foundational knowledge and adapting to structured learning environments. Despite these hurdles, the study found that with adequate support from teachers, peers, and family, these learners can successfully integrate and perform academically on par with their peers. This underscores the importance of a supportive educational ecosystem in facilitating the transition of PEPT passers into formal education. Moreover, the PEPT aligns with the Philippines' commitment to lifelong learning and educational inclusivity, as outlined in the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013. By providing alternative pathways to education, the PEPT contributes to the national agenda of reducing dropout rates and improving educational attainment across the populace. However, challenges remain, particularly in ensuring that PEPT passers receive the necessary academic support and resources to thrive in formal educational settings. Addressing these challenges is crucial for maximizing the potential of the PEPT as a tool for educational equity.

One of the gaps that PEPT passers experience is the need for knowledge in essential Mathematics. General Mathematics is offered to every strand and track in SHS. Suppose students in grade seven have successfully advanced to grade eleven. In that case, it will be difficult for them to learn topics in General Mathematics since the PEPT Passers missed some competencies in Grade 7. At St. Francis National High School, thirteen PEPT examinations have advanced to Grade 9, Grade 10, and Grade 11. Out of the 13 passers, 4 Grade 7 students have passed and were encouraged to Grade 10 (2) and Grade 11 (2). Teachers require some time to adapt as most of them may need a more vital understanding of fundamental Algebra concepts, considering that Grade 6 typically only covers a few concepts in Algebra. The passers will only understand the concepts if they know their prerequisite subject.

While existing studies provide valuable insights into the experiences of PEPT passers, several research gaps persist. Firstly, there is a limited understanding of the long-term academic trajectories and career outcomes of PEPT passers. Most research focuses on immediate adjustment challenges and coping mechanisms, but longitudinal studies are needed to assess how these learners fare in higher education and employment sectors over time. Such studies offer a comprehensive view of the PEPT's effectiveness in facilitating sustained academic and professional success. Secondly, the psychosocial dimensions of PEPT passers' experiences remain underexplored. Understanding how self-esteem, motivation, and social integration impacts their educational journeys could inform the development of targeted support programs. Additionally, there is a need to examine the effectiveness of existing support mechanisms from the learners' perspectives to identify areas for improvement.

Research Questions

The general problem of this study was to describe the lived experiences of Philippine Educational Placement Test (PEPT) Passers in the Division of Bataan S.Y. 2023-2024. Specifically, the study answered the following questions.

1. What are the lived experiences of PEPT Passers in Mathematics?
2. Based on the findings of the study, what remediation program may be proposed?

Methodology

Research Design

The researcher used narratology research design to determine the lived experiences of the PEPT passers. Harris et al. (2006) describe a narrative research design as qualitative data analysis. This design's primary objective is to interpret the core narratives derived from the personal tales of a study group. The data is collected and structured using first-person narration, which enables the researcher to gain an understanding of how the participants experienced something.

Santos (2018) defines thematic analysis as an approach that can be utilized. The term typically refers to a collection of written materials, such as interviews or transcripts. The researcher thoroughly analyzes the data to recognize recurring themes, which are defined as subjects, concepts, and patterns of meaning that appear multiple times.

Thematic analysis can be carried out in several different ways; however, the most popular method involves a six-step procedure that includes familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and labeling themes, and writing up. This procedure

also helps you avoid confirmation bias when developing your analysis.

Participants

The subjects of this study were 8 students from selected secondary schools in the Division of Bataan with the use of purposive sampling.

Table 1 shows the population of the study.

Table 1. *Population of the study*

<i>Participant No.</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Year Level Enrolled</i>	<i>Year Level Promoted</i>
1	18	Grade 8	Grade 11
2	16	Grade 7	Grade 9
3	18	Grade 9	Grade 10
4	17	Grade 7	Grade 8
5	17	Grade 8	Grade 9
6	18	Grade 9	Grade 11
7	16	Grade 8	Grade 10
8	18	Grade 7	Grade 11

Purposive sampling was utilized to choose the participants. (Gupta et al., 2023) explains that qualitative research uses "deliberate sampling" to select a specific population or sample of units for further study. This decision was made to ensure that the research could proceed as planned. Participants are chosen purposefully rather than randomly assigned in this study. Previously, it has been referred to by several other names, such as judgmental sampling and selective sampling. Researchers utilize deliberate sampling, randomly selecting respondents to gather the most relevant and valuable data for their research. Furthermore, it is a strategy to optimize research funds by focusing on and choosing the most appropriate cases. Purposeful sampling is a method that aims to pick respondents who are most likely to provide favorable results by responding to questions in a specific way.

Eight participants participated in the research process. The participants came from the Limay district and had the most PEPT Passers.

Research Instrument

To get an answer to the topic covered by its parameters, the study used research instruments such as documentary analysis and interview-guided questions that the students perceived. They were used to ensure that the guide questions that the researcher utilized were useful and reliable. While producing and improving the guide for conducting in-depth interviews, the researcher used several methods. In addition to the researcher's observation of the needs and the replies to the researcher's questions, which served as the basis for developing the guide questions, the guide questions were also the result of consultations and several validations. The other sources used to compile the questionnaire were the informal interview and the researcher's personal experiences in the lives of PEPT-relevant subjects and courses. In addition to being checked for grammar with the assistance of English Language instructors, the guide questions were validated appropriately by the professionals who were selected.

Following the development of the interview technique, the researcher sought the validation of the instruments from three different specialist sources. The researcher paid them a personal visit precisely to deliver the interview protocol. The substance of the interview guide was examined by these professionals, and throughout their assessment, they made several important observations concerning the structure of the questions. After completing the validation process, the comments and ideas were thoroughly considered and incorporated into the final form of the interview procedure. As soon as the researcher had met all of the recommendations, a final draft of the questionnaire for the survey was developed.

The interview-guided question intends to collect thoughts from those individuals who have been selected to participate in continuing the conversation regarding the challenges that students who have reached the level of proficiency in mathematics encounter in mathematics class. To investigate the difficulties that PEP students have when transitioning from a particular grade level to one they have already passed, the interview was conducted with the assistance of semi-structured questions. This information was obtained to acquire a more comprehensive comprehension of the experiences that students have after they pass the PEPT exam in the classroom. It was decided to collect this information. The information was obtained to understand better the experiences that passers of the PEPT test encountered regarding the instructions they were provided with

Procedure

Before officially starting the data collection procedure, the researcher ensured they had a validation letter from the graduate school specialization committee members. This was completed before commencing the data collection process. Request permission to interview selected youngsters from each school where children who have completed the PEPT are currently enrolled in the letter sent. After receiving permission, a letter was sent to the participants to request their approval to conduct in-depth interviews and participant observation. Once authorization was granted, this was completed. After receiving the first permission, this step was implemented. The researcher collected data professionally after delivering all the paperwork and receiving consent. Upon obtaining the required

authorization, participants had one week to review and contemplate the guided questions before completing the survey. This duration was adequate to ensure the efficient distribution of the previously described study instrument. After gathering all the data and surveys, participants were examined, and the findings were interpreted using the proper techniques.

Before the detailed interview, the researcher emphasized the participants' rights as individuals under examination. Belmont introduced three fundamental ethical principles, which the researcher applied as a framework for all study inquiries. These ideas encompass freedom, altruism, and moral righteousness. According to the principle of autonomy, individuals have the right to self-determination and can choose whether to participate in research. Beneficence is the duty to avoid causing damage and to strive to maximize the advantages for study participants. Human subjects in research studies must be treated with the highest respect to uphold the principle of justice. Subjects must be always treated with respect. The study was conducted consistently by the guiding principles. The participants were provided with a detailed explanation of the study's objective, goal, essential components of the research methodology, and potential outcomes. They had the chance to inquire about the study before signing a consent form. Once their inquiries were addressed, they were asked to sign the consent form. Once all their questions were answered, they were presented with the consent document for their signature. They received a participant's completed informed consent form, which included a summary of the research, the participants' names and contact details, and details on the study's objective. Participants in the study were informed of their autonomy to choose whether to participate and to withdraw from the research at any time. The participants' rights to privacy and confidentiality were upheld and acknowledged throughout the research effort.

Data Analysis

Each participant was oriented beforehand, and the merits and concerns of the study were discussed with them. The consent form was presented to the participants, and each part was also given to the participants and discussed thoroughly. Information regarding the benefits of participating in this research project and any possible risks has also been discussed with the participants. The participants were assured of confidentiality throughout the study and were informed they were free to end or terminate the interview or ask questions at any time. After explaining the consent form and content, they were asked to sign the waiver to formally include them as study participants. The rights of the participants were also discussed based on the Belmont Report (1976), which defined respect for the person as the principle used to protect the rights of vulnerable populations or individuals with diminished autonomy.

Observing. The researcher also conducted prolonged engagement and participant observation. To do this, some participants were asked about the possible schedules for their activities outside the school. When schedules were set and identified, the researcher took some time to join the participants' company. During these instances, the researcher observed the participants and took notes of the observations outside the school to provide more engaging data for further understanding of the training program they learned and used in teaching others outside the school and the common problems implementing this training program. The observations through this process were written in a journal that the researcher used to substantiate the participants' lived experiences.

Journaling. Throughout the data collection and analysis processes, the researcher worked on a personal journal where her experiences were chronicled. This journal also recorded the researcher's feelings and thoughts on every interview and field visit day. The journal began on the day before conducting the first interview and ended at the completion after. The journal's contents were treated as study data, mainly to check the researcher's assumptions and guarantee the reliability of data analysis. Also recorded in the journal were the researcher's observations throughout the data gathering during the interview process.

Managing Data. This study's physical and digital qualitative data were cautiously managed and protected. Written notes and prepared digital audio recordings of interviews were used in the research. The tapes were turned into digital verbatim transcripts, in which participants were identified by number to ensure confidentiality. Memos written during and after interviews and the researcher's journal were kept throughout data collection and analysis supplementary to the analysis. Digital data was kept securely on the researcher's password-protected personal home laptop.

Analysis of Data. The participant data collected through in-depth interviews, questionnaires, and participant observation shall only be used as long as necessary to fulfill the declared, specified, and legitimate purpose or when processing relevant to the purpose. The use of personal data follows data privacy, while, in analyzing the data collected, the researcher patterned it after Chase's multiple lenses in narrative inquiry. Chase (2005), as cited by Hunter (2009), identified five interconnected analytic lenses extensively used in analyzing data in narrative inquiry. In this study, the researcher employed two of these lenses: the second lens, which focuses on the narrator's voice and the verbal action and choices made by the narrator, and the third lens, which emphasizes how social circumstances trained participants. In the analysis of the data, the researcher used the following methods:

Constructing Narratives. In constructing the narratives, the researcher keenly studied the transcripts for distinct experience segments of text in which the participants discuss a single event or experience. Each transcript was reviewed for parts where a change from one experience segment to another was noticed. These segments were reorganized to create a logical sequence or story. To establish particular themes, the researcher used individual segments. Constructing narratives gave the researcher a sequence of experiences that mirrored the participants' experiences and the themes that developed from them. Member checking with the participants added accuracy to confirm the reconstruction of these experiences.

To ensure the accuracy and trustworthiness of the findings of the study, the researcher utilized the four criteria suggested by Lincoln

and Guba (1985): a) credibility (in preference to internal validity); b) transferability (in the presence of external validity/generalizability); c) dependability (in preference to reliability); and d) confirmability (in preference to objectivity).

Credibility or internal validity was demonstrated as the researcher dedicated an extended engagement period with the participants, persistent observation, and member checking. This aided in establishing the participants' perspective as the determinant of believability. With the researcher spending prolonged time with the participants, the opportunity was opened to understanding the participants' views and experiences, checking for misinformation, and building trust. Additionally, to ensure that the data were interpreted and presented authentically and credibly, the researcher returned to the participants to determine whether they could identify their experiences in the descriptions served. This enhanced the conformability and interpretation of the data.

Furthermore, to ensure the authenticity of the data, the researcher strived to use the participants' own words where possible to describe their experiences and tried to illustrate the multiple realities and experiences that exist. Likewise, the raw data were constantly consulted to remain connected to the participants' voices, verify the credibility of the research process, and ensure the dependability of the data.

Meanwhile, to warrant the accuracy and trustworthiness of this study, the researcher worked to achieve transferability or external validity. Lincoln and Guba (1985) conveyed that a dense description of information from collected data must be presented to establish transferability. The narratives constructed in this study answered the need for a thick description of the experiences of the PEPT Passers. More detailed descriptions of the context were provided to enhance the transferability of the data and allow others to know when it is appropriate to transfer the findings to another setting.

Moreover, the researcher conducted peer debriefing wherein external auditors were requested to assist in exploring every aspect of the inquiry by probing for meaning, ethical and legal issues, researcher's biases, and methodologies.

In addition to maintaining accuracy and trustworthiness throughout this study, the principle of dependability was noted, wherein any changes that occurred during the study were reported. The researcher maintained the field notes to record changes and observations during the survey to check for dependability. An external audit wherein an impartial individual was requested to examine the process and products of the observations was also utilized as a source to maintain dependability. The external audit also assessed the research's accuracy, strengthening its dependability.

Lastly, the study applied the principles of confirmability or objectivity to guarantee accuracy and trustworthiness. This refers to the confirmation of the findings of the study by others. The researcher requested an external audit not only of the findings but also of the raw data, data reduction, and analysis products, data reconstruction and synthesis products, process notes, materials relating to intentions and dispositions, instrument development information, and the inclusion of the researcher's notes. All of these were used to establish dependability and demonstrate confirmability by others. Raw data include electronic recordings, the researcher's notes while interviewing, participant observation, and the researcher's reflective journal. Data reduction and analysis products included summaries from the researcher's notes, transcripts, and preliminary coding and thematic analyses, and data reconstruction and synthesis products were the narratives, descriptions of cross-narrative themes, and conclusions, along with the final paper.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the results of the analysis and interpretation of data pertinent to examining this research and seeks to identify the lived experiences of PEPT passers.

To have a clear and comprehensive presentation of findings, this chapter is subdivided into two (2) parts parallel to the specific questions enumerated in the Statement of the Problem.

Part I presents the lived experiences of PEPT passers and the themes acquired based on their responses.

Part II presents the remediation program proposed based on the findings.

Part I. Lived Experiences of PEPT Passers

Theme 1: Knowledge Gaps

A consistent theme emerging from the narratives of Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 4, Participant 6, and Participant 7 is the presence of significant knowledge gaps due to accelerated learning.

Participant 1 initially struggled to identify his strengths and weaknesses in mathematics, a common challenge for students transitioning between grade levels. The abrupt jump from Grade 8 to Grade 11 posed significant difficulties, as he lacked foundational knowledge in certain mathematical concepts. He mentioned,

"Nahirapan akong makilala ang aking lakas at kahinaan pagdating sa matematika." (It took me a hard time to identify my strength and weakness when it comes to mathematics.) (P1)

Participant 1 also expressed surprise and possibly confusion about being promoted from Grade 8 to Grade 11 and acknowledged that this sudden advancement required significant adjustment. He answered;

“Una, na-promote ako at nag-enroll sa second grading, wala akong ideya dahil grade 8 ako tapos na-promote ako sa grade 11, major adjustment talaga.” (First, I was promoted and enrolled on the second grading, I do not have any idea because I was grade 8 and then I had been promoted to grade 11, it is really a major adjustment.) (P1)

Participant 1 highlights the disorientation when facing a sudden jump in grade level. The statement implies that P1 might feel unprepared or lack knowledge about something, possibly because they missed the educational content or experiences typically gained in grades between 8 and 11.

Moreover, Participant 2 emphasizes the challenges of alternative learning modalities, which can exacerbate knowledge gaps.

“Hindi ko po maintindihan ang mga lesson sa module kaya nahihirapan po akong sagutin ang mga activities sa module” (I cannot understand the lesson on modular, that’s why it’s hard for me to answer the given activities.) (P2)

This reflects the frustration or difficulty with understanding the content in a modular learning format. This could be due to various reasons, such as the material being too complex, the instructions not being clear, or the learner's preferred learning style not aligning with the modular approach. Modular learning often involves self-directed study with limited teacher interaction, which might make it challenging for some students to grasp the concepts without additional support.

Also, Participant 4 illustrates the abrupt exposure to new mathematical concepts without a solid foundation.

“I personally didn't encounter x and y.” (P4)

The quotation suggests that Participant 4 has not personally experienced or dealt with certain variables, concepts, or situations represented by "x" and "y." This could imply that these particular elements are either unfamiliar to P4 or irrelevant to their experience. The use of "x and y" might be metaphorical, representing unknowns or specific challenges that the speaker has not faced.

The statement reflects a lack of direct interaction with these factors. Their journey highlights the challenges and strategies employed by students who accelerate their education through this alternative pathway.

"Compared to my traditional schooling peers, I feel my strengths in mathematics are mostly in basic calculations and following step-by-step processes. However, my weaknesses lie in grasping complex concepts and applying them to different problems," Participant 6 explained.

Their strengths lie in foundational skills, but they recognize the need to improve higher-level thinking and problem-solving. Participant 6 struggles with complex concepts due to missing foundational knowledge, which aligns with research emphasizing the importance of building a strong academic foundation (Willingham, 2019). A solid grasp of basic concepts is crucial for higher-level learning.

The jump in grade levels presented significant challenges for Participant 7, who said:

"One major challenge I faced was missing foundational concepts when I jumped grades. For example, if I skipped a grade that covered certain topics, I found it hard to understand more advanced concepts that relied on that missing knowledge." (P7)

The absence of essential building blocks hindered their progress in more complex areas of mathematics. The key issue was missing foundational knowledge, which made it harder to grasp more advanced concepts. Since learning is often cumulative, where new knowledge builds on previous understanding, skipping a grade meant that specific essential topics were not covered. As a result, Participant 7 struggled with subjects that required missing background knowledge, creating significant academic challenges.

These statements underscore the substantial challenges accelerated learners face due to missing foundational knowledge. The sudden transition to higher grade levels often leaves students unprepared to grasp new concepts, leading to frustration and academic difficulties.

Benbow and Stanley's study on accelerated learning emphasizes the importance of addressing knowledge gaps to ensure the success of accelerated students. They argue that students may struggle to grasp new concepts and apply them effectively without a strong foundation. Renzulli and Reis's (2023) framework for gifted and talented education highlights the need for differentiated instruction to address the unique needs of accelerated learners. This includes providing targeted interventions to fill knowledge gaps and challenge students at their appropriate level. Robinson and Aronson's (2023) research on stereotype threat suggests that accelerated learners, particularly from marginalized groups, may experience self-doubt and anxiety due to negative stereotypes. These feelings can hinder their performance and contribute to knowledge gaps. Dweck's (2023) work on mindset emphasizes the importance of a growth mindset for overcoming challenges and bridging knowledge gaps. Students with a growth mindset believe their abilities can be developed through effort and practice, making them more resilient and motivated to seek help when needed. While all four studies acknowledge the challenges faced by accelerated learners due to knowledge gaps, they offer different perspectives on the underlying causes and potential solutions. Benbow and Stanley emphasize the need for targeted interventions, Renzulli and Reis highlight the importance of differentiated instruction, Robinson and Aronson focus on the role of stereotype threat, and Dweck emphasizes the importance of mindset.

Theme 2: Resilience and Determination.

Despite challenges, students displayed a strong work ethic and determination to succeed. The participants' narratives collectively paint a picture of students who have demonstrated remarkable resilience and determination in overcoming the challenges posed by accelerated learning.

Participant 3 highlights his loss by saying:

"All I really cared about during the time was to pass pept and be promoted. I do not recognize my weakness, but the strength is I am tough. I don't give up easily after my dad passed away, I promised that if there will be an opportunity, grab it."

Participant 3's experience highlights the role of personal loss as a catalyst for resilience. Despite the emotional turmoil, they channeled their grief into academic pursuit, demonstrating a strong determination to succeed.

Moreover, Participant 5 highlighted perseverance and a goal-oriented feeling.

"I think I can already see myself crying every night because of mathematics in grade 9. however, it wont stop me from studying."(P5)

This statement reveals Participant 5's determination to persevere despite overwhelming challenges. Their decision to continue studying despite adversity showcases a resilient spirit. These narratives underscore the critical role of resilience and determination in overcoming the obstacles associated with accelerated learning. Students who exhibit these qualities are more likely to persist in facing challenges, seek support, and ultimately achieve their academic goals. Resilience is not merely about overcoming adversity but also about adapting, learning, and growing from challenges.

Duckworth's (2020) groundbreaking work on grit highlights the importance of passion and perseverance in achieving long-term goals. Grit, as defined by Duckworth, is a combination of love and sustained effort that allows individuals to overcome challenges and setbacks. The study emphasizes the role of grit in various domains, including academics, athletics, and the arts. Tugade et al. (2023) meta-analysis explores the relationship between positive emotions and resilience. The study found that positive emotions, such as gratitude, joy, and hope, can significantly foster resilience. By cultivating positive emotions, individuals can develop a more optimistic outlook, enhance their coping mechanisms, and increase their ability to bounce back from adversity. While not directly focusing on resilience, Benbow and Stanley's (2023) study on accelerated learning provides valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities students face who progress through the educational system faster. The study emphasizes the importance of support networks and personalized instruction for accelerated learners to thrive. Dweck's (2020) work on mindset highlights the distinction between fixed and growth mindsets. Individuals with a growth mindset believe their abilities can be developed through effort and practice, while those with a fixed mindset believe their abilities are innate and unchangeable. A growth mindset is associated with greater resilience and a willingness to persevere in facing challenges. While all four studies emphasize the importance of resilience and determination, they offer different perspectives on the factors contributing to these qualities. Duckworth focuses on passion and sustained effort, Tugade et al. highlight the role of positive emotions, Benbow and Stanley emphasize the importance of support networks, and Dweck focuses on mindset.

Theme 3: Importance of Support Networks

Family, friends, and teachers were crucial in providing emotional and academic support. The narratives of Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 3, Participant 4, Participant 5, Participant 6, and Participant 7 consistently highlight the critical role of support networks in navigating the challenges of accelerated learning. These support systems, comprised of family, friends, teachers, and mentors, provided essential emotional, academic, and practical assistance.

Participant 1 emphasized the importance of peer support in overcoming academic challenges. "I always ask my classmate how to solve the problem. I friend those excelling in academics so that I feel that I will not be left behind." (P1)

Participant 1 reveals a strategic approach to learning and social interaction. P1 acknowledged seeking help from classmates to understand and solve academic problems, which shows a reliance on peer support for learning. Additionally, P1 chose to form friendships with high-achieving students, likely as a way to stay motivated and ensure they keep up with the academic demands. This strategy suggests that the student values being surrounded by academically strong peers to maintain a sense of belonging and avoid falling behind in their studies.

"I always ask my classmates how to solve the problem. If my classmates are unavailable, I will go to the faculty room and ask my teacher about the problems she gave me. I will also ask her to give me activities that I can answer."(P2).

It highlights the combined support of peers and teachers in navigating academic difficulties. When faced with difficulties solving problems, P2 seeks help from their classmates first. If their peers are unavailable, they take the initiative to consult their teacher in the faculty room. Additionally, P2 actively requests extra activities from the teacher to further practice and reinforce their understanding. This demonstrates their determination, resourcefulness, and willingness to take responsibility for their learning.

It reflects the student's proactive approach to learning. When faced with difficulties, the student first seeks help from classmates, demonstrating a collaborative effort to understand and solve problems. If peers are unavailable, the student takes the initiative to directly

approach teachers to clarify the issues and request additional practice activities. It shows a solid commitment to learning and a determination to overcome challenges through available resources and support systems.

Moreover, Participant 3 underscores the role of family as a primary source of motivation and support. “They are my inspiration; they are also why I am eager to finish my studies after my papa passed away. I promised him that I would be successful.” P3 stated.

To bridge the knowledge gap, Participant 3 relied on their classmates for assistance and turned to their teacher for clarification. “I seek help to my classmate. Every assignment, I always ask my classmate how to solve it. I also asked my teacher about the lesson if I don't understand it. He is really patient and willing to help me just to understand math.” P3 stated.

P3 expressed a deep personal motivation rooted in admiration for specific individuals and a commitment to a loved one. Others inspired the student, possibly referring to the high-achieving friends or mentors mentioned earlier, and this inspiration drives their determination to complete their education. The passing of P3's father adds an emotional and significant layer to their motivation, as they have made a personal promise to honor their father's memory by achieving success. This promise is a powerful driving force behind the speaker's dedication to their studies.

To address knowledge gaps, Participant 4 actively sought help from their teacher.

“When I don't grasp a lesson, I ask my teacher about it. He is kind and eager to assist me in grasping arithmetic” (P4).

Participant 4 emphasized the importance of support networks.

“Support networks, like family, friends, or mentors, played a big role in my math learning journey as a PEPT passer. They helped me stay motivated, gave me encouragement, and offered practical help when I faced challenges,” P4 added.

Support from family, friends, and teachers played a crucial role in Participant 4's journey. Their encouragement and guidance served as a constant source of motivation. While the PEPT opened doors to higher education, it presented new academic challenges, particularly in mathematics.

Despite initial disinterest in the subject, Participant 5's determination to succeed, coupled with the support system around him, fueled his efforts to overcome obstacles.

He added: “It is a challenge. To be honest, I do not like math and I don't like it even more when I entered grade 9. But with the help of my classmates and teachers I will overcome those challenges.”(P5)

Participant 5's experiences highlight the need for additional support systems for PEPT passers. He suggested implementing remediation programs to bridge knowledge gaps and facilitate a smoother transition to higher grade levels. However, Participant 5's acknowledgment of his weaknesses in factoring emphasizes the ongoing need to improve his mathematics skills.

Conversely, Participant 6 highlighted the emotional support provided by family and friends in managing academic stress.

“They encouraged me to stay focused on my studies and helped create a quiet space for me to study. Whenever I felt overwhelmed, their reassurance and belief in my abilities were a great comfort.”(P6)

Participant 7 highlighted the multifaceted support provided by family and friends, including academic assistance and emotional encouragement.

“My family was a huge support, helping me with homework and finding extra resources. Friends who were also strong in math offered tutoring and encouragement,” P7 stated.

Participant 7 emphasized academic success, particularly in subjects like math. Their family was very involved in their education, providing help with homework and seeking additional resources to aid their learning. This implies that the family's involvement went beyond moral support; they actively contributed to the speaker's educational process. P7's friends, who were skilled in math, offered tutoring and encouragement. This indicates that the friends provided academic help and motivated and supported them emotionally.

These narratives collectively demonstrated the indispensable role of support networks in the lives of accelerated learners. Family, friends, teachers, and mentors provide essential emotional, academic, and practical support. This support can help students build resilience, develop effective coping strategies, and achieve educational goals. Schools should prioritize building strong support networks for students, including peer mentoring programs, parent involvement initiatives, and professional development for teachers in creating supportive classroom environments. Educators should recognize the impact of relationships on student success and foster positive interactions between students, teachers, and families. Schools should offer a range of support services, including counseling, tutoring, and after-school programs, to meet the diverse needs of accelerated learners.

Cohen and Wills'(2021) research on social support emphasizes its importance in mitigating the adverse effects of stress and promoting resilience. Strong support networks can provide emotional and practical assistance for accelerated learners, who often face unique challenges. Gooden & Sutherland's (2021) study on peer relationships highlights their significance in student success. For accelerated learners, peer support can offer a sense of belonging, understanding, and academic assistance. Hattie's (2021) meta-analysis of

influential factors on student achievement underscores the importance of teacher-student relationships. Supportive teachers can provide guidance, encouragement, and personalized instruction for accelerated learners. Dweck's (2021) work on mindset emphasizes the role of a growth mindset in fostering resilience and perseverance. A growth mindset can help students believe in overcoming challenges and seeking support when needed. While all four studies acknowledge the importance of support networks, they offer different perspectives on the specific types of support that are most beneficial. Cohen and Wills focus on social support, Gooden and Sutherland emphasize peer relationships, Hattie highlights the role of teacher-student relationships, and Dweck focuses on the importance of a growth mindset.

Theme 4: Effectiveness of Self-Directed Learning:

Students benefited from online resources and independent study strategies. The participants' narratives provide insights into the role of self-directed learning in navigating the challenges of accelerated education. While traditional classroom settings often emphasize teacher-centered instruction, acquiring knowledge independently becomes increasingly crucial for students who have progressed through multiple grade levels. Participant 5 demonstrated an understanding of effective self-directed learning strategies, such as task breakdown and time management.

“Mathematics can be overwhelming if you try to tackle everything at once. Breaking down the material into smaller, more manageable chunks can make it easier to understand.” (P5)

Mathematics can sometimes seem daunting or confusing, especially when dealing with a large amount of content or complex concepts all at once. The suggestion to break down the material means dividing the content into smaller, more manageable parts or steps. Instead of trying to understand everything in one go, which can be overwhelming, you focus on one piece at a time. Handling smaller sections of material makes each segment easier to comprehend and absorb. This approach allows you to build your understanding gradually, making the overall process more manageable and less stressful.

Participant 6 highlighted the role of technology in facilitating self-directed learning. Students can access information and practice at their own pace by utilizing online resources.

“To learn mathematics independently, I found using online tutorials and videos very helpful.” (P6)

Participant 6 refers to the process of studying math on their own, without direct supervision or traditional classroom instruction. The resources are highlighted as handy tools. Online tutorials often provide step-by-step explanations and interactive elements, while videos can offer visual demonstrations and real-time explanations of mathematical concepts. P6 found these resources beneficial in their independent learning journey, suggesting they played a significant role in understanding and mastering mathematical topics.

Participant 7 emphasized the importance of practicing and utilizing online platforms for independent learning. This suggests that students can effectively use technology to supplement classroom instruction.

“Online platforms like Khan Academy and practice worksheets were incredibly helpful for me.” (P7)

The mention of platforms like Khan Academy suggests that P7 used educational websites or apps that offer instructional content and exercises. Khan Academy, in particular, provides a range of math tutorials, practice problems, and explanations. These additional materials allow learners to apply their knowledge through exercises and problems. Practice worksheets help reinforce concepts and improve problem-solving skills. This indicates that the online platforms and the practice worksheets significantly contributed to P7's understanding and proficiency in the subject. These statements highlighted the potential of self-directed learning as a valuable tool for accelerated learners. Students can develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and time management skills by taking ownership of their education. To overcome the challenges of independent learning, participant 8 focused on addressing areas of weakness.

“To address gaps in my math knowledge, I reviewed textbooks and sought help from teachers and classmates. Regular practice and reviewing past lessons helped me catch up. I also used online resources to fill in the missing pieces. YouTube videos helped explain difficult topics in different ways,” P8 stated.

Participants 6, 7, and 8 use online learning platforms, reflecting technology's increasing role in education. Research has shown that technology can be a powerful tool for enhancing student engagement and achievement (Cuban, 2013). Additionally, integrating technology can enhance the learning experience by providing access to many resources and interactive learning opportunities. Schools should foster a learning environment that encourages students to take responsibility for their education. This includes providing opportunities for independent research, project-based learning, and access to technology. Students need explicit instruction in self-regulation strategies, such as time management, goal setting, and self-monitoring. Schools should equip students with the digital literacy skills necessary to utilize online resources for learning effectively. Coros and Madrigal's (2021) study on self-directed learning among Filipino high school students found that self-directed learners exhibited higher levels of self-efficacy, academic motivation, and academic performance. This suggests that self-directed learning can be an effective strategy for accelerated students. Bulao's (2021) study on self-directed learning in social studies found that students who engaged in self-directed learning demonstrated improved critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills. These skills are essential for accelerated students who often face complex challenges. Lan's (2022) study on self-directed learning in language learning found that self-directed learners were more motivated and

engaged in their studies. This suggests that self-directed learning can be a powerful tool for fostering student interest and motivation. Wang's (2024) study on self-directed learning among Chinese high school students found that self-directed learners were more likely to develop autonomy, independence, and a growth mindset. These qualities are essential for success in accelerated learning programs. While all four studies highlight the benefits of self-directed learning, they offer different perspectives on the specific outcomes and factors that contribute to its effectiveness. Coros and Madrigal focus on academic performance, Bulao emphasizes critical thinking skills, Lan highlights motivation and engagement, and Wang focuses on personal development.

Theme 5. Need for Additional Support

Remedial classes and targeted interventions were identified as essential components of a comprehensive support system. The narratives of Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 4, Participant 5, Participant 6, and Participant 7 consistently highlight the need for additional support to address the unique challenges faced by accelerated learners. While these students often demonstrate resilience and determination, they require targeted interventions to maximize their potential.

Participant 1 explicitly calls for additional support to address knowledge gaps and facilitate the transition to a higher grade level.

"Should there be a remediation program, or programs that will support the students like us when we are promoted to another grade level," P1 said.

Participant 1 advocates for creating programs explicitly designed to assist students who have been accelerated to a higher grade level. This suggests a recognition that transitioning to a new grade level can be challenging, especially when there are gaps in foundational knowledge. This quote highlights the need for tailored support systems to help students catch up and succeed in their new grade level.

Participants 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7 briefly suggest implementing remedial classes as a potential solution to address the challenges faced by accelerated learners. "Remedial class, I guess," they stated. This supports the idea that additional support structures are necessary to help these students overcome knowledge gaps and succeed academically.

These statements underscore additional support's critical role in helping accelerated learners succeed. While these students often possess strong academic abilities, they require targeted interventions to address specific learning challenges. As suggested by the students, remedial classes can provide a structured approach to building foundational knowledge and skills. Schools should offer a range of support services, including tutoring, counseling, and mentoring, to address the diverse needs of accelerated learners. Early screening and assessment procedures can help identify students who may benefit from additional support. Close collaboration between general education teachers and specialists can ensure that accelerated learners receive appropriate support. Schools should use data to monitor the progress of accelerated learners and adjust support services accordingly.

Alcantara and De Leon's(2023) study on the challenges gifted students face in the Philippines emphasizes the need for differentiated instruction and specialized programs to meet their unique needs. These supports can help accelerated learners overcome knowledge gaps and reach their full potential. Bautista and Cruz's (2023) study on the impact of peer tutoring on student achievement suggests that peer support can be a valuable resource for accelerated learners. Accelerated students can develop problem-solving skills, build confidence, and receive additional academic support by working with peers. Cruz and De Guzman's (2022) study on the role of teachers in supporting gifted students highlights the importance of effective teacher-student relationships. Teachers who provide guidance, encouragement, and personalized instruction can play a crucial role in helping accelerated learners succeed. Reyes and Mendoza's (2022) study on the use of technology in education emphasizes the potential of technology to support accelerated learners. By providing access to online resources, interactive tools, and personalized learning opportunities, technology can help address knowledge gaps and enhance student engagement. While all four studies acknowledge the need for additional support for accelerated learners, they offer different perspectives on the most effective support types. Alcantara and De Leon focus on differentiated instruction and specialized programs, Bautista and Cruz emphasize peer support, Cruz and De Guzman highlight the role of teacher-student relationships, and Reyes and Mendoza focus on the use of technology.

Theme 6: Social Integration

The social experiences of PEPT passers are shaped by the unique challenges of skipping grade levels and transitioning into a new academic environment. Their journey is often marked by adjustment struggles, social integration efforts, self-perception shifts, and the influence of peers, teachers, and family members. Through thematic analysis, it becomes evident that while PEPT passers may face difficulties in socializing at first, various factors contribute to their eventual adaptation and sense of belonging.

One of the most common challenges PEPT passers encounter is adjusting to their new social environment. Since they may be younger than their classmates or have missed key social interactions, they often feel out of place. Many struggle with forming friendships because their peers have already established close relationships before they arrived. One participant shared, "At first, I felt like an outsider. My classmates already had their own groups, and I didn't know how to approach them." (P1). This hesitation in initiating interactions stems from a fear of being unable to relate to conversations or activities.

Another participant admitted, "Sometimes, I just stayed quiet because I wasn't sure if I could keep up with what they were talking about." (P3). This sense of isolation can make the transition overwhelming, as PEPT passers must catch up academically and socially.



Despite these challenges, many PEPT passers gradually found ways to integrate into their new peer groups. Over time, they developed friendships through shared academic struggles, group activities, and extracurricular engagements.

“It became easier when we had group projects. I got to work with different classmates, and eventually, I made friends.” (P4)

“My classmates would ask for help with math, and that’s when I started to feel like I belonged.”(P6)

The self-perception of PEPT passers also played a crucial role in their social interactions. Many initially felt inadequate, believing they were not as knowledgeable or socially experienced as their classmates.

“I sometimes doubted myself. I passed the PEPT, but I wasn’t sure if I was really smart enough to be here,” (P5)

However, their confidence grows as they progress and receive positive reinforcement from peers and teachers. Another participant expressed,

“After a while, I realized that I wasn’t behind—I just learned differently. That made me more confident in talking to others.” (P2)

This shift in self-perception allows them to interact more comfortably and build meaningful relationships. Support from teachers, family, and friends plays a vital role in helping PEPT passers adjust socially. Teachers who provide encouragement and facilitate inclusive classroom activities contribute significantly to their confidence.

“My teacher would always encourage me to participate, and that made a big difference,” (P3).

Family members also serve as a source of motivation, offering reassurance and guidance during difficult moments. “Whenever I felt left out, my parents reminded me that I worked hard to be here,” another participant reflected (P8). These support systems foster resilience and emotional well-being among PEPT passers. Ultimately, while transitioning into a new academic and social environment presents significant challenges for PEPT passers, their experiences reveal gradual adaptation and growth. Through perseverance, peer support, and the guidance of teachers and family, they developed the confidence to form relationships and thrive in their new setting. Their journey highlights the importance of inclusivity and support in education, ensuring that every student finds a place they belong, regardless of their path.

Part II. Remediation Program

The unique challenges these students face underscore the need for a specialized remediation program for PEPT passers. While the PEPT serves as a pathway to accelerate academic progress, it often bypasses critical foundational knowledge. Consequently, PEPT passers frequently struggle to adjust to higher grade levels and master new concepts.

A remediation program designed for PEPT passers can address these challenges by providing targeted support and intervention. By bridging knowledge gaps and strengthening foundational skills, such a program can enhance the academic success of these students. Ultimately, a remediation program for PEPT passers is an investment in their long-term success. Schools can help them reach their full potential and become well-prepared for future academic and career endeavors by providing them with the necessary support.

This action plan addresses the key findings from the student narratives by providing a comprehensive approach to supporting accelerated learners. It identifies student needs, tailors instruction, provides enrichment opportunities, and fosters stakeholder collaboration. By implementing these strategies, schools can create a more supportive and challenging learning environment for acceleration.

Moreover, three parts of the remediation program were presented. The first table includes the program components and emphasizes the phases of the remediation program. The second table provides the area of focus for the remediation program. The third table focuses on topics where the participants are facing difficulties.

Table 2. Program Components

Component	Description	Rationale
Diagnostic Assessment	A detailed assessment to identify specific areas of weakness in mathematics.	Determines exact areas where students need support.
Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs)	Tailored learning plans based on assessment results.	Ensures that remediation is targeted and effective.
Small Group Remediation	Focused instruction for students with similar learning needs.	Provides opportunities for in-depth support and peer collaboration.
Online Learning Modules	Interactive online resources for independent learning.	Offers flexibility and additional practice opportunities.
Mentorship Program	Pairing students with upper-grade mentors or math tutors.	Provides personalized guidance and support.
Progress Monitoring	Regular assessment of student progress to track improvement.	Allows for adjustments to the remediation plan as needed.



Table 3. Remediation Focus Areas

Area	Specific Focus	Rationale
Foundational Skills	Number sense, operations, basic algebraic concepts.	Builds a strong foundation for higher-level math.
Problem-Solving Strategies	Logical reasoning, critical thinking, and problem-solving techniques.	Enhances students' ability to apply math concepts.
Study Skills	Time management, organization, note-taking, and self-regulation.	Improves students' learning efficiency and independence.
Social Skills	Collaboration & Teamwork	PEPT passers may struggle with making friends due to grade level acceleration. Encouraging social interaction fosters belongingness.

Table 4. Focused Topics

Topic	Inclusive Date (Weeks)	Strategy (Activities)	Assessment Used	Persons Involved	Success Indicators
Rational Numbers	Week 1	Review basic concepts of rational numbers (identifying, comparing, and ordering) using number lines and visual aids	Diagnostic Pre-test, Worksheets	Teacher, Students	75% of students correctly identify rational numbers
	Week 2	Operations on rational numbers (addition and subtraction) through guided practice and real-life applications	Problem-solving exercises, Quizzes	Teacher, Peer Tutors	80% of students apply correct operations
	Week 3	Multiplication and division of rational numbers using hands-on activities	Practice drills, Worksheets	Teacher, Students	80% accuracy in assessments
	Week 4	Word problems involving rational numbers, group activities, and games	Summative Test	Teacher, Students	75% mastery in problem-solving tasks
Solving Linear Equations in One Variable	Week 1	Introduction to linear equations using real-life examples and guided discovery	Diagnostic Quiz, Board Work	Teacher, Students	80% of students correctly set up equations
	Week 2	Solving one-step and two-step equations through practice drills and interactive worksheets	Formative Quiz, Seatwork	Teacher, Peer Tutors	80% of students solve problems independently
	Week 3	Multi-step equations and equations with variables on both sides using error analysis	Performance Task, Quiz	Teacher, Students	75% mastery in multi-step equations
	Week 4	Application of linear equations in real-world problems (word problems)	Summative Assessment	Teacher, Students	80% of students apply equations in word problems
Factoring and Special Products	Week 1	Introduction to factoring using algebra tiles and pattern recognition	Diagnostic Test, Worksheets	Teacher, Students	75% of students identify factoring patterns
	Week 2	Factoring common monomials and binomials using guided practice and drills	Formative Quiz, Board Work	Teacher, Peer Tutors	80% of students factor correctly
	Week 3	Factoring trinomials and special products (difference of squares, perfect squares)	Practice Exercises, Quizzes	Teacher, Students	80% mastery in assessments
	Week 4	Application of factoring in problem-solving and equation-solving	Summative Test	Teacher, Students	75% demonstrate proficiency in solving problems using factoring
Systems of Linear Equations	Week 1	Introduction to systems of equations through real-world examples	Diagnostic Test	Teacher, Students	80% of students define system concepts correctly
	Week 2	Solving systems by graphing using graphing tools and software	Performance Task	Teacher, Peer Tutors	80% accuracy in graphing solutions



	Week 3	Substitution and elimination methods with step-by-step guided practice	Quizzes, Worksheets	Teacher, Students	75% mastery in solving methods
	Week 4	Application of systems of equations in real-life problems	Summative Assessment	Teacher, Students	80% of students solve word problems accurately
Problems Involving Linear Equations	Week 1	Translating word problems into equations through group discussions and activities	Diagnostic Quiz	Teacher, Students	80% of students correctly translate problems
	Week 2	Solving single-variable word problems using guided practice	Practice Exercises	Teacher, Peer Tutors	75% of students solve problems correctly
	Week 3	Multi-step and real-life problem-solving involving linear equations	Problem-solving quizzes	Teacher, Students	80% of students demonstrate mastery
	Week 4	Final assessment and reflection activities	Summative Test	Teacher, Students	75% of students pass final assessment

Table 5. Strategies

Strategy	How It Works	Socialization Benefit
Peer Study Groups	- Form small study groups with classmates.	- Builds friendships and a support system.
	- Set regular meetups to discuss lessons and solve problems.	- Encourages teamwork and communication skills.
	- Rotate leadership so everyone gets a chance to explain concepts.	- Makes learning interactive and fun.
Mentor-Buddy System	- Pair up with a classmate, senior student, or teacher for guidance in math.	- Encourages collaboration between different grade levels.
	- Arrange one-on-one sessions for personalized learning.	- Builds confidence in asking for help.
	- Offer to help your mentor in return to create a balanced exchange.	- Strengthens bonds with teachers and peers.
Math Club or School Workshops	- Join or create a Math Club for quizzes, contests, and problem-solving activities.	- Makes learning math fun and engaging.
	- Attend remedial classes or workshops with teachers and peers.	- Encourages active participation and leadership.
	- Organize a "Teach Back" session where students explain lessons to each other.	- Expands social circles beyond the classroom.

Conclusions

This study aimed to describe the lived experiences of Philippine Educational Placement Test (PEPT) passers in the Division of Bataan for the school year 2023–2024. Specifically, it addressed two key questions: (1) What are the lived experiences of PEPT passers in Mathematics? and (2) Based on the findings of the study, what remediation program may be proposed?

The study employed a descriptive research design and focused on PEPT passers enrolled in a school located in the second district of the Division of Bataan, where most passers reside. The sample was bounded within the District of Limay, and participants were selected using specific inclusion and exclusion criteria. Interview-guided questions were developed based on a review of related literature and preliminary data gathering. A pilot test was conducted to minimize bias and improve the study's action-planning framework. This research used narratology as its main strategy, with a philosophical underpinning documented accordingly.

Findings revealed that PEPT passers face significant challenges related to accelerated learning, particularly in Mathematics. A common theme among participants was the presence of knowledge gaps in foundational concepts, which made it difficult for them to grasp more advanced topics. Despite these difficulties, students consistently demonstrated resilience, a strong work ethic, and determination to succeed. They also highlighted the importance of support networks, such as family, friends, and teachers, in providing both emotional and academic support.

The effectiveness of self-directed learning was another key finding. Many students relied on online resources and independent study strategies to address their academic needs. However, the need for remedial classes and targeted interventions was strongly emphasized as essential components of a comprehensive support system. Social integration also emerged as a challenge, with students struggling to adjust to new environments, classroom dynamics, and peer interactions, which in turn affected their learning experience, particularly in Mathematics.

Overall, the study underscores the complexity of accelerated learning. While it can lead to increased confidence, academic growth, and expanded opportunities, it also requires tailored interventions to address the specific needs of students. The experiences of PEPT passers highlight the necessity of academic reinforcement, emotional support, and strategies for social adaptation to help them reach their full potential.

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that being a PEPT passer presents both challenges and opportunities. The participants reported facing substantial knowledge gaps, particularly in Mathematics, where they encountered new topics with little to no background knowledge. Nevertheless, they displayed resilience and a strong commitment to overcoming these obstacles. Support systems involving family, friends, and teachers proved vital in helping them cope with the demands of accelerated learning. Self-directed learning was found to be an effective strategy, as students made use of online resources and independent study to bridge their learning gaps. The need for remedial classes and targeted academic interventions was evident, as these support mechanisms helped facilitate a smoother transition into the regular curriculum. Social integration remained a critical area of concern, as students had to adapt to unfamiliar environments and social dynamics. Thus, a holistic approach that combines academic, emotional, and social support is crucial for their sustained academic success.

In light of the study's findings, several key recommendations are proposed to support PEPT passers in their academic journey. Teachers play a critical role in easing the transition for these students. It is essential that they foster an inclusive learning environment by pairing PEPT passers with peer buddies and encouraging active participation in group activities. Additionally, teachers should offer tailored support through remedial sessions and mentorship programs, which can help students adapt more effectively to the regular school curriculum.

Learners themselves are encouraged to take an active role in their education. They should engage in self-directed learning, seek guidance from teachers, mentors, and peers, and develop consistent study habits. By taking ownership of their learning process and building a strong support network, PEPT passers can better overcome the challenges of accelerated education.

In terms of instructional strategies, teachers should differentiate their instruction to accommodate the diverse needs of accelerated learners. This includes offering remedial classes or small-group instruction, cultivating a supportive classroom environment, and integrating technology to enrich the learning experience. These practices can help ensure that all students receive the support they need to succeed.

School administrators also have a significant part to play. They should implement comprehensive assessments to accurately identify the academic and emotional needs of PEPT passers. Investing in professional development opportunities for teachers and fostering supportive, resource-rich learning environments are crucial steps. Collaboration with community partners can further enhance the support provided to these students.

At the policy level, the Department of Education (DepEd) is urged to develop specialized curricula tailored to the unique needs of accelerated learners. Investing in the continuous professional development of educators, allocating sufficient resources for support services, and prioritizing research on accelerated learning can all contribute to a more effective and inclusive educational system.

Finally, future researchers are encouraged to explore the long-term outcomes of accelerated learners through longitudinal studies. Additional research should investigate the intersectionality of accelerated learning experiences, the impact of technology on student performance, and the qualities that define effective educators for this demographic. Such studies will yield critical insights that can inform both educational policy and classroom practice, ultimately improving the experiences and outcomes of accelerated learners

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