

SIGNIFICANCE AND THE STATUS OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN INDIA

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Introduction

Mahatma Gandhi said “by education I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man, body, mind and spirit”. Swami Vivekananda gave the most practical definition of education and it is a new outlook on education. He said “we want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, and the intellect expounded and by which one can stand on his feet”. According to Aristotle “Education is a creation of sound mind in sound body. It develops man’s faculty especially in his mind so that he may be able to enjoy the contemplation of supreme truth, goodness and beauty of which perfect happiness especially consists”. In the modern world, education is looked on as preparing the individuals for a meaningful self-directed existence. It is viewed as the primary focus of education. The role of physical education comes up in this juncture.

Physical education as a branch of knowledge lays emphasis on building a physically, emotionally, mentally and socially fit individual. A heavy responsibility rests on the shoulders of those who spend a large share of their time with the youths of today. If experiences are provided that are satisfying, successful and directed towards enriching the student’s life, the purpose of education will be accomplished. Charles Butcher (1967) the great American physical educationalist states: “Physical education is an integral part of the total education process in the field of endeavor, which has as its aim the development of physically, mentally, emotionally and socially fit citizens through the medium of physical activities which has been selected with a view to realizing these outcomes”

Aim and goals-of physical education

A Physical education is the education that is based on common core of learning experience planned on a sequential arrangement appropriate to the individual’s all stages of physical, social, emotional, intellectual and psychomotor development. Education is brought about as the individual’s interest with the surrounding physical environment. According to Budely Sergent, (1997) "physical education should aim to improve the mass students and to give them as much as health, struggle and stamina as possible to enable them to perform the duties that

adds them a greater their schools and colleges. Participation of the students in physical education activities under the guidance of well-qualified teachers contribute significantly to the total health through the development of physical, mental social and emotional aspect. Physical education programmes also provide experience in imbibing the spirit of democratic citizenship as well as an opportunity for carrying out leisure time pursuits.

Objectives of Physical Education

The physical objectives are organic efficiency neuromuscular coordination, safety habits, the ability to handle oneself in a variety of situations for the protection of self and others, good health habits and posture awareness. The mental objectives are knowledge and understanding of rules, strategy and etiquette of various activities. The social objectives include leadership and ability to organize, the ability to follow and cooperate self-confidence and a sense of belonging, appreciation of other's skills and performance, respect of the right and property of others and good sportsmanship. Emotional objectives are self-control, a desire to be fair, a desire to complete and desire to accept the challenges of new activities. According to John C. Thomson (1971) the primary objective of physical education is to help each Individual achieve to physical fitness, mental balance, social adjustability, emotional stability, moral and spiritual understanding and cultural development of which he is capable.

Importance of Physical Education: Physical education is an organized experience related to general education which attempts to lead the individual and the group into situations offering opportunities for the learning of neuromuscular skills, acquisition of vigor development of desirable social attitude and the enjoyment of creative expressions through muscle activity. Physical education is the important phase of education concerned with the teaching of skills, acquisition of knowledge and development of attitudes through human movement. Physical education as an important branch of knowledge for the development of human being was accepted by all the human societies even from the primitive civilizations. Most of the public schools, colleges and universities of the world in leading countries recognize the importance of physical education by making it part of the required curriculum.

According to Don Cach Seaton, (1970) “ The school physical education programme in USA provides each person with several opportunities that will strengthen personal weakness to development of life time skills and understanding enabling the student to lead a full and productive life while in school and afterward. In a broad view of education, physical education's uniqueness lies in its contribution to physiological and psychomotor development. It shares with other disciplines in contributing to the cognitive, social and affective areas of development”. Williams states (2000) “physical education in Russia is

compulsory for all school students and widely promoted for all adults of schools. The programme is centered in three age groups 7-10, 10-17 and 18-25.” Likewise in most of the leading countries both socialist and, capitalist, physical education is accepted as essential in the education curriculum. Schools are considered as the spot of talent hunting, school physical education and sports is the basement of the sports performance of these countries in international sporting arena.

Physical education develops the students ‘motor skills and hand-eye coordination. It also develops the upper body muscles through activities like doing pushups as well the lower body muscles (for instance, through stationary jumping jacks, running and jumping exercises, etc.). Programs usually have core training exercises also like doing abdominal crunches. Physical health allows students to function even better in classrooms. A good cardiovascular system developed from regular exercise promotes excellent blood and oxygen circulation. This means more nutrients circulate throughout the body which includes the brain. This circulation produces longer attention span during classes allowing longer concentration and absorption. Students who are active in physical activities like basketball, volleyball, martial arts and running just to name a few are more confident with themselves. It is because of the self-discipline and dedication to excel in a sport that brings out the best in students. In school, the physical education program introduces these sport activities to students, allowing them to make choices to which sport areas they want to get involved in. This paper aims to give an insight into the health benefits of physical education programs for students within the school system. It also provides legislative / regulatory recommendations for the purpose of improving the quality of physical education. Physical Education fosters personal and community wellness by empowering students to attain healthy, lifelong attitudes and behaviours through physical activity as part of the total educational experience. A Curriculum Framework for Physical Education: Adjusting the Focus builds on the belief that learners in a school setting have a fundamental need and desire for movement. This framework defines physical education as—that part of the educational experience which provides learners with the opportunity to become aware of and engage in physical activity that is whole-bodied, intrinsically valuable and personally meaningful within the context of the learners' social and environmental setting.

Physical education should be an important part of that requirement and does more than provide some minutes of moderate-vigorous activity. It also exposes students to lifetime activities and teaches students how to integrate exercise into their lives. Since childhood

obesity rates continue to rise across the regions of the globe, there is public support for more physical education in schools.

Types of physical education

Team Sports: These are organized sports played by teams and typically involve competition, such as basketball, soccer, and football.

Individual Sports: These are typically played by a single individual or against another individual, such as tennis, swimming, and running.

Fitness Activities: These are designed to improve overall physical fitness, such as running, jumping, lifting weights, and stretching.

Outdoor Education: This type of physical education involves activities in a natural environment, such as hiking, camping, and rock climbing.

Dance: This type of physical education involves learning and performing various dance styles, such as ballet, jazz, and hip hop.

Yoga and Other Mind-Body Practices: This physical education involves exercises focusing on connecting the mind and body, such as yoga, tai chi, and meditation.

Physical Education in India

A National Plan of Physical education and Recreation was first prepared in 1956 by the Union Ministry of Education. This plan has included useful guidelines for a syllabus of physical education for implementation in the secondary schools. The Government of India, in 1965, framed a multipurpose programme of physical education for implementation in the secondary schools of the country. Under the present educational structure of 10+2+3, as envisaged by the National Policy of education, and declared by the Union Government in April, 1977, physical education and sports are to be an integral part of curriculum at all stages. With respect to context of the government policy many state Governments have attempted to make physical education a compulsory subject in the school and college programmes. Kothari Commission states, (1966) “It is wrong to ignore the educational values giving too much emphasis only to physical wellbeing. Perhaps physical education is one of the latest subjects to enter the field of organized educational system in our country. According to a report by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), only about half of the schools in india have a physical education teacher and adequate facilities for physical activity. This is a concern, as the benefits of physical education are not just about sports and exercise but also about teaching students the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

Several Interferences to Physical Education in India

1. Lack of Resources

Many schools in India need more facilities and equipment for physical education. This can make it challenging to provide quality physical education programs.

2. Insufficient Staffing

Some schools may need more physical education teachers or trained staff to provide physical education to students.

3. Cultural and Societal Barriers

In some cases, cultural or societal norms may discourage physical activity, particularly for girls.

4. Academic Pressures

In some cases, physical education may be seen as less important than other subjects, and schools may prioritize academic subjects over physical education.

5. Funding

Physical education programs can be expensive to implement and maintain, and some schools may need more funding to support them.

6. Time Constraints

Physical education may be given less time in the school schedule, making it difficult to fit in all necessary activities.

There are several reasons why physical education may be lacking in some Indian schools. While one issue is a need for more resources, including facilities and equipment, there may be a focus on academics at the expense of other subjects, such as physical education. There may also be cultural or societal barriers that discourage physical activity, particularly for girls.

Conclusion: In conclusion, the importance of physical education in schools is essential to a well-rounded education and has numerous benefits for both physical and mental health. The current state of physical education in Indian schools is a concern, and more needs to be done to address the physical education gap. By prioritizing physical education, we can improve the health and overall success of Indian students. Readers can support physical education in their communities by advocating the benefits of physical education and the need for better resources and facilities, thus encouraging regular physical activity.

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