

# Contribution of Physical Education: An Overview

Naveen Sangwan, DPE

GSSS Humanyapur, Rohtak (HR.)

**Abstract:** Educators are continually looking for ways to improve the way students learn. One area that has been studied in an attempt to find out more about how students learn is that of Physical Education. Many aspects of Physical Education have been examined with each offering various positive and negative results that provide information to help educators best understand their students. However, the amount of Physical Education being taught is dwindling in many schools as extra time is afforded to other academic subjects. It is important to not only consider what is being taught in Physical Education in schools, but also the perceptions students have towards this subject. The reason it is so crucial to consider the attitudes and perceptions students have towards Physical Education is that the “students” attitudes to PE may influence their participation in PE at school as well as organized sports outside school”. The perceptions a person has on a topic can influence what they do. In a study it is frankly clear that traditionally the opinions students have about learning have been overlooked. However, this has recently been changing and more research has been completed that examines students views or attitudes. This research paper examined the perceptions of students and teachers about how Physical Education is both taught and received.

**Keywords:** Physical Education, Academic Subject, Substitute Model, Classroom Behavior.

**Introduction:** The primary goal of schools is to positively influence their students’ mental, social, and physical development. Some schools also aim to enhance their students’ spiritual development. Students generally develop socially by being in a caring school community and spending

time interacting with fellow students as well as their teachers. These relationships can be developed in addition to the specified learning topics and can be integrated into whole school learning. The physical education is trying to develop students cognitively.

Traditionally the main focus during the school day is the development of the mind through traditional subjects like mathematics, English and science. Under this persisting model, children sit passively at their desks attempting to develop their minds and reasoning capacity while ignoring the needs of their bodies. Therefore, the psychomotor or physical component of children's learning often tends to be overlooked. Conventionally cognitive learning has been prioritized above that of psychomotor learning. The idea of ignoring physical activity in education does not comply with the holistic wellness view of education where people should be developing socially, physically, spiritually, environmentally, intellectually, emotionally, and occupationally. Some students and parents have the perception that replacing cognitive learning with physical learning can have a detrimental effect on a child's cognitive development. Physical Education can affect student behavior, this may mean that it can also have an influence on the way students learn or their tendency to remain focused during classroom lessons.

There are ample points to describe that how beneficial physical education for

everyone. Some of the key-points are as under:

- **Health Benefits and Physical Considerations.** Physical activity and exercise are known to aid overall health in both children and adults. Physical Education is a method used for improving fitness which can help counter current trends towards obesity and inactive behaviours in children. "Obesity is just one of many health issues that a comprehensive HPE [Health and Physical Education] curriculum will engage with from an educational perspective". The health benefits associated with Physical Education is a major reason why teachers believe this subject is taught in schools. Another point is that Obesity with children; who are overweight and obese. Teachers play an important role in helping students are Healthy by providing them with opportunities to be physically active by participating in Physical Education sessions. What students currently think about Physical Education must be considered to determine how this subject is influencing child obesity levels. There is also the likelihood that a high level of physical activity as a

child could lead to positive health results as an adult. These benefits include “reduced risks of obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and osteoporosis”. With these positive outcomes in mind, it is paramount that children engage in sufficient physical activity to ensure they remain healthy not only as children, but also to provide a platform for remaining healthy as adults. One of the easiest ways to make sure that every child at least has the chance to exercise regularly is for schools to provide a range of opportunities for their students to exercise and therefore stay healthy. Schools therefore have an important role to play in helping students develop healthy fitness habits. Although there are significant health benefits connected with the teaching of Physical Education, there are also other aspects to consider including student behavioural changes. Some of these behavioural changes are now explored.

- **Physical Education in Comparison to Fitness & Competitive Sport:** Many Physical Education programs include a high number of competitive games and activities. These competitive

situations that students are placed in can be of benefit to some students and yet detrimental to others. Physical Education programs should be designed in a way that is less formal and not competitively orientated to ensure equity is shown to all students. Physical Education and sport are sometimes used as synonyms in the educational environment; this is known as The Substitution Model. Students that participate in performance and competition focused Physical Education classes are more likely to be subject to negative Physical Education experiences. This is especially likely to happen to students who are less physically inclined. The Versus Model states that although Physical Education and sport are related, they cannot be substituted because Physical Education provides less-capable students with the opportunity to participate without the competitive component that sport provides. The Reinforcement Model and The Sequence Model are similar in that they both link Physical Education and sport.

- **The Effect of Exercise on the Brain:** Another suggestion has been made as

to why physical activity may affect academic performance, this time on a biological level. Research has been completed in this area that indicates that blood flow to the brain increases during a spell of physical activity. More recent neuro-imaging technology has shown that exercise can lead to an alteration in brain structure and function that can be beneficial to student learning. Jensen (2008) agrees that Physical activity can increase the blood flow to the brain as by causing an increase in blood circulation within the body. This could lead to an increase in thinking ability which could benefit the performance of students in the classroom. This area of research is very current and it is beginning to become clear that physical activity is strongly linked to changes in the human brain.

- **Physical Education must be part of Curriculum:** Curriculum documents are used as a vehicle for governments and policy makers to influence the way education is administered in a school environment. Certain subjects must be taught in all schools but physical education must be a part of curriculum. Physical education can be

a major force in helping children socialize with others more successfully. Being able to participate in games and sports is an important part of fitting in, especially for those in late childhood and early adolescence. It not only outlet the tension and anxiety but also reduced the risk of depression.

- **Physical Education Helps in Concentration Problems:** In 2007 a report published by Dr. Stewart Trost of Oregon State University links as little as 15 minutes of physical activity to improved concentration, memory and classroom behavior among elementary school students. Contrary to what may be expected, the improved concentration and academic performance were more pronounced among children who exercised than in those who had an additional lesson. As such, eliminating breaks for physical activity to fit in additional lessons may be counterproductive when teaching children.

Further we can say that physical exercise can improve a person's memory and concentration. Scientific research shows that exercising releases more of the chemical compounds used

in brain activity and cognition, thus improving your ability to focus.

- **Physical Education helps to build Self-Discipline:** We all better know that students do superior in school when they are emotionally and physically healthy. They miss fewer classes, are less likely to engage in risky or antisocial behavior, concentrate more, and achieve higher test scores. Physical education programs not only improve physical fitness, but they can also benefit students by improving skill development, reinforcing self-discipline, supporting academic achievement, reducing stress, strengthening peer relationships, improving self-confidence and self-esteem, and teaching goal setting.

**Conclusion:** All in all we can say that many adolescents who have few opportunities to be active outside of the school day, quality physical education becomes the only option for physical activity. For students in large urban communities, physical education classes serve as a safe environment in which to be physically active under adult supervision in a structured environment. For students with disabilities in particular, physical education classes are one of the only

outlets for physical activity. For these reasons, it is crucial to overcome the above barriers to quality physical education. Some school districts have found ways to do so and provide robust physical education programs. The barrier of limited time during the school day can be overcome through creative scheduling that makes use of every minute of the day in a constructive manner.

#### **References:**

- Indian Academy of Pediatrics, 2006. Active Healthy Living: Prevention of Childhood Obesity through Increased Physical Activity, Pediatrics, 2012.
- Fishman BJ, Marx RW, Best S, Tal RT. Linking teacher and student learning to improve professional development in systemic reform. Teaching and Teacher Education. 2003.
- Fawcner SG, Niven A, Thin AG, MacDonald MJ, Oakes JR. Adolescent girls' energy expenditure during dance simulation active computer

gaming. Journal of Sports Sciences. 2010.

- Haddock BL, Siegel SR, Wikin LD. The addition of a video game to stationary cycling: The impact on energy expenditure in overweight children. Open Sports Sciences Journal. 2009.
- Kramer SL, Keller R. An existence proof: Successful joint implementation of the IMP curriculum and a 4 × 4 block schedule at a suburban U.S. high school. Journal for Research in Mathematics Education. 2008.
- P. Jankinathan, N. Srivastva. What makes teacher professional development work? The influence of instructional resources on change in physical education. Journal of In-Service Education. 2006.