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Current trends, challenges and developmental reforms in physical education in the 21st century: A review

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Abstract

In order to address future obstacles, this study attempted to identify the trends, problems, and challenges that are currently present in physical education and sports. Physical Education as a subject has been there in the curriculum for ages. In modern times, it has become one of the highest-priority subjects in India. The importance of physical education has never before been emphasised as extensively as it is today. Physical education (PE) and sports are widely recognised as important, relevant, and required for promoting an active, healthy lifestyle and for addressing the rising obesity rates in the world. Despite the fact that physical education is taught in schools in the majority of countries, children and teenagers have fewer opportunities to engage in physical activity as a result. The interactions between various movement-related behaviours, such as sleep, sedentary behaviour, and physical activity of all intensities, that make up the entire day (24-hour period), have recently piqued the interest of leaders in the fields of healthy active living, public health, and preventive medicine.

Keywords: Physical education, sports, curriculum, NEP 2020

Introduction

One of the key challenges of the 21st century is the low levels of youth physical activity engagement (Bouchard *et al.*, 2012) [4]. Numerous studies have shown that physical education classes are an effective way to encourage youth physical activity and so enhance their general health (Fairclough, 2004; Sallis *et al.*, 2012) [9, 24]. Noncommunicable diseases (such as obesity, diabetes, and heart diseases) are known to increase the risk of physical inactivity, whereas regular physical exercise is strongly linked to a reduction in the risk factors for such noncommunicable diseases (Ekelund, 2012) [8].

Never before has the value of physical education been emphasised as much as it is now. It is generally acknowledged that physical education (PE) and sports are relevant, significant, and necessary for fostering an active, healthy lifestyle and for finding a solution to the rising obesity rates around the world. Even though physical education is taught in schools in the majority of nations, this results in fewer opportunities for children and youth to engage in physical activity (Anmol, 2015) [2]. Leaders in the fields of healthy active living, public health, and preventive medicine have recently expressed a greater interest in the interactions between different movement-related behaviours that make up the entire day (24-hour period), such as sleep, sedentary behaviour, and physical activity of all intensities (Chaput *et al.*, 2014; Saunders *et al.*, 2016; D. Thompson *et al.*, 2015; Tremblay *et al.*, 2010) [6, 25, 28, 30].

This study tried to identify the current trends, issues and challenges in PE and sports based on which future challenges would be addressed.

Current trends

The scope of education is being drastically altered as a result of the significant problem that today's teachers have in educating a new generation of students who have never known a world without a computer, video game console, cell phone, or Internet access. Digital technologies have entirely normalised themselves for today's youngsters as indicated by their thorough incorporation into every part of their lives (Green & Hannon, 2007) [11].

One of the many tools available to teachers to improve the way content is presented and is communicated to students is instructional technology.

Technology also has the ability to enable more effective physical education instruction through improved planning and communication (Eberline & Richards, 2013) [7]. These lingering issues will undoubtedly have an impact on the entire dynamic of the educational environment as schools continue to struggle to keep up with the ever-increasing demands to upgrade technological infrastructure and future technological innovation. Students are accustomed to and familiar with technology as one of the primary tools for receiving information (Krause *et al.*, 2017) [16].

New methods of interaction, cooperation, operation, and social construct formation have been shaped by the development of digital games and social networking technology (Klopfer *et al.*, 2013) [15]. The use of handheld devices like tablet computers and GPS units, as well as pedometers, accelerometers, heart rate monitors, and active video games, is currently widespread in field of health and physical education (HPE) (Gogoi *et al.*, 2020; Jodoin & Robertson, 2014; Juniu, 2011; Krause & Sanchez, 2014; Mears *et al.*, 2012; K. Thompson, 2008) [10, 13, 18, 14, 17, 29] as far as Higher Education is concerned.

No longer a common subject in children's curricula, physical education. As it promotes children's physical, emotional, and psychological development, schools and parents are placing more emphasis on this domain (Mocanu *et al.*, 2021) [21]. But in India, when the ground reality studies are conducted, a lack of on-site unavailability of the facilities is feared. However, digital classrooms and similar modern technologies have covered the gap of in-depth demonstration. For an example, if the structure of a heart is to be explained to anatomy students in Physical Education, overhead projectors can help showing a detailed graphical and animated videos of heart and so, more understanding about the internal heart can be perceived into students' mind.

Challenges

India's higher education system is the third largest in the world. Despite the academic revolution of the twenty-first century, a significant number of colleges and institutions are having difficulty making their mark on the global academic landscape. It seems that weak administration and governance have caused the majority of the problems in these educational institutions. Even while centrally supported academic systems have performed better, a lack of committed academic leadership and inadequate resources have gradually reduced numerous schools' ability to compete academically (Anmol, 2015; Singh, 2021) [2, 26]. The Ministry of Education of India has proposed, in National Education Policy 2020, a number of reforms to both school and higher education. One of which reads the higher education system would include professional education as a fundamental component. Stand-alone technical universities, medical schools, law schools, and agricultural institutions, among others, would strive to become multidisciplinary institutions (MJPS & AK, 2022) [20].

Now, focusing this particular policy in terms of Higher Education in Physical Education in India is an utmost challenge as PE is already struggling with setting a uniform curriculum across country; and this is due to the factor that different institutions and universities provide a different tenure for similar courses of Physical Education. For an example few institutes offer a 4-years integrated course of Bachelor of Physical Education, whereas few institutes offer 3-years curriculum for the same course, and few institutes offer 2-years graduation curriculum for the same course.

Categorizing these all into one is going to take lot of efforts,

challenges and intelligent as well as experienced brainy personnel involved in the task. A blend of experienced and young professionals would be needed in the team of policymakers. It will be a time-taking drill wherein a low number of trial-and-error would be essential, as the future of students who are getting educated in this transition period would be on stake.

Developmental reforms in 21st century

The goal of physical education is to help all students become physically competent so they can move successfully, safely, and efficiently while also understanding what they are doing. Along with literacy and numeracy, the outcome of physical literacy provides the necessary foundation for students to access the full spectrum of competencies and experiences. The curriculum for health and physical education in the twenty-first century must include connections to community-based organisations, agencies, and institutions (Pate *et al.*, 2006; Sallis *et al.*, 2012) [22, 24]. Although there are many different instructional, curriculum, or pedagogical models, as defined by Jewett and Bain as well as Metzler, some have attracted more attention than others (Jewett *et al.*, 1985; Metzler, 2011) [12, 19]. Physical education is promoted as having four genuine learning outcomes: physical learning, cognitive learning, social learning, and affective learning (Casey & Goodyear, 2015) [5]. With a population surging over 140 crores, if the worldometer's data is to be believed, India may seek opportunities out of this. One such being, the greater number of participants in multinational tournaments, so a greater number of medals can be achieved. For this to happen, a large number of coaches, trainers and physical educators would be required in near future.

The global covid pandemic has been a crisis that has impacted every industry, including education (Ayitney *et al.*, 2020) [3]. Emerging ODL and correspondence courses have upsurged in the times of quarantine and fortunately became a boon to the field of teaching Physical Education in India as it gave birth to number of online and distance courses in the field of PE. PE, along with other courses, has benefitted from the distance and online education platforms. It is claimed that distance education has become a necessity in the recent times in India (Sabbir & Chatterjee, 2019) [23].

However, in the times of transition period, as far as NEP 2020 policies are concerned, these opportunities and healthy competitions will keep on growing and it is expected that they would be for the betterment of the Indian education.

Conclusion

The current curriculum and procedures are being revised to stimulate students' interest in physical education and sports. The primary hurdles in the future will be developing and implementing a suitable curriculum and securing sufficient funding from various organisations to support the intelligent but indigent children, allowing them to only concentrate on their education without having to worry about money. The development and arousal of interest in physical activity will be significantly influenced by technology. Today's society is recognising the value of physical education and participation in sports, and attempts are being made to enhance the situation so that more and more talent can be discovered.

In summary, this study has shown the value of physical education in encouraging an ever-changing curriculum of physical education. More specifically, student-developed motivational processes have a significant impact on perceptions and attitudes during physical education lessons and, as a result, on the intention to engage in extracurricular

physical activity after school life. As a result, physical education instructors are crucial in developing learning settings that enable students' fundamental physical requirements to be met. When implementing intervention programmes, physical education teachers should take this environment into account and offer support tools for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Aelterman *et al.*, 2013; Tessier *et al.*, 2010) [1, 27].

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