

An Analysis of Societal Views and Needs for Physical Education

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1. Introduction

Physical education and its activities have been part and parcel of human life since time immemorial. Play or Recreation has been shown to be a fundamental necessity of man and this fact clearly affirms that there is an essential inter-connection between the social structure of a society and physical education activities. The evolution of human life started with movement and coupling of movements provides the bases for physical activities. The importance of physical activities was first recognized by Plato when he said that "Lack of physical activity destroys the good condition of every human being, while movement and methodical physical exercise save it and preserve it," (Plato 1955). IN this context the words of Miller & Russell also seem pertinent that "Play is nature's hand on the back of the child pushing him to educate himself" or "to move is to learn and to learn is to move" (Miller & Russell, 1971).

2. Nature of Physical Education

Human beings have been very active and creative by nature and physical activity has been part of their life all along since evolution. Infact, physical activities have been a mirror of society as society changes so does the nature of physical activities, but in different societies the purpose of physical activities have been different for example for primitive man search for food and shelter was the first requirement and thus the activities like running, jumping, throwing, swimming and hunting were necessitated by his instinct for survival. Moreover the physical activity was the first mode of communication and it was also a means of expression. As human beings evolved culturally, emotionally and socially physical activity also evolved. With the passage of time as the society become more and more complex leading towards the modern age, physical activities have taken a new shape and recognized as an organized, supervised, specialized, competitive and professional form of education and was termed as physical education. (Singh A.2006).

3. Nature and Trends of Physical Education

Physical education in its modern concept is some two hundred years old and its introduction in our country is just about past seventy years. Although started as an educational tool for developing human personality physical education served different social purposes. Like from struggle for existence to struggle for excellence, from fun and enjoyment to attainment of fitness, from maintenance of health to therapeutic care, from education of the Individual to the emergence of sport as a strong social force physical activities have played numerous roles. Whatever be the form at every stage of human history physical activities have been providing exciting outlet for human expression often creative in nature.

In modern society physical activities have reached new dimensions and turned into more organized, commercialized and competitive events. With the revival of Olympic games and some more international sports tournament like world championships, Asian games and commonwealth games etc. the sport attained a new height and now winning a medal in these tournaments have become a matter of prestige and pride for every nation. Infact, in recent years, occupying top spot in the medal tally of Olympic games have become the principle aim of most of the developed countries to prove their supremacy on rest of the world. Thus, now participation in sporting event is no more a mere pastime matter rather young boys and girls all over the world are opting sport as a career. But if we have a glance few years back the picture was entirely different people used to scold their children for participation in sports, the proverb 'khelege koodoge Hoge Kharab and Padhoge likhoge Banoge naawab' was very famous with the middle class families of Indian society but in modern world things have completely changed and now a huge population are looking sports stars like Sachin Tendulkar, Vishwanathan Anand, Sania Mirza, Saina Nehwal, Vijender Singh and Sushil Kumar in their children. The media has placed the sport at the apex end now the number of countries participating in Olympics are much more than the number of countries participating in UNO. As a result of this the leading sports stars of any country are more famous than the politicians, academicians or the businessman of that country.

4. Need of Physical Education:

A properly directed physical education programme results in Health, happiness, efficiency and character as stated by H.C. Buck indicates that Physical education has a social obligation of preparing the youth for work and socially useful activities. According to National plan for physical education and recreation by Ministry of Education, Govt. of India, Physical Education is the education through physical activities for the development of the total personality of the child, to its fullness and perfection in body, mind and spirit. It is concerned with development of physical fitness. However, striving for such fitness, physical education has to train the child's mental, moral and social qualities, arouse its awareness of environment and develop alertness, presence of mind resourcefulness, discipline, co-operation and spirit of respect, sympathy and generosity towards others-qualities that are essential for a happy and well adjusted life in a free and democratic world. Physical education can thus, make a very valuable contribution to our national life. It is now an established fact that regular participation in sporting activities is and essential adjunct for normal growth and development and improves the self-confidence and social competence of the participants and which in turn make them unable to cope with stress and anxiety. It has been observed that sporting activities intended

not only to achieve physical fitness but also optimum organic health, emotional stability and social adaptability to take proper decisions and develop skills that enable a child to participate in other various activities. (Waknarkar. D.G. 2002). Thus, it is rightly said that physical fitness is one's richest possession; it can't be purchased but can be earned through a daily routine of physical exercise and there is hardly any doubt that fit citizens are the best assets of a nation.

A report of the secondary education commission states that the physical education is an indispensable part of all health programmes. Its various activities should be so planned as to develop the physical and mental health of the students, cultivate recreational interest and skills and promote the spirit of team work, sportsmanship and respect for others. Physical education is, therefore, much more than drill or a series of regulated exercises. It includes all forms of physical activities and games which promote the development of the body and the mind.

Besides, today everyone specially the youth opting to participate in this multi-dimensional discipline because they feel that it provide them the opportunity to complete and to earn

name, fame, enjoy, self-satisfaction, glory and goodwill and above all respect in their lives. Moreover, the wide variety of experiences and feelings like joy, anguish, success, failure, exhaustion, pain, relief and feelings of belongingness result from participation in sporting activities. Wilkerson and Dodder conducted a research to determine what sports does for people they found that sports has seven functions in society i.e. Emotional release, Affirmation of Identity, social control, socialization, change agent, collective conscience and success.

5. Conclusion:

It is evident that Physical education activities have played numerous roles from a pastime activity to a profession the physical education has now emerged as a multidimensional discipline in modern society. Since long physical education has played important role in harmonious development of the human beings therefore its promotion should be taken carefully into consideration. Physical education has an undeniable role in society and as society changes so does the physical education activities. This education is also proved very helpful in catering the career needs of the youth involved in it.

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