

# Chapter 12

## Physical Education in India: A Critical Review and Reflection



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**Abstract** This chapter deals with the review and reflection on what is happening in the teacher education institutions as far as in-service training of physical education teachers is concerned. Before that, it is important to know the concept of physical education as a subject. For clarity this chapter will attempt to define physical education; and what is expected from it, before providing a corresponding elaboration from expectation to actuality. Globally it is accepted that the “activity” or “movement” is the essence of physical education; which is the “sign of life”. Plato said, from conception to the coffin life is an uninterrupted continuum of movement. When and where movement ceases, life ceases to exist. Play, sports, exercise, recreation, dance, gymnastics, swimming, etc. are various forms of activity and essential components of physical education. Here it is very much clear that physical education is a lifelong process and in the words of Charles A. Bucher “physical education is an integral part of the total education process and has its aim in the development of physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially fit citizen through the medium of physical activities which have been selected with a view to realising these outcomes”. Now, we have a clear picture of what physical education is, and what is expected from it. This chapter will cover all the above-mentioned points in detail.

**Keywords** Physical education · Movement · Activity · Sports · Play · Exercise · Recreation · Dance · Gymnastics · Swimming

### Introduction

All organisms are naturally active; they move in order to live, and they live because they move. Movement or activity reflects life. All functions of the organism are a function of movement. Activity is the cosmic principle of matter, mind, and plasma. The inherent energy in the matter generates movement and movement, in turn, creates,

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propagates, and sustains life. Like each atom, each cell of the body over-brims with vital energy which causes it to remain in a state of constant motion.

The horizons of physical education have changed much over recent decades. Several new trends have emerged. Focus has been steadily shifting from traditional play and recreational activity to overall fitness (for a complete living) and optimum sports performance. Greater emphasis has come to be now placed on research in sport sciences (sports philosophy, biomechanics, exercise physiology, sport and exercise psychology, nutrition, etc.), exercise, fitness, and well-being. Teaching and training methodologies and management are especially of human material than ever before. All these and many more innovative approaches have contributed quite a lot to enriching the content and raising the stature of physical education as well as improving the quality of teacher education across the globe.

As one of the students of physical education, I realised that whatever happened in United States and Europe in Physical Education and sports as academic subject the shores of Indian Ocean by just floating rather than by cruising. By the time physical educators in India come to know, and try to understand, absorb and assimilate what is new, the whole thing gets outdated and outmoded where it originated. Take, for instance, quality literature. At the moment, the best possible publications on physical education and sports come from the United States. For Indian, they are awfully expensive. Most institutions in our country can ill-afford to procure them for their library. That way, they are just beyond an individual reader's reach. Besides, these books illustrate points and exemplify American or European lifestyles and environs which are ordinarily difficult for most Indians to digest.

In a world getting infected with exploding information, fast proliferating technology, and increasing use, misuse, and abuse of both by all sections of society, taking problems of this nature may not pose much difficulty if a little intelligence were used and a well-planned effort made. Procurement of foreign books at exorbitant prices may be like a Himalayan climb for the resources are strictly restricted and problems of procedure abound. As the best alternative, it is possible to combat the situation by borrowing novel and useful ideas, chiselling and reshaping them to suit our own objectives and environs. This would neither hurt anyone nor trespass any norms of ethics. This can be understood by a simple example—if two of us exchanged a one-rupee coin each, we shall be left with one coin each, but if we exchanged a new idea with each of us, both of us shall have two ideas each at the end. Book exchange leads to no book multiplication, but idea exchange inevitably results in idea multiplication and proliferation. If physical educators in India adopt this strategy, a new bright dawn of good literature might not be far away. However, this is easily said than done because for all this, people need to keep their knowledge updated (being prompt in their response to what is going on in the world where and from moment to moment), acquire the art of studying, evaluating, and transforming ideas (being rightly critical and systematic), and improving communication skills—both verbal and non-verbal. All this and much more are needed to discuss to be incorporated into teacher education programme, which could serve as a text for many a university teaching departments and training colleges in the country. So, to meet the demand

of this chapter, we have to have a clear understanding of where and how physical education emanated to India.

## **A Very Brief History About the Start of Physical Education Courses in India**

Physical education is nowadays termed as movement (activity) education, and it is believed by almost all physical educators in and around the world that the origin of physical education is as old as human existence. In a few senses, it is true but as we perceive what physical education is today, in this and similar form, it is being originated during the first decade of the twentieth century in India. Physical education based on Swedish gymnastics, games, and sports was incorporated into the United Kingdom's (Britain's) curriculum at the time. The British educational authorities in India implemented a similar policy in the European institutions as well as the elite schools for the sons of Nawabs, Rajahs, and Indian nobility (Kamlesh, 2018; Khan, 1964).

The missionary schools opened in India, too, were always ahead in everything. In 1903, one of the missionary schools in India at Bellary, U.P., the St. Joseph's High School, was equipped with parallel bars, Roman rings, vaulting horses, Indian clubs, dumbbells, and climbing ropes. After school hours, all students assembled for P.T. exercises which were conducted by a specialist instructor. In addition, football, hockey, and cricket were popular. Most of the missionary schools in the country had a similar set-up and facilities. Affluent people preferred sending their children to these schools because the curriculum was adopted for the training of the mind as well as the body.

In 1912, the Education Department of the then-Government of India allotted a non-recurring grant of Rs. 25 Lakhs for distribution in all the provinces (States) for school hygiene and for the purchase of playing fields, as the then-Government of India was aware of its responsibility to assist in establishing a sound system of education throughout the country. As a result, organized games were encouraged in the country as part of the educational curriculum, which had a desirable and healthy effect.

The Y.M.C.A. received a substantial subsidy from the allocated grant to cover the salary of a Physical Director, whose services were also organized by the Education Department of the Government of India. In Poona (now Pune), a class was conducted to train teachers to teach simple P.T. exercises and games in their respective schools. During this period, a manual for the guidance of these educators was also published.

This grant made it possible for all European schools in Madras (now Chennai) to establish the position of Physical Director (Physical Education Director). As games were already organized in these institutions, this grant gave organized games additional impetus.

By the end of the 1920s, the well-organised public institutions had a suitable physical education layout. Football, hockey, and cricket were among the most popular outdoor sports, which received a great deal of support. At significant centres, private football, hockey, cricket, and tennis clubs were formed.

At this point, the significance of physical education as a component of the curriculum was acknowledged by the higher education authorities. Retired army personnel and good gymnasts were employed as physical instructors in the schools, and at that time, they were known as drill masters. They conducted all practical activities and worked with enthusiasm and showed devotion to their duties. Due to the absence of systematic/organised training, the educational background of those drill masters was different from other members of the school staff, and this tended to set them apart. This kind of tendency is still visible among school teachers.

As much of the present sporting set-up in India was begun during the British period, it is more convenient to deal with this aspect of the British contribution to physical education, games, and sports under the separate sections that follow.

## **Training/Education of Physical Education Teachers**

After the conclusion of the first world war, all segments of Indian society began to awaken. Education was examined from a national and geographical perspective. A structured programme of physical activities based on the interests and physiological requirements of children was deemed essential for quality education. There was a high demand for trained physical education teachers. To meet this demand, the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in Madras (now Chennai) established the country's first College of Physical Education.

## **The Origin of Y.M.C.A. College of Physical Education, Madras (Now Chennai)**

The School of Physical Education is the first college of Physical Education in India. It was established in the year 1920 at Madras (now Chennai) by the National Council of Y.M.C.A.'s of India, Burma (now Myanmar), and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). Its founder Principal, the late Mr. H.C. Buck, worked with selfless devotion from the founding of the institution till his last breath in 1943. The institution since 1932 is known as Y.M.C.A. College of Physical Education and has gained national and international reputation. Since 1940, the institution is open for co-education and from that time offers three types of courses, namely—Diploma, Government Certificate Higher Grade, and Government Certificate Lower Grade. At present, this institution offers almost all courses related to physical education which are recognised by NCTE and other diploma courses.

## **Government College of Physical Education, Hyderabad, Deccan (Now Telangana)**

The Government College of Physical Education was founded in Hyderabad in 1931, with Mr. Fred Weber serving as its first principal. Mr. Weber was a member of the Y.M.C.A., and prior to his arrival in Hyderabad, he had done excellent work for Physical Education in Bihar and Bombay (now Mumbai). Physical education was made mandatory in all elementary, middle, and high schools in the former state of Hyderabad largely due to his endeavours. Mr. Weber served as Principal there till 1945 and handed over the charge of Principal to Mr. S.M. Hadi, M.A. (Cantab), a well-known Tennis and Cricket player, and went over to Osmania University as Head of the Student Welfare Department. From there, he retired in 1946 (Khan, 1964).

After, Mr. Hadi's retirement in 1952 (he later in 1954 become deputy advisor, physical education, Union Ministry of Education) the college went in the hands of private management for 5 years, and it was known as the academy of physical education. It then riveted to Government control and has since shifted to its new buildings at Gagan Mahal with Mr. Meer Asad Ali as Principal.

At that time, this college offered courses that lasted for one academic year; at the end of which, graduates are awarded diplomas and non-graduates' certificates.

## **Government College of Physical Education, Calcutta (Now Kolkata)**

Also, among the first of India's physical education colleges was established in 1932 at Calcutta (now Kolkata) by the Government of Bengal. Mr. James Buchanan (M.A.), trained at Dunfermline (Scotland), was appointed as the Principal. His conscientious training of teachers was so highly regarded that, in the 1940s and 50s, some private institutions in Bengal advertise for a "Buchanan-Trained" teacher of physical education. In 1942, Mr. Buchanan left the College since his services were required by the Government of Bengal for Home Guards and A.P.P. training. Mr. M.K. Roy took over. In 1956, the college was shifted to Banipur, about 30 miles from Calcutta (now Kolkata).

## **Christian College of Physical Education, Lucknow**

Lucknow's Christian College of Physical Education was founded in 1932 under private missionary management. The college is a division of Lucknow Christian College and is governed by its Board of Trustees. Initially, recognition of these trained teachers of physical education was given by the then Uttar Pradesh Department of Public Instruction. One development happened with this college as the

Lucknow Christian College created a separate Department of Physical Education and the college is affiliated with the University of Lucknow, Lucknow. This department is having all the courses in physical education, i.e. Ph.D. in Physical Education, B.P.Ed., and M.P.Ed. A two-year D.P.Ed. programme (after graduation) is offered by the other unit which was initially established.

### **Training Institute for Physical Education Kandivali (Bombay)**

The Bombay (now Mumbai) administration was also eager to develop physical education. In 1927, a committee was established to report on physical education, but its recommendations were shelved. In September 1937, another committee was appointed which submitted its report within three months. The committee suggested, among other things, the creation of a Physical Training Institute modelled after the Y.M.C.A. College of Physical Education in Madras. As a result of this report, the government of Bombay established a Training Institute of Physical Education at Kandivali near Bombay (Mumbai), in June 1938, and Prof. P.M. Joseph (Padmashree) was appointed as a principal. Prof. Joseph worked as Principal for nearly twenty years and gave the college a sound foundation that has survived. His administrative capacities attracted the attention of the Education Ministry, Government of India. In 1957, he was appointed Principal of Lakshmbai College of Physical Education, Gwalior, established by the Union Ministry of Education.

### **Shree Hunuman Vyayam Prasarak Mandal, Amravati**

The Hunuman Vyayam Prasarak Mandal was founded in 1914 at Amravati by Vaidya brothers, Pandit Ambadas Pant Vaidya and Anant K. Vaidya. Since its foundation, the Mandal has played an important role in promoting the cause of physical education in India.

The Mandal gained popularity because of its policy to revive traditional Maharashtra exercises. The daily programme consisted of regular practice in the use of sword and spear, lathi (stick) and banethi (stick rotating technique), patha and lezim (folk dance form of Maharashtra), and other combative exercises. The practice of yoga asanas was also cultivated.

In 1924, a five-week summer course was introduced with the object of training young men and women in indigenous forms of physical training exercises. Since then, the summer training course has become an annual feature of the Vyayamshala (Gymnasium). Thousands of men and women from various parts of the country have attended this course, on completion of which they are known as Vyayam Visharad (Exercise Master).

Under the auspices of the Mandal, the first All-India Physical Education Conference was held at Amravati in 1946. Its success was due to the untiring efforts of Shri H.V. Deshpande. It was at this conference that the National Association of Physical Education and Recreation, India, was formed.

In 1947, the Mandal introduced a Diploma course in physical education. It was a regular course of one year's duration and has lately received recognition from the Ministry of Education, Government of India.

During that period, Mandal's team has given demonstrations in various parts of the country and also in Europe and the Middle East. In 1936, the team gave a display of the Indian system of physical culture at the Olympic Games in Berlin. In 1949, it took part in the demonstrations at the second LINGIAD in Stockholm. On its return journey, it gave a number of displays in various European countries.

### **Post-independence Establishment in the Field of Physical Education: Lakshmibai National Institute of Physical Education (LNIPE), Gwalior**

In independent India, the second five-year plan is important as far as the history of physical education is concerned. Under this five-year plan, in 1957, the Lakshmibai College of Physical Education (LCPE) was established at Gwalior by the Ministry of Education and Culture, Government of India, and Padmashri Prof. P.M. Joseph was appointed as the Principal. Since the year 1957 marked the hundredth anniversary of the national uprising of 1857, the new College bears the name of Lakshmibai as a mark of tribute to the great Rani of Jhansi who died valiantly in the national revolt at Gwalior in 1857. The college offers a three-year degree programme and is affiliated with Vikram University, Ujjain, which was the first university in India to recognise physical education as equivalent to any other subject for the award of a degree before joining Jiwaji University, Gwalior, in 1964. In 1973, the Institute's name was changed to Lakshmibai National College of Physical Education (LNCPE) to reflect its elevated status. In 1982, the college was designated an "Autonomous College" by Jiwaji University, Gwalior, in recognition of its distinctive services and character, and to facilitate its continued development. In September 1995, in recognition of the Institute's exceptional educational services in the fields of Physical Education, Sports, and Research, the Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development, granted the Institute "Deemed to be University" status under Section 3 of the U.G.C. Act, 1956. Consequently, the Institute was once more renamed Lakshmibai National Institute of Physical Education (LNIPE). The Institute is the sole "Deemed to be University" in the field of Physical Education in South East Asia.

The primary objective of establishing this institute was to elevate the standing of Physical Education by producing instructors and leaders of high calibre through graduate and postgraduate programmes. In 1957, the Bachelor of Physical Education (BPE) with a duration of three years, and the Master of Physical Education (MPE)

with a duration of two years were introduced for the first time in the country. In 1980, the then-college was the first institution in India to offer a one-year Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.) in Physical Education. Additionally, the Institute accepts Ph.D. candidates on a regular basis. Students are also admitted to numerous Certificate/Diploma/Postgraduate Diploma programmes in various Physical Education and Sports disciplines.

Initially, the Bachelor of Physical Education (B.P.E.) programme lasted three years. The course was extended to four years and renamed Bachelor of Physical Education (B.P.Ed. 4-year Integrated) in order to make it comparable to other professional degree programmes and to conform to international standards. The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) has recognised this programme. The 4-semester M.P.Ed. Degree Programme is also accredited by the NCTE.

With the sanction of the Government of India, the Institute has established the North East Regional Centre in Guwahati (Assam) beginning with the 2009–2010 academic year. The Centre offers B.P.Ed., M.P.Ed., and Ph.D. programmes in physical education.

Possibly the first Institute to be certified to the Integrated Management System (IMS) parameters of ISO 9001 (Quality Management System), ISO 14001 (Environmental Management System), and OHSAS 18001 (Occupational Health and Safety Management System).

In India, numerous colleges and departments of physical education eventually emerge.

## **Perception of General People About Physical Education**

If you conduct a survey and ask people what they think of when they hear the term Physical Education, they may respond, “It’s sports activity..., sports education..., sports coaching..., health education..., yoga education..., or anything related to the fitness of individuals...”

Is this Physical Education only related? No, Physical Education is substantially more than the aforementioned elements. Even though these activities are associated with Physical Education, they are not the only focus of Physical Education. Physical Education employs physical activity or movement to improve an individual’s physical, mental, and emotional qualities. In reality, physical education is a broad discipline of education that examines the relationship between body movement and other areas of education.



## What Actually Does Physical Education Means?

### *Physical Education—An Education with a Difference*

Rightly called “an old and fundamental education” (Williams, 2000) physical education is the mother of all education for even the first yell of the newly born signifies the primary need for movement. It needs no proof that activity or movement is the very basis of our existence; through activity alone does the child receive the first lessons of life involving physical interaction with the environment. During the great span of biological evolution, the survival of organisms including man solely depended on physical activity besides the need for air, water, and food, for the simple reason that only running, jumping, throwing, climbing, leaping, hitting, kicking, striking, pulling, pushing, etc. could enable man to accomplish two major objectives of life: (1) searching food to satisfy hunger and (2) ensuring his/her safety against dangers from preying animals as well as natural calamities. This necessitated individual to be strong, powerful, & agile; and it is only possible through intense physical activity and movement. Consequently, training the body to meet the exigencies of time and place using experience and experiment became a dire spontaneous necessity. Thus, was laid the foundation for physical education in its rudimentary form. “The first physical educator,” opines Williams (2000), “was the parent who taught his son to throw a spear, to climb a tree, to leap a brook, to do all those things that were important for a youth to learn in the tribal life or uncivilised man”. The March of Civilization in no way has struck down these highly valuable skills but rather has stimulated the “intelligent man” to refine them and use them for a far greater variety of purposes than just survival.

Since the Survival Activity Era through the fabulous Pan-Hellenic Contests Age (about 2,500 years ago) of the Greek dominance coming to the resurrection of the Olympic Games in 1896 A.D., physical education in diverse forms and frames such as play, exercise, recreation, sport, games, yoga, martial art, etc. has continued to play a decisive role in keeping man in a state of ever readiness both for war and calamity management without digressing from cherished objectives of health, fitness, well-being, and recreation.

Interestingly, at no point of time in history has physical education received so much attention from society in our times. The reason for this dramatic change lies in the recent “fast-paced industrialization”, urbanisation, revolutionary growth of science, and exploding information and communication technology considered very much responsible for an irretrievably degraded life’s physical activity scenario. The unchecked blind pursuit of materialistic philosophy, the steeply rising consumerism, and the depressing “push button” lifestyle are badly eroding man’s “physical activity base” and replacing it with a culture, overly dominated by mental gymnastics and bodily inactivity (Kamlesh, 2013). According to a WHO estimate, 60% of the world’s population is not physically active enough to ensure excellent health. The majority of urbanites have allowed themselves to be enslaved by pervasive automation. As a result, our bodies had become accustomed to enjoying themselves above all else,

perched on swivelling office chairs and remaining in air-conditioned homes, offices, and vehicles. It is a sad fact, however, that a person who moves from an air-conditioned car to an air-conditioned office and back to an air-conditioned house without engaging in any strenuous activities may reach the air-conditioned grave faster than his/her active peers.

Under this current murky scenario of degraded physical activity, the onus lies on the entire mankind to take time by the forelock and recall the piece of advice the great Chinese revolutionary leader Mao Ze Dong gave to his people almost a century ago in 1917:

Physical education (activity) helps to maintain life.... It complements virtue and knowledge education. Furthermore, both virtue and knowledge reside in the physical body. Without the body, neither virtue nor knowledge would exist. The only tragedy that can befall a man is to lack a physical body. What else is there to be concerned with? If one endeavours to improve one's body, other improvements will occur naturally. Physical education is the most effective activity for the development of the body. Physical education is truly the most important aspect of our lives. When one's body is healthy, one can rapidly advance in knowledge and morality and enjoy numerous benefits.

In the present scenario, "Physical education is the study, practice, and appreciation of the art and science of human movement" (Harrison et al., 2001). It is a subject the framework of which proudly but firmly stands on the sound foundations of fundamental facts and generalisations from various sciences and philosophic thoughts.

## **What Constitutes Foundations of Physical Education?**

Physical education is a unique field that places human movement at the centre of its theoretical and practical explanations. It is not a secret that human movement or activity encompassing a vast expanse of play, exercise, and sport is practiced, studied, discussed, and dealt with from a scientific angle on one side and a rational angle on the other; that is, there are certain scientific facts that govern the performance of movement, and there are artistic, aesthetic, ethical, and social standards that govern the planning, organising, teaching, and performing of the movement. This makes physical education a science-art combination that adheres to the goals of organised activity programmes for the holistic development of the human personality. Therefore, a physical educator must ensure that neither scientific facts nor rational-logical considerations are neglected in the planning and execution of physical activities. This situation necessitates that physical educators understand what facts and generalisations based on human reasoning and scientific observation increase the likelihood of more effective interactions in the classroom and practices on the athletic fields, particularly in terms of imparting knowledge in health and fitness principles, acquiring motor and athletic skills, and engaging in sporting activities with the goals of achieving excellence and achieving high-performance goals.

Let alone the physical educator, the common man also must be aware of the real springs of physical activity for it is necessary for him to perform the movement economically and efficiently so as to maintain good health and fitness. The physical education spectrum reflects both science and philosophy. Putting up concrete and research-based evidence science explains what causes the movement to occur in our body; what conditions, factors, and forces facilitate or debilitate movement performance as we see it happening with our naked eyes; and what catastrophic changes occur in our body and mind as movement gradually progresses to its optimal pitch in such situations as an infant playing with a doll or a walking or running unaided, a young child learning to perform a front roll on a gymnastic mat, an adolescent athlete running a 100 m dash at an athletic contest or doing high jump using Fosbury flop, and seasoned soccer player making a mad rush for the ball to score a goal during a terribly contested match. Besides, science also tells us how these and myriads of other movements—whether as part of physical exercise or competitive sport—can be performed with greater poise, precision, economy, and efficiency, given the congenial climate. Correspondingly, various logical perspectives give us an opportunity to evaluate how rewarding human activities should be in terms of aesthetics, ethics and society.

Conclusively, the foundation of physical education as we know, understand, and study them is an inevitable outcome of the philosophical approach on the one hand and the scientific approach on the other, with relative fundamental facts and truths balanced on both sides. Cannons of divergent educational philosophies, viz. idealism, realism, naturalism, pragmatism, and many others, enable physical educators to develop a professionally sound personal philosophy and in spirit with it makes the right decisions about what is best (ideal) in terms of teaching material (content of physical education programme), methodology (teaching and training style), and likely outcomes (developmental effects of activity and sport). Significantly, personal and professional values cherished by a physical educator stem from philosophic thinking and constant interactions and experiences in the teaching–learning environment. The validity of the ideals and values developed by the rational physical educator is assessed by the realistic yardsticks based on established facts, laws, principles, theories, and paradigms put up by various sciences of life, matter, and mind. Over the decades, a host of exercise and sports sciences' disciplines such as—anthropometry, biomechanics, physiology, psychology, sports medicine, nutrition, etc. has emerged not only to assist athletes and coaches, but to move the curve of performance up, as well as to strengthen the foundational framework of physical education and sports. Also, to enrich the course-content of these disciplines, these hybrid sciences use the scientific principles from the mainstream biological and social sciences and apply them to the sports and exercise environment in order to improve performance, reduce injuries or increase motivation. While philosophic truths are liable to change often due to the transience of human experience and understanding, scientific truth continues to be permanent until new facts discover to add to or subtract something from them. Interestingly, both for the philosopher and scientist, every fundamental truth is tentative and liable to change.

## *Meaning of Physical Education*

Physical Education is composed of two words physical and education. The term physical refers to the body or to one or more bodily characteristics, such as physical power, physical endurance, physical fitness, physical appearance, and physical health. And the second term is education, which refers to preparation for life or a specific task, as well as systematic instruction or training.

Using the human body as a means of instruction, the combined meaning of these two terms becomes training or preparation for life. Physical Education is, on a deeper level, the systematic training of an individual through the use of his or her own body to achieve the goals of developing and maintaining the body, developing motor skills, physical abilities, forming the habit of living a healthy lifestyle, and developing the capacity to control emotions for a fuller life.

According to the Kothari Commission, “physical education contributes not only to physical fitness, but also to physical efficiency, mental alertness, and the development of certain qualities such as perseverance, team spirit, leadership, discipline, tolerance, rule observance, moderation in victory, and equilibrium in defeat”. Thus, physical education is regarded as an essential component of an education that emphasises physical activity predominately. This enables physical education to be integrated into the overall educational system.

## *Definitions*

In all its kinds, forms, and shapes developmental activity constitutes the core of physical education, which is commonly called a large muscle activity forming part and parcel of the “learning experience” at school. Precisely, physical education is what children do at school on playfields and athletic tracks, in the gymnasium, and in the swimming pool under the guidance of the physical educator who is often addressed by students as physical training instructor (PTI), PT master, PT sir, Games/Sports Teacher. Physical education is not physical training which aims to toughen body as in military. Further, physical education is also no “exercise” alone, i.e. “a process of bodily movements in a particular way”. However, exercise is a formally structured and planned physical activity that causes visible improvement to the body, its health, fitness, and general well-being. The element of fun, recreation, and amusement is absent in it. Physical education has all these, and perhaps, much more.

Physical education is a modern expression for various physical activity programmes carried out as a curricular educational experience in schools. The word “physical” refers to the body and underscores such qualities as strength, speed, stamina, endurance, coordination, flexibility, movement, etc.—all essential for the promotion of health and fitness for work and sport. Education may mean many things but when used in conjunction with physical, it is understood as a process of educating

oneself through bodily movements and seeking harmonious development of personality. Physical education is globally accepted as a curricular activity and an integral ingredient of a child's education.

There is no single definition of physical education but many, each one somewhat distinct from the other, according to Irwin: "Physical education is a programme of physical activities that develops health in youth through various organic systems; develops skills in physical activities which have implication for enjoyment, emotional development, recreation and the optimum development of the human organism." Jay B. Nash looks at physical education as "that field of education which deals with big muscle activities and the related responses." In Lumpkin's view, "physical education is a process through which an individual obtains optimal physical, mental and social skills and fitness through physical activity." Charles A. Bucher is of the considered opinion that "physical education is an integral part of total education process and has its aim the development of physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially fit citizen through the medium of physical activities which have been selected with a view to realising these outcomes". Same way Harold Barrow and Janie Brown consider physical education as "an education of and through human movement where many of the educational objectives are achieved by means of big muscle activities involving sports, games, gymnastics, dance, and fitness activities". J.F. Williams categorically said: "Physical education is the sum of man's physical activities selected as a kind and conducted as to outcomes". As per this definition, physical educators should (a) select activities in consideration of age, sex, and environs, and (b) look for outcomes that were more than physical. "Physical education," proclaimed Bucher and Wuest, "includes the acquisition and refinement of motor skills, the development and maintenance of fitness for optimal health and well-being, the attainment of knowledge, and the growth of positive attitudes towards physical activity".

The Central Advisory Board of Physical Education and Recreation in India formulated a comprehensive definition of physical education in the National Plan of Physical Education and Recreation-1956:

Physical education is education. It is 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 immediately concerned with organic fitness and such other outcomes as would help the individual develop into a balanced personality.

In sum, with large muscle activity as its chief medium, physical education has been accepted as an integral part of education with utmost emphasis on organ development, motor fitness, skill, and health. A scientifically planned and systematically conducted programme of physical activity, sport, recreation, and dance is capable of creating a physically educated person who can live most and serve best and be an integrated personality.

## **Current Trends of Physical Education in India**

The thinking patterns and expectations of today's students are entirely different from those of yesterday. This is the result of changes in society, community, and family structure, as well as the shrinking of the globe due to technological advancements. All these factors influence the adolescents of today. All of these shifts become issues and trends that have an impact on society as a whole and education in particular. The education of the past will not meet the requirements of today's students, and the physical education curricula of the past will not meet these ever-changing demands. This prompted a discussion of the main trends and issues pertaining to physical education and its repercussions.

As per current trend, Indian physical educationists have a strong belief that today's physical education teachers should be called "human engineers". The rationale given to this idea is—as engineers are engaged in developing machines or engaged in the correction or restoration of any error in the machine, in the same fashion, a physical education teacher can help in the development/correction/restoration/and rehabilitation of human body (God generated machine).

As awareness of the importance of physical education has grown, the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP-2020) has been emphasised in various locations. In paragraph 15.4 of the NEP-2020, it is emphasised that a teacher education programme requires multidisciplinary inputs, and it is recommended that all multidisciplinary institutes establish education departments that, in addition to conducting cutting-edge research in various aspects of education, will also run teacher education programmes in collaboration with other departments, including physical education. This move of NEP-2020 is a steady progress in the right direction.

## **Physical Education in National Education Policy 2020**

In various sections of the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP-2020), physical education is given due recognition. For example, in Paragraph 4.2 (dedicated to the Foundational Stage, which consists of five years of flexible education), it is stated that the preparatory stage will consist of three years of education based on activity-based pedagogy and will also begin to incorporate some aspects of more formal but interactive classroom learning in order to lay a solid foundation across subjects.

As far as empowering students through flexibility (Paragraph 4.9) in course selection is concerned, NEP-2020 states that students will be given greater flexibility and choice of subjects to study, especially in secondary school—including physical education subjects—so that they can design their own study and life plans. The new distinguishing feature of secondary school education will be holistic growth and a broad selection of subjects and courses from year to year. In addition to science, the humanities, and mathematics, the school curriculum will include physical education, taking into account what is interesting and secure for each age group.

In Paragraph 4.23, which relates to “Curricular Integration of Essential Subjects, Skills, and Capabilities,” it is recommended that students have a great deal of freedom in selecting their individual curricula, specific subjects, skills, and capacities. In addition to other skills, the list included provisions for health and nutrition, physical education, fitness, wellness, and sports.

Paragraph 5.5 addressed the need for an adequate number of instructors in all subject areas, particularly in physical education, art, vocational education, and languages. Here, NEP-2020 suggested that teachers could be recruited to a single school and that the sharing of teachers between schools could be considered in accordance with the school groupings adopted by State/UT administrations.

These all efforts of NEP-2020 show that there is a need for an interdisciplinary approach in teaching–learning process and special thrust is given to the integration of physical education and sports as much as possible in the curriculum. Which lay the foundation for widening the scope of physical education.

University Grants Commission (UGC) also takes several steps for quality enhancement of higher education in the country. UGC suggested a Learning Outcome based Curriculum Framework for physical education graduate programmes. Although they are unrelated to the programmes offered by the NCTE for becoming a Physical Education Teacher, they illustrate the significance of the subject in the country. In the document’s preamble, the UGC emphasises that Physical Education is one of the most effective methods for imparting education through movement and physical activities. According to this document, physical education is an integral component of the educational process, which results from simple participation in the activity. These outcomes are both instantaneous and have significant lifelong implications (UGC, 2021).

## What Could Be the Scope of Physical Education?

Physical education is the branch of education where knowledge is imparted among the students by using students’ whole body (majorly includes brain and big muscle activities), whereas, in general education, only the human brain is used as a medium for knowledge sharing or educating students. Physical education is a branch of education, therefore, it is having the same aim as education, i.e. preparing an individual for complete living. In addition to this “optimum performance in sports” is also added as an objective of physical education.

In its 1978 General Conference, UNESCO was persuaded that everyone should have the freedom to develop and maintain their physical, intellectual, and moral capabilities. Therefore, Physical Education and Sport should be assured and guaranteed for all individuals. Following could be the scope of physical education:

**1. Physical Education and Sports as a Cultural Heritage:** The physical education and sports activities that we participate in today have a strong connection with our culture. Sports activities that predominate in any region are ingrained in its cultural

milieu. Kho-Kho, Kabbadi, Archery, Lezim, Wrestling, etc. are examples of sports that reflect the culture of a region of India. You must be aware that our ancestors subsisted on foraging for a very long time. Stones, bows and arrows, running, leaping, and other activities are used for survival and recreation. Later, as civilization developed, competitive activities such as athletics, wrestling, and archery emerged. Consequently, the current development of physical education and athletics demonstrates a strong cultural bond.

**2. Mechanical Aspects in Physical Education:** One of the goals of physical education is “optimal athletic performance”. The performance is dependent on the various mechanical aspects of movement; consequently, there is room for physical education. Here, the mechanical aspects of a variety of physical and athletic activities performed by individuals are considered. Important content areas of physical education include the laws of motion, lever, force and its generation, maintenance of equilibrium, the centre of gravity and its effect on movement, the law of acceleration, and the development of speed.

**3. Biological Contents in Physical Education:** Physical education also includes content derived from the biological sciences, such as the study of heredity and environment, growth and development, organs and systems, classification of joints, and movements possible around these joints. In addition, the content of physical education includes the muscles and their properties, as well as the effects of physical activity on various body systems (such as the circulatory, respiratory, muscular, metabolic, and skeletal systems).

**4. Health Education and Wellness Contents in Physical Education:** In Indian, ‘health and health education’ is studied in physical education. There are no separate departments where health and health education can be studied. Consequently, physical education includes content related to health and health education, such as understanding the concept of health and hygiene, knowledge about various communicable and non-communicable diseases, health problems and their prevention, proper nutrition and balanced diet, community health, school health service programme, assessment of health status, prevention, safety, and first aid for common injuries.

**5. Psycho-social Content of Physical Education:** Physical education includes the study of individual differences, personality development, skill acquisition, motivation and its techniques, anxiety management, ethical and social values, group dynamics, cooperation, cohesion, and learning. In this section, emotional development, relationships with peers/parents and others, self-concept, and self-esteem are also emphasised.

**6. Sports Training Content in Physical Education:** Sports instruction is an integral component of physical education. It contains information regarding the development of sport-specific components, as well as knowledge of aerobic, anaerobic, rhythmic, and callisthenics activities. Physical education also includes training programmes, learning and perfection of various movements, sports skills, techniques, and tactical patterns, as well as warming up, load adaptation, recuperation, and cooling down.



As far as India is concerned, physical education's scope is not limited to the above-mentioned points only, its scope is very wide and it is very difficult to include all scopes of physical education in the content developed for physical education teacher training programme. Thus, it is the need of the hour to think about it and start making separate discipline out of this one physical education. Because no institute in and outside India can cater all the content provided in the scope (Indian version) list to one programme. If we look at developed countries they already segregated physical education and its allied subjects and coming up with new disciplines such as health education, sports medicine, sports management, sports coaching, kinesiology, anthropometry, health and nutrition, recreation, dance, etc. Now, it is our turn to think on this line.

## References

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