

Systemic Challenges of Physical Education Teachers in Schools of Directorate of Education, Delhi

Key words - Systemic Challenges #

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Abstract

Physical education is a crucial component of education that focuses on the development of physical fitness and skills through various physical activities. It is an integral part of the school curriculum aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles, physical competence, and overall well-being. The study emphasizes the urgent need to address these challenges to ensure sufficient time for physical activities and enhance the role of PE teachers in school system. This paper explores the systemic challenges of male and female PE teachers, including inadequate infrastructure, limited resources, curriculum constraints, and scheduling issues. Findings revealed that there is no significant difference in the systemic challenges faced by male and female physical education teachers working in the DoE, Delhi.

Introduction

Physical education is integral to education, aiming to foster physical fitness, skill development,

and overall well-being among students. Physical education encompasses a wide range of activities, including sports, exercise, dance, gymnastics, and outdoor pursuits, all designed to improve students' physical health, motor skills, and cognitive abilities. The objectives of physical education are multifaceted, encompassing physical, mental, emotional, and social aspects of development. Primary goal of physical education is to enhance physical fitness. This includes improving cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition. Through regular participation in physical activities, students develop healthier bodies, reducing the risk of obesity, heart disease, and other health problems associated with a sedentary lifestyle. Physical education provides opportunities for students to acquire and refine various motor skills. These skills can range from basic movements like running, jumping, and throwing to more complex skills required in specific sports or activities. Skill development not only improves physical competence but also boosts self-confidence and self-esteem.

Physical education serves as a platform to educate school students about the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. Topics such as nutrition, hygiene, injury prevention, and the dangers of substance abuse are often integrated into the curriculum. By raising awareness about health-related issues, students are empowered to

make informed decisions that positively impact their well-being. Participation in physical education fosters social interaction and teamwork. Through collaborative activities and team sports, students learn valuable interpersonal skills such as communication, cooperation, leadership, and sportsmanship. These experiences promote empathy, respect, and tolerance, contributing to the development of well-rounded individuals. Physical education is not solely focused on physical activity; it also stimulates cognitive development. Activities that require problem-solving, strategy formulation, and decision-making enhance cognitive skills. Moreover, research suggests a positive correlation between physical activity and academic performance, indicating that regular exercise can improve concentration, memory, and overall cognitive function. The ultimate goal of physical education is to instill a lifelong commitment to fitness and physical activity. By cultivating a positive attitude towards exercise and providing students with the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain an active lifestyle, physical education sets the foundation for long-term health and well-being. Physical education plays a vital role in promoting holistic development by focusing on physical fitness, skill development, health education, social interaction, cognitive stimulation, and the cultivation of lifelong fitness habits. By integrating these components into the curriculum, schools empower

students to lead healthier, happier, and more fulfilling lives. Importance of Physical education holds immense importance in both individual development and society as a whole.

Systemic Challenges in schools: The position paper on physical education highlights numerous obstacles hindering the achievement of its objectives in schools, such as inadequate infrastructure and budgetary support, lack of trained personnel, and poor coordination between education and health departments. Despite its mandatory status, physical education often takes a backseat in schools, receiving minimal attention and facing challenges in scheduling and curriculum development. Moreover, teachers lack necessary training opportunities and struggle with limited time and resources. These challenges underscore the need for concerted efforts to improve the status of physical education and address the concerns of teachers in school systems.

Physical education teachers encounter numerous challenges, including inadequate physical infrastructure, lack of essential amenities like electricity and water supply, insufficient budgetary support, shortage of trained staff and training facilities, poor documentation practices, and limited collaboration between education and health departments. Despite being compulsory, physical education often receives insufficient attention in schools, being relegated to

administrative tasks. Teachers struggle to secure suitable timetable slots and lack a curriculum tailored to address physical and life skills based on students' ages. Limited access to regular teacher training programs hampers professional development and peer learning. Schools also struggle to allocate the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical education, resulting in fewer weekly periods. The lack of qualified teachers, proper medical examination facilities, well-equipped playgrounds, funding, provision of mid-day meals, and dealing with double shifts further exacerbate the challenges. It's imperative to address these hurdles to ensure adequate time for educational physical activities and elevate the role of physical education teachers in school systems. Physical education teachers face several system-related challenges that can impact their effectiveness in delivering quality instruction and promoting physical activity among students.

According to research by the National Council of Educational Research and Training in 2006, and data from the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in 2015, a significant 93.7% of young people lack access to organized sports. Despite the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) of 2005 advocating for physical education's integration into the curriculum and its mandate by various Indian boards, it doesn't receive the same recognition as subjects like science and mathematics. Physical

education teachers often struggle to secure preferred timetable slots and are frequently marginalized in schools. Additionally, many lack a curriculum tailored to different age groups' physical and life skills and access to regular teacher training programs. The National Association of Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) recommends a minimum of 60 minutes of daily physical education for children, yet scheduling constraints often make this unfeasible. Consequently, students may only have one period per week or a few days allocated to physical education. Ongoing efforts, such as the current study, are crucial in addressing these concerns, especially in Directorate of Education schools. The challenges faced by physical education teachers include:

Inadequate funding and resources- Many physical education programs suffer from inadequate funding and resources, which can limit the variety and quality of equipment, facilities, and instructional materials available to teachers. Without access to proper resources, teachers may struggle to provide engaging and effective lessons that meet the needs of diverse learners.

Large Pupil -teacher Ratio -Physical education classes often have large student-to-teacher ratios, making it challenging for teachers to provide individualized instruction and supervision. Large class sizes can also lead to safety concerns during activities and difficulties in

managing participation.

Limited Periods in School Time -Table - Physical education is often allocated limited time within the school schedule, with competing priorities such as academic subjects and standardized testing taking precedence. As a result, physical education teachers may have insufficient time to cover essential content, conduct meaningful activities, and assess student progress effectively.

Lack of opportunity for CPD -Many physical education teachers face a lack of continuous professional development and training opportunities to enhance their teaching skills and stay updated on best practices in the field. Without access to professional development, teachers may struggle to incorporate new techniques, adapt to changing curriculum standards, and address emerging issues such as inclusive practices and technology integration.

Autonomy in work - Physical education teachers may be required to adhere to standardized curriculum mandates and testing requirements imposed by state or district policies. These mandates often prioritize academic subjects over physical education, leading to reduced instructional time, pressure to focus on test preparation, and limited flexibility in curriculum design.

Physical Education for all: In some cases, disparities in access to physical education opportunities exist based on factors such as

socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, and disability status. Students from marginalized communities may have limited access to quality physical education programs, facilities, and extracurricular sports opportunities, existing health and education inequities.

Parental and Community Support: Physical education teachers may face challenges in gaining support from parents, administrators, and the broader community who may prioritize academic achievement over physical activity. Educating stakeholders about the importance of physical education in promoting holistic development and lifelong health can be a persistent challenge.

Safety and Security while playing-Physical education teachers must ensure the safety of students during physical activities, which can pose inherent risks of injury. Managing safety protocols, addressing liability concerns, and obtaining necessary certifications can be complex and time-consuming tasks for teachers, particularly in environments with limited resources and support.

Physical education teachers face a range of system-related challenges that impact the implementation of evidence-based practices and the integration of research findings into their teaching. Many studies addressed various aspects of the duties, challenges, and potential solutions that physical education teachers encounter. Collaboration between educators, administrators,

legislators, and community stakeholders is needed to address these systemic issues. These issues include promoting a holistic approach to student well-being, addressing disparities, providing professional development opportunities, prioritizing physical education, and effectively allocating resources.

Review of literature

Sodhi (2011) conducted a study on the relationship between the role expectations of PE teachers, organizational climate and leadership behavior of principals. The study concluded that the principals had high expectations from PE teachers regarding their roles and responsibilities as compared to PE teachers perceive themselves. The role expectations of PE teachers had significant relationship with the leadership behavior of Principals. There was no difference in the perception of male and female PE teachers regarding their roles.

Wanyama (2011) conducted a qualitative study on the experience of PE teachers of Kenya and Victoria in Australia. The findings of the study highlighted that PE teachers were marginalized in comparison to other subjects' teachers. In comparison to Kenya, Victoria still gave good value to PE by making it a Key Learning Area (KLA). Thus, the study recommends PE teachers to collaborate and share information on how to improve and strengthen the PE programmes in

secondary schools. The major problem faced was the lack of professional association of PE teachers which could rectify the other small problems of proper time allocation, class size, curriculum planning and equal importance to PE. The study recommends giving more importance to PE, providing adequate funds and resources to PE teachers, ensuring professional development of PE teachers, giving proper encouragement and incentives to motivate PE teachers, and generating more opportunities for physical activities in schools. Oudat (2016) used a descriptive research approach to identify issues among Jordanian physical education teachers (PETs). The study emphasised the critical issue of growing classroom numbers, which affects PETs' capacity to teach effectively. The research proposed that these findings be shared with the Jordanian Ministry of Education in order to provide viable remedies.

Adhikari Y (2023) Health and Physical Education is losing appeal despite of its real need in teacher education. In this context, this study aims to explore the teachers' perceptions towards the importance of health and physical education and its challenges to gain prescribed objectives. Pphenomenological research design under qualitative inquiry was applied. Unstructured interview was taken with teachers to gather information. The study explored that health and physical education is always emerging, dynamic,

daily life related and life skills-based education but phenomena is different. For this phenomenon various constraints are responsible, out of them student, teacher, curriculum, pedagogies, evaluation system and job-related challenges are major constraints.

Numerous research covered different facets of the responsibilities, difficulties, and potential solutions faced by physical education teachers. Addressing these system-related challenges requires collaboration among educators, administrators, policymakers, and community stakeholders to prioritize physical education, allocate resources effectively, provide professional development opportunities, address inequities, and promote a holistic approach to student well-being.

Objective of the Study

To compare the systemic challenges faced by male and female Physical Education Teachers in DoE schools of Delhi

Research Design

The present study used the descriptive research method. Survey method was used for data collection and data analysis. The population of the current study were male and female Physical Education Teachers of DoE (Directorate of Education) Schools of District-West, Delhi. Simple random sampling technique to select the sample from the population. The sample of the current study 60 male and 49 female Physical Education

teachers of DoE District West, Delhi. The study used self-developed questionnaire which includes the questions in the form on 5-point Likert scale. The statements are as under-

- Clarity about Roles and Responsibilities
- Clarity about Job Expectations
- Recognition of Work by Higher Officials
- Addressing Students' Needs
- Sufficiency of Physical Education Teachers

The data for the present research was collected through a Self-developed questionnaire. The questionnaire consist of close-ended items. The close-ended items were written in the form of statements to which the PE Teachers had to select one response on a five-point scale (Strongly agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, and Strongly disagree). After the administration of the questionnaire. t- ratio was used to analyse the data.

Delimitation of the Study:

The study is delimited to male and female Physical Education Teachers (T.G.T) working in the schools of Directorate of Education, District -West, GNCT Delhi only.

Data analysis and Interpretations: The 't' ratio was calculated to find out the difference in the systemic challenges faced by male and female physical education teachers working in schools of DoE district west, Delhi.

Table - Systemic Challenges of Male and Female

Physical Education Teachers (Item- wise)

SN	Variable				
	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Mean
Diff	SEd	df	t -ratio	p-value	
1	My role and responsibilities as a physical education teacher are not clearly stated.				
M					
60					
2.87					
1.27	0.15	0.23	107	0.64	0.52
		F	49	2.17	1.19
2	I feel that there is a lack of clear directions and guidelines related to my job as a physical education teacher.				
M					
60					
2.88					
1.18	-0.08	0.22	107	0.33	0.73
		F	49	2.96	1.14
3	My work as a physical education teacher does not get enough recognition by the higher officials.				
M					
60					
3.02					
1.20	-0.25	0.22	107	1.11	0.26
		F	49	3.27	1.11
4	I feel that I am not able to cater to the physical education needs of all children due to large				

number of students.

M

60

2.95

1.35 -0.25 0.25 107 0.99 0.32

F 49 3.20 1.29

5 I don't feel number of P. E.Ts are sufficient in my school to meet the CBSE guidelines for classes 1- 8.

M

60

3.38

1.21 0.08 0.23 107 0.32 0.74

F 49 3.31 1.26

The obtained 't' value (.64) which is found to be not significant at 0.05 level. This may be interpreted that the there is no significant difference of male and female physical education teachers about roles and responsibilities.

The obtained 't' value (.33) which is found to be not significant at 0.05 level. This may be interpreted that there is no significant difference of male and female physical education teachers about lack of clear directions and guidelines related their job as a physical education teacher.

The obtained 't' value (1.11) which is found to be not significant at 0.05 level. This may be interpreted that the there is no significant difference of male and female physical education teachers in

lack of recognition by higher officials.

The obtained 't' value (.99) which is found to be not significant at 0.05 level. This may be interpreted that there is no significant difference of male and female physical education teachers in catering the physical education needs of all children due to large number of students.

The obtained 't' value (.32) which is found to be not significant at 0.05 level. This may be interpreted that there is no significant difference in male and female physical education teachers on the insufficient number of teachers to meet the CBSE guidelines.

Graph – Difference in mean scores on Systemic Challenges of Male and Female Physical Education Teachers (Item- wise) are graphically represented below:

Conclusion:

The study found that there is no significant difference in the systemic challenges faced by male and female physical education teachers of schools under DoE, Delhi on clarity about roles and responsibilities, about job expectations, recognition of work by higher officials, addressing students' needs, and sufficiency of physical education teachers.

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