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Developing Life Skills through Physical Education Programmes in Schools

Dr. Priti Pandey

Assistant Professor-Physical Education
S.N.Sen B.V.P.G.College, Kanpur

Abstract:

In schools, physical education is an essential component of quality education. Physical Education programmes not only promote physical activity, there are evidences that such programmes promote life skill development in adolescents with special reference to self awareness, effective communication, interpersonal relationship and decision making.

The question of whether life skill can be taught has received considerable attention in the academic arena. Prominent management educators on this topic, concludes that several aspects of life skills may be enhanced through various learning experiences. Ewing et al. (2002) argue that sport contributes to learning the skills and values necessary to succeed in education, in the workforce and throughout life. Danish (1986) defines some of these skills as the ability to perform under pressure, solve problems, meet deadlines and challenges, set goals, communicate, handle both success and failure, work in a group and within a system, and receive feedback and benefit from it. DeMoulin's (2002) research involving high-school seniors also found that students who were organized in organized sports showed greater social integration skills, but significantly lower personal maturity scores on validated measure of leadership development of youth.

Keywords: Physical Education, Life skills, School, Leadership, Socialization, Youth.

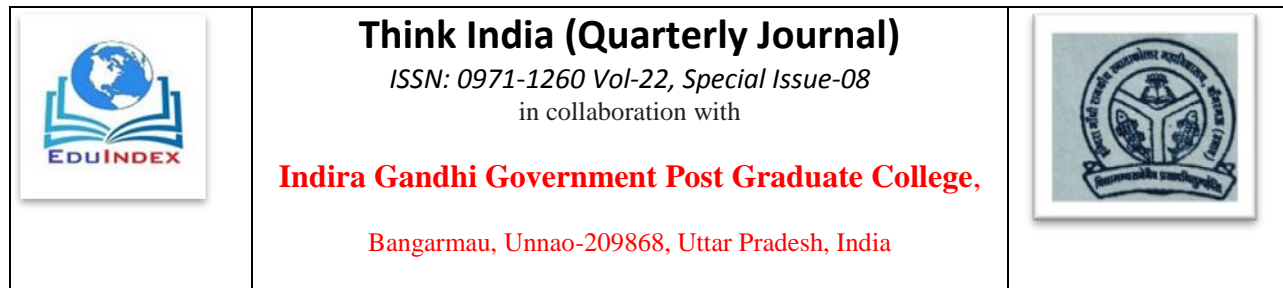
A basic skill learned from sports is socialization. Interaction with other people is an important skill to have later in life. Any group activity which ensures total involvement leads to the nurturing of certain life skills like leadership development, effective communication, interpersonal relationship, self awareness and decision making.

School Activities and Life Skill Development:

“Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individual to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life” –WHO. Enhancing enables the individual to adapt to situations and people and helps us to lead healthy and positive life. A skilled person uses less time energy and resources to do a job and produces quality results. Here the investigator makes an attempt to redefine physical education as a medium for developing certain life skills-self awareness, effective communication, interpersonal relationship and decision making.

Self awareness

Self awareness is necessary for developing a positive attitude towards life. Being aware of good points about oneself helps young people build a sense of self esteem and self confidence and the same time realizing the weakness will make them to learn more to equip themselves to face the challenges in life. Analysing likes and dislikes, strength and weakness, positive and



negative qualities will help himself or herself to assess level of acquisition of core like skill on par with others.

Effective Communication

It is the ability to express verbally through spoken or written language and nonverbally through gestures and body movements that are culturally acceptable. Adolescence being a period of immense change, communication during this transitional phase of life assumes even more importance. Young people should be equipped to effectively communicate with others regarding their feelings and emotions.

Interpersonal Relationship

The relationship between and among parents, friends, classmates and future partners determines the quality of life. It is the ability to establish positive relationships to help us to relate positive ways with the people we interact with. An adolescent's life is further complicated when he or she starts getting attracted to opposite sex. The first experience of strong emotion or attraction to the other person is exhilarating, making one happy and alive.

Decision Making

Good decision making depends on understanding the situation well, being aware of choices and above all visualizing the consequences of our choices. It is a complex process where some are made after careful deliberation, some are made more hastily and some are made through our own will or under pressure of others.

Physical activity and life skill development—A model approach

In a game situation, there are opportunities for a player to observe himself and others in terms of performance and winning spirit. In the progress of the game, who takes the leadership, how they organize themselves, how they interact with each other, whether they function as a team, what decisions are being made, body language used and how they carry on the game are the dominant factors deciding the course of the game and ultimately leading to success.

On completion of the game an attempt should be made to explain the proceedings of the game in terms of life skills. It is imperative to analyse strength and weakness each one has during the game, whether the team is accepting other team members as friends and being with them as a team, effectiveness of verbal and nonverbal communication within and between teams, when some one did not play well appropriate decision has taken to change the strategy of the game. These post game analysis gives opportunity to verify whether the life skills are adopted during the game situation. Besides, it gives impetus to incorporate these skills in further match situations.

Often education and sports organizations do not expand methods for learning and skill development. As well, too often individuals are not aware of alternate ways to acquire knowledge, skills and abilities.

Conclusion

The educational philosophy in ancient India was one of *guru-shisya parampara* and stressed on the teacher being responsible both for knowledge and personality development in the



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ward. However, education, which is currently prevalent in our country is achievement oriented than oriented than child oriented. It does not address the needs of all the children who in spite of various levels of scholastic competence are capable of learning and need to develop those skills, and become empowered to live effectively in this world. This empowerment is very essential in today's context in India as there is rapid globalization and urbanization with a breaking up of joint families and the traditional support systems.

It is high time to devote more time and resources for specially designed physical education programmes suitable for developing life skills at school level. Physical education programmes mainly intend to develop fitness and health in children, nevertheless life skill development through physical education programmes is gaining momentum in recent days.

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