

The Importance of Physical Education & Recreation in Student Life

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Abstract: Every individual must know the importance of physical fitness. In other words, one must have a fundamental knowledge of anatomy and physiology. This fundamental knowledge enables person to understand physical fitness. Physical fitness is the capacity of a person to function steadily and smoothly when a situation arises. Physical fitness makes you feel mentally sharper, physically comfortable and more with your body and better able to cope with the demands that every day life makes upon you. Increased physical fitness not only improves health but improves your performance at work. In this paper, the authors have discussed the importance of physical education in student life.

Keywords: physical education, students, health, fitness, sports, recreation.

INTRODUCTION

The Health and physical fitness have a vital role in the life of men from time immemorial. The progress of the Nation lies in the hands of the people, who are healthy and physically fit. Every individual should develop physical fitness for a happy and effective living. In order to get physical fitness one has to involve in physical activities. Physical activity is essential for the development of wholesome personality of a child which would depend upon the opportunities provided for wholesome development of the mental, physical, social and spiritual aspects. Hence a well organized and properly administered physical education programme for school children is very essential. Physical activity throughout the ages has been acclaimed for health and recreation. It provided fun and enjoyment. It also provided youthful exuberance and the elderly care. Physical activity and movements are as old as human existence. It played numerous roles from struggle for existence to struggle for excellence.

A sports is an activity in our lives where pursuits of different movement achieved through the total investigation of Neuro – muscular co-ordination. In this modern era, we can see that each and every individual directly or indirectly related to sports. Modern Physical Education commonly known as there is sports where pursuit of discipline freely formed such as biological, social and physical sciences. Over a decades, the society in general has realized the need for keeping fit and health through organized physical activity programme. Scientific evidence has made with a clear and that unless man engages himself in organized vigorous physical activity programme. The real benefits would not come. Many researchers strongly support the regular exercises helps one to keep a strong and healthy and to prevent cardio vascular diseases. Physically fit person, heart beats at a lower rate and pumps more blood per beat at rest. As a result of regular exercises and individual's capacity to use oxygen is increased systematically energy production depends on internal chemical or metabolic change.

IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Every individual must know the importance of physical education. In other words, one must have a fundamental knowledge of anatomy and physiology. This fundamental knowledge enables person to understand physical fitness. Physical fitness is the capacity of a person to function steadily and smoothly when a situation arise. Physical fitness makes you feel mentally sharper, physically comfortable and more with your body and better able to cope with the demands that every day life makes upon you. Increased physical fitness not only improves health but improves your performance at work. Hundreds of American companies have backed with idea financially by employing full time directors of fitness for their work. **Gorden Jackson** (1985) The benefits of physical fitness are numerous. The person who is physically fit has greater amount of strength, energy and stamina an improved sense of well being better protection from injury because strong well developed muscles safeguard bones, internal organs and joints and keep moving parts limbers and Improved cardio respiratory function **Bucher and Prentice** (1985) It is necessary for every individual to be physically fit to perform their daily work

with ease and to take part in various activities effectively. Everyone should be fit enough through participation in physical activities to develop the different physical fitness components.

Physical Exercise and Physical Fitness

Exercise is the means to an art, vigorous and lengthy life, inactivity will kill you. Many people say that exercise makes them feel better and more relaxed number of studies have shown that people improve psychologically as well as physically as a result of running programmes. There is a lot of circumstantial evidence to suggest that this relaxing effect is caused by the release of endorphin – morphine – like substances which occur naturally in the brain. “If you make an investment in exercise it makes you conscious of other reasonable health habits. You are not about to waste your investments” **Morehouse and Brass (1975)**.

According to **Lumpkin (1986)** “Exercise means using or exerting body play” refers to the resultant action or what the participants do during physical exertion. “Games” range from amusements or diversions to competition with significant outcomes governed by rules. Freedom from work or duties describe “Leisure” which may or may not be used for physical activity similarly “Recreation” refers or renews one’s strength and spirits after toil again with or without activity. “Sport” encompasses all these diversions and physical activities that are does for pleasure and success”.

Health related Physical Fitness

According to current thinking in the physical education profession, physical fitness is either health related or performance related. In keeping with wellness trend today and an emphasis on all aspects of healthful living in addition to stressing performance or motor skill related to fitness. This aspect of physical fitness concerns the development of qualities necessary to function efficiently and maintain a healthy life style. Each of the components of health related fitness cardio respiratory endurance, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility and body composition **Bucher and Prentice (1985)**.

According to **Bucher and Wuest (1987)** “Health related physical fitness is concerned with the development of those qualities that often protect against disease and frequently are associated with physical activity. Then health related physical fitness is important to everyone and should be stressed by physical educators”. Spiraling health care costs and realization of benefit to be gained from participation in health and fitness activities have prompted many colleges, corporation and other organization to establish programmes for their students and client able. They have found that such programmes promote good health and also make economic sense since poor health is cost by in terms of illness, primitive death, development productivity and absenteeism **Bucher and Prentice**.

Performance related Physical Fitness

Ko Ko (1985) says, “General physical fitness is the capacity of the body to perform work to resist disease and infection and to resist physical stress imposed by such things as heat, cold, atmospheric pressure changes at high attitude or under water and the forces of jolts and vibrations”. **Thomas (1962)** opines, “Physical fitness is the total fundamental capacity of an individual to perform a given task”. Exercise is not always performed in a sport or training when you paint your room or change a flat tube you are exercising and when you exercise or number of important bodily changes influence psychological functioning in every striking ways if you are eventually to organize a realistic personal programme of exercise it is important that you understand these changes.

THE COMPONENTS OF PHYSICAL FITNESS

There is no single measure of physical fitness and no single way of achieving it. However, these are three major qualities which contribute to overall fitness, they are strength, stamina and flexibility. “The achievement of total fitness depends upon combining these three main strands, strength, stamina and flexibility” **Gardon Jackson (1985)** According to **Mathews (1967)** “Total fitness refers to individual capacity to measure and live effectively in the environment. AAHPER fitness is that state which characterizes the degree and which the process is able to function. Fitness is an individual matter. It implies the ability of each person to live most effectively with potential ability to function and depend upon the physical, mental, emotional, and social and spiritual components of fitness, all of which are related to each other and are mutually independent. “Fitness means the development of components muscular strength, muscular endurance cardiovascular endurance and flexibility”

A Global Commitment

In July 2002, the United Nations Secretary-General convened an Inter-Agency Task Force to review activities involving sport within the United Nations system. The Task Force, co-chaired by Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UNICEF and Adolf Ogi, Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace, brought together 10 UN organizations with significant experience of using sport in their work.[†] Several months later, the Task Force produced *Sport for Development and Peace: Towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals*. The comprehensive report concluded that sport – from play and physical activity to organized and competitive sport – is a powerful and cost-effective way to advance the Millennium Development Goals, the agenda agreed to by world leaders at the UN Millennium Summit, and ‘A World Fit for Children’. In 2003, the Governments of Switzerland and the Netherlands hosted global conferences on sports for development. Both the Swiss conference, which led to the Magglingen Declaration, and the ‘Next Step’ conference in the Netherlands brought together for the first time sports, government, UN and non-governmental organization partners from around the world. That same year, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on the role of sport as a means to promote health, education, development and peace, proclaiming 2005 as the International Year for Sport and Physical Education.

An inventory of programmes and activities in sport for development can be found at www.sportdevconf.org and www.sportdevelopment.org.[†] Members of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace include: International Labour Organization, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations Environment Programme, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Children’s Fund, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, United Nations Volunteers, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and World Health Organization. The Secretariat was the non-governmental organization Right To Play.

Recommendations adapted from the United Nations Secretary-General’s report, *Sport for Development and Peace*:

Towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals:

1. **Incorporate sport and physical activity into the development agenda** of countries as well as of national and international development agencies, with a particular emphasis on young people.
2. **Include the opportunity to participate in sport as an objective as well as a tool to achieve the Millennium Development Goals** and the goals of other international conferences and the broader aims of development and peace.
3. **Include sport-related initiatives into the programmes of UN agencies**, where appropriate and according to locally assessed needs.
4. **Facilitate the development of innovative partnerships involving sport for development.**
5. **Urge governments to identify and make available resources for sports initiatives** that maximise participation in and access to ‘sport for all’ within their own countries, and sport-for-development programmes within overseas development assistance, and to strengthen the position of sport and physical activity in policy development generally. Also urge UN system partners, including the private sector, sports organizations and civil society, to generate in-kind and financial support for sport for development and peace.
6. Encourage the UN system to **seek new and innovative ways to use sport for communication and social mobilization** at national, regional and local levels.

THE SERIOUS BUSINESS OF PLAY

Early childhood

From the time they are born, before they coo and gurgle, infants begin to explore. They touch and hold, reach and shake, grab and taste – discovering the world not only with their eyes and ears but also with hands, feet and mouths. They play.

Children at play are constantly at work – making new observations, asking and responding to questions, making choices and extending their imaginations and creativity. Play gives children the stimulation and physical activity they need to develop their brains for future learning. Through play, children explore, invent and create. They develop social skills and ways of thinking, learn how to deal with emotions, improve their physical abilities, and find out about themselves and their capabilities. A child's play forms a solid foundation for a life of learning.

School-aged children

As children grow, they acquire new skills and build on existing capacities. Climbing, running, hopping, skipping and jumping, they further develop and strengthen their bodies. Increasingly socialized, they master the more formal skills of life. Games with rules and formal teamwork play an important role in helping school-aged children develop their physical skills and practise cooperation, mutual understanding and logical thinking. They learn about taking turns with their team-mates, sharing, respecting their peers and valuing rules.

Adolescents

The search for identity becomes the major development task of adolescents. As explorers of a widening unknown, adolescents experiment with new behaviours and test possibilities. With the right guidance, they develop the skills they need to become responsible and caring adults. Organized sport and physical recreation provide adolescents opportunities for self-expression, critical to this discovery process. They help adolescents to develop skills in communication, negotiation and leadership and to test and improve their abilities, which increases confidence. They allow young people a way to bond with adults and with one another, creating a sense of community and belonging.

SCIENCE OF SPORT, PLAY AND RECREATION

Regular physical activity and play are essential for physical, mental, psychological and social development. Good habits start early: Research shows that children who exercise are more likely to stay physically active as adults. Sport, recreation and play have the potential to:

Strengthen the body and prevent disease. Regular physical activity builds and helps maintain healthy bones, muscles and joints; helps control body weight; helps reduce fat and blood pressure. Promoting physical activity is a powerful means of preventing chronic diseases. For nations, it can provide a cost-effective way of improving public health. Physical inactivity caused some 1.9 million deaths worldwide in 2000. Globally, it was estimated to cause about 10 per cent to 16 per cent of cases each of breast cancer, colon cancers and diabetes, and about 22 per cent of ischaemic heart disease. In the United States, inactivity contributed to more than \$75 billion in medical costs in 2000 alone.

Prepare infants for future learning. A national study of 3,000 children in Early Head Start programmes in the United States found that 3-year-olds in the programmes performed significantly better in a range of measures of cognitive, language and social-emotional development than a randomly assigned control group. Early Head Start includes opportunities for children to express themselves through art, music, movement, storytelling and indoor and outdoor play.⁴

Reduce symptoms of stress and depression. While research has confirmed that physical activity reduced symptoms of stress and depression in adults, a recent study of boys and girls ages 8 to 12 from three schools in the United States revealed that inactive children were more often depressed than active children.

Another study revealed that high-school athletes were less likely than non-athletes to seriously consider committing suicide.

Improve confidence and self-esteem. A study of seventh-graders from inner city neighbourhoods found that those involved in organized sports reported higher overall self-esteem and were judged by teachers to be more socially skilled and less shy. The study also found that 13-year-old boys who were involved in sport during the past year were less likely to report having experimented with marijuana than 13-year-old boys who had not played a sport during the same period.

Improve learning and academic performance. A study of two fourth-grade classes revealed that 60 per cent of children, including five children suffering from attention deficit disorder, worked more and fidgeted less on recess days. A 15-minute recess resulted in the children's being 5 per cent more on-task and less fidgety, which translated into 20 minutes saved during the day.⁸ In another study, 6- to 12-year-old children who received five hours of physical activity each week showed significant improvement in academic performance compared with children receiving only 40 minutes of physical activity

per week.⁹ A study of 900 high school students examined the long-term benefits of sports, revealing that those who participated in sports in the 10th grade completed more years of schooling and experienced lower levels of social isolation than non-participants. (Involvement in sports, however, also predicted higher levels of drinking.)

Prevent smoking and use of illicit drugs. A 1997 survey of over 16,000 public and private high school students revealed that athletes were less likely than non-athletes to have ever smoked cigarettes regularly or to have smoked within the past month. (The study also found that athletes were more likely to use chewing/dipping tobacco than non-athletes.) Athletes were also less likely to use marijuana, cocaine or other drugs, such as LSD, PCP (phencyclidine), speed or heroin.

Reduce crime. The causes of crime are complex and multidimensional. Sport may have an indirect impact on criminal activity by encouraging challenge and adventure, promoting positive use of leisure time, providing role models through coaches, and by giving young people a sense of purpose. Sport appears to be most effective when combined with comprehensive programmes that address wider social and personal development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN ANCIENT INDIA

The profound tradition of physical fitness in India could be traced back to thousands of years. It has been closely associated with the religious practices, traditions and culture of India. The then Indian Physical Education was nothing but contributing to physical fitness. The physical fitness programme was in the form of physical activities like Yogasanas, Pranayama, Dands, Baithalls, Malkhamb, Lezium, Lathi, Calisthenics, Combatives, Dumb-bells and so forth and the games like, Khabaddi, Kho-kho and Atyapatya have been in vogue from time immemorial, but the names of the inventor and the dates of their origin are not clearly known. Yet we are aware of the fact that a scientific system of Physical fitness programme was in existence in India and it was practiced by the people from time of yore. These physical fitness programmes were organized and practiced in parnashtalas, ashramas, hermitages and the temples. The preceptors were the ustads **Tirunarayana and Hariharasarma**.

The age - oral Vedas have also sounded the strength as one of the components of the physical fitness programme. This could be assessed in the following words "Barana Vai Prithivi Tishtati, Balan Upasura" (The world stands protected by strength, worship strength) Medical authorities of ancient India, such as Charaka and Susruta, recommended physical exercise (Vyayam), oil bath and massage for maintaining and restoring health. Susruta defined Vyayam as movements of the body that produced sufficiently vigorous circulation of the blood and quick respiration to fatigue the individual. Charaka recommended various exercises to ward off disease, reduce weight and activate digestion, present a pleasing appearance, and delay the encroachment of old age **Van Daley and Benett** (1971).

Dance requires a great deal of physical fitness. It has a long and systematic history in India and is intimately associated with religion. The bronze figure of a dancing girl found in the ancient city of Mohenjo-Daro proves the antiquity of the art, and the early literature reveals the people's love of dancing and the important role played in their religion. In fact, Shiva, one of the trinity of Hindu Gods, was known as 'the Lord of Dance'. The development of physical fitness and motor skills was incorporated in the vocational aims of certain groups of people especially that of the Kshatriyas or military caste. Dancing girls were also trained to give expression to religious concepts and to provide recreation for spectators 16 Ibid. The great epics the 'Ramayana' and 'Mahabharata' have considered physical fitness as an important factor in all welfare. It was promoted through participation of Indigenous system of physical activities **Tirunarayanan and Hariharasarma** (1985). The great Nalanda and Takshasila Universities prominent in Ancient and Medieval India, had physical fitness programmes for 12,000 students at one time in the form of Indigenous activities and gymnastics of Indian origin.

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