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Research Article

Student's attitude towards outsourcing physical education in schools across Maharashtra

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ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of outsourcing is in great demand in the 21st century. The outsourcing Physical Education implies that the designing of curriculum and the trainers required to implement the Physical Education curriculum is entrusted to external agencies. The purpose of the study was to find out the attitude of students towards Outsourcing Physical Education program. For this purpose data was collected from ten focus groups of students from different schools from the state of Maharashtra which has outsourced physical education in their schools. Data were collected through semi-structured face-to-face interviews. Further the data were analyzed through thematic and phenomenon approach, where in the data were divided into segments and codes. Further into themes and the themes were interpreted.

Keywords: Outsourcing physical education, Focus group, Semi-structured face-to-face interview, Segments and codes, Thematic and phenomenon approach

INTRODUCTION

Participation in physical activity is the right of every child. Physical education perhaps is the best opportunity for children to actively participate in physical activity organized by the physical education teacher. For every individual to showcase their talent require a better platform and physical education is the best platform for them to showcase their talent in their respective games. Physical education teacher act as a talent search personnel, who organizes various events as per the interest of the students and availability of the infrastructure and facilities. School organizes various intra-mural competitions as well as extra-mural competitions in order to give students maximum opportunities to enhance their skills and to build up competitiveness among them. Further, the Physical education teacher plays very important role in motivating students to explore their skills and also guides students to go for personal coaching if the student is capable of achieving glory to the state or nation. It is the responsibility of

the physical education teacher to organize physical education class in such a way that each and every child participate in that and keep themselves physically active. In the present competitive world, people are looking for better quality of life and career. In this regard outsourcing of physical education will play a major role in meeting these expectations.

Objectives of the Study

- 1) To find out the attitude of students towards outsourcing physical education.
- 2) To find out about physical education curriculum
- 3) To find out about physical education environment
- 4) To find out about physical education resources
- 5) To explore "Best practices" by outsourcing physical education.

METHODS

The outsourcing schools from the state of Maharashtra are the population in this study. The Phenomenological study requires participants who can give examples of relevant experiences that they have personally lived through (Jones *et al.* 2013, p. 120). Hence, focus group of students from outsourcing schools were

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selected. The participants were selected purposively. The researcher selected participants who could provide the required information to achieve the objectives of the study.

Instrumentation

The face-to-face Semi-structured interview was conducted to collect information. The interviews have some structure and guide the researchers to achieve a specific aim of exploring a phenomenon or eliciting participants' thoughts and feelings (Jones *et al.*, 2013, p. 50). In a Semi-structured interview, the researcher presents the same topic to all the participants, but the order of questions and the wordings differ in each interview. The interviews were carefully planned, using interchangeable topic and question sequence. The researcher, after interacting with experts, literature review, and personal experience, finalized the areas based on which the interview questions were framed. Main aspects that were covered while interviewing the focus group of students were:

- Physical Education Curriculum
- Physical Education Resources
- Physical Education Environment
- Best Practices in Physical Education.

Procedure of the Study

Research problem was formulated based on concerns arising on the rising issues in physical education. The interpretive phenomenological approach was adopted as this study tries to understand and interprets the lived experiences of focus group about the phenomenon. The sample size was ten focus groups from schools. After the selection of the participants, an informed and written consent to take part in the study was taken from the participants. The main aim was to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of physical education. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were scheduled wherein the researcher had a set of questions on an interview guide. During the interviews, the researcher probed interesting areas that arise from participants' interests and concerns. In the analysis, the interviews were transcribed, and the researcher identified statements made by the phenomenon. Then, these statements were thematized, which are also called meaning units. The goal of organizing the meaning units of creating themes was to manage information that ultimately enabled the researcher to describe the phenomenon (Pitney and Parker, 2009, p. 124). The transforming step attempts to distill the phenomenon down to its essence or the meaning of the experience (Pitney and Parker, 2009). In this study, the researcher first described the participants experiences based on emergent themes. Next, how the participants experienced the phenomenon and what it meant to them is explained, to transform the data, the researcher captured the expression and language that the participant used to described their experiences (Pitney and Parker, 2009). In this process, the researcher has tried to explain what is learnt in a manner that captures its essence and does justice to the participant's experience and yet presents the general meaning of the phenomenon (Pitney and Parker, 2009)

Analysis and Interpretation

In this study, the goal was to understand the attitude of students towards outsourcing physical education program. The dominant theoretical themes that were generated from the analysis of the transcripts of the participant's interviews are described. The interview transcripts provided data based on the participants perspectives towards the outsourcing physical education Program.

Physical Education Curriculum

The outsourcing companies design curriculum on the international guidelines with the help of experts appointed by them. While designing curriculum the experts consider the Indian environment. The curriculum designed is very much structured in nature. To implement curriculum in smooth way lesson plans are provided to physical education specialist. The interviewed students felt the class conducted by physical education specialist much more organized and planned. They stated that all the classes were active in nature and also they were taught variety of skills related to sports as well as theory. The students revealed that with outsourcing the curriculum has been updated as they are exposed to variety of activities whereas in In-house it used to be mostly Mass PT exercises and free play.

FG 1 "During the Physical education class we learn lot of sports skills and its very enjoying."

FG 3. "We had our teachers conducting classes were first in lower classes but she just used to let us play on the ground. But now we are taught according to the physical education syllabus"

FG 4 "teachers explain each and every skill concept very carefully it is much easier understand and practice"

The Frequency of the Physical Education classes is very less on an average two classes per week if any students want to devote more time they have to wait after class and opt for the sports specific clubs the students feel that the frequency of physical education classes should be increased so they can learn and practice effectively

FG 2 "We only get two classes per week I think they are not enough they should at least increase classes by 4-5 classes per week"

FG 1 "our schools offer sports club options after class hours some of us opt for that to learn sports"

Physical Education Resources and Environment

To have a collaboration with any school, the outsourcing companies demands for infrastructure and facilities within the campus. The outsourcing company provides school with physical education specialist, coaches, and the equipment

required to run the curriculum smoothly. The maximum use of equipment during PE class helps to save waiting time of the students. The interviewed students were satisfied with the facilities and the equipment available as compared to the in-house program. They were of the opinion that with outsourcing they spent more time actively as before the student-equipment ratio was on an average 10:1. The students also stated that the playgrounds and indoor hall have been upgraded since outsourcing companies took over physical education program.

FG 4 "now we all get equal time with equipment mostly one equipment such as ball is shared by two of us"

FG 3 "in comparison to before we get to practice with better sports equipment, also our indoor hall and playground has been upgraded"

Physical education programs in the schools should be focusing on all the students rather than students who take part in inter-school events. Students felt that with the outsourcing companies they all were actively involved in the program whereas during the in-house most of the time inter-school players were given prominence to improve their skills during class. Most of the students stated they felt the class more enjoyable and were eager to learn

FG 3 "before sir used to involve only sports players for demo and all, but now we all are given opportunity"

FG 2 "I find the class more enjoyable as I am involved in all the activities"

Best Practices in Physical Education

To participate in PE class wearing PE uniform is mandatory. Students have to wear PE uniform on the day of PE class. Further the school organizes after school coaching classes for the students in different games. The outsourcing company provides specialized coaches in various disciplines. Many students expressed that they feel comfortable to take part in physical education activities wearing PE uniform, the school uniform is used to create hindrance while take part in physical education activities. Due to the setting sports specific clubs by the outsourcing companies, the students expressed that they were very eager and happy because they were given an opportunity to practice and learn sports-specific skills irrespective whether they are part of inter-school team or not.

FG 1 "we feel it is easy to participate in physical education activities due to uniform before it used to be difficult as school uniform was not comfortable for sports."

FG 4 "the sports club setup in schools have helped me a lot to improve my skills in basketball, I do not have ground at my place so I can play here".

The awards and felicitation go in a long way to motivate students to take part in physical education and sports. The students felt more motivated and eager to perform well at school and interschool activities. The number of participants also improved as a result of this.

CONCLUSION

The goal of the study was to understand the attitude of students towards outsourcing physical education in school for this purpose the schools who moved from in-house program to outsourcing program were selected for study the results are as follows. The students felt the outsourcing program to be more update and inclusive as the activities conducted was structured and program was strictly followed. The students stated that the student equipment ratio and the quality of playgrounds both indoor and outdoor have improved as a results of outsourcing.

Many students are of the opinion that sportspersons need support and motivation so the opportunities and the encouragement provided in form of felicitation and financial support to students by the outsourcing program is appreciable. Furthermore, the environment created by the companies were conducive to all. The best practices followed by the companies are noteworthy and should be replicated in the in-house physical education curriculum.

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