

IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ITS GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Imagine that you own a time machine and have travelled back to those days when your great grandparents were children. The lifestyle of those people was physically very active and vigorous. The main activity was running, throwing and jumping for survival i.e. a man was running for search of food, safety and arranges basic needs of life. With the passes of time Kingship introduced the military and war training for supremacy, to prepare their army for war and other battles. Later on in the present era it has transformed to individual fitness, wellness and good health. In this context, the Indian Government has focused on citizen's health by introducing various programmer of physical training, physical assessment under physical education programmer as well as has introduced celebration of International Day of Yoga, i.e. 21st June every year. In this lesson you will learn meaning and importance of physical education and yoga and its historical development in details.

KEYWORDS: Growth, Development, physical education, Yoga Day, sports

INTRODUCTION

The growth and development of physical education in India can be traced through various historical phases, each reflecting broader societal, political, and cultural shifts. From ancient traditions to contemporary practices, physical education in India has evolved significantly, influenced by indigenous systems, colonial impacts, and post-independence policies.

Physical Education is now days connected with biological, sociological, psychological, philosophical, political and cultural aspects of life. It deals with totality of human behavior which makes man different from other species.

Importance of Physical Education

Physical growth and development-

Physical activity is a necessary step to develop the proper function and growth of the human body

Optimum development-

Physical education deals not only with physical growth but also helps us to improve in all parameters of development such as Physical, Mental, Social and Emotional development by participating in physical activities.

Intellectual development-

Physical activities also improve the intellectual ability. For example players need to take decision in different conditions and situations; that ability helps them to improve their thinking.

Emotional development –

Physical education and sports provide opportunities to control emotions. For example, a particular match incident gives you a maturity to execute yourself as a tough player.

Social adjustment-

Physical activities also provide opportunities of interaction with others and participation in varied situations enabling them to learn social qualities like sportsmanship, co-operation, honesty, friendship, fellowship, courtesy, self-discipline and respect for authority which promote social adjustment of an individual.

Personal adjustment-

Physical education gives worth-while experience to an individual to realize her/his full potential and has self-expression and highest Satisfaction which facilitates his personal adjustment in life.

Character development-

Group efforts, loyalty, dedication, discipline and determination help to build a good character of the individual.

Physical Fitness-

Physical education through scientific mode of exercise and Knowledge about one's body and its requirement contribute immensely to physical fitness. Systematic and scientific physical training helps to improve the physical fitness of the individual.

Mental development-

The physical activities not only help to improve the physical development but also the mental development of the individual; for Example a badminton player is good in physical fitness, but smash comes from mental development.

Constructive use of leisure time-

Physical education contributes to the constructive use of leisure time. Parents are motivating their children to utilize their leisure time in a particular manner so that a child doesn't get the chance to indulge in non-productive activities like roaming, or wasting time.

Neuro-muscular development-

Through physical activities an individual learns to co-ordinate the muscular and nervous systems. Neuro-muscular coordination develops well only if various types of skills and exercises are done repeatedly for a long period of time. A good neuromuscular coordination is indispensable for learning skill.

Economic value-

Nowadays sports have become commercial. Each and every game is organising its own professional league, which not only helps to promote the game, but also helps to improve the financial position of the player, which ultimately improves the career opportunities in sports

Ancient and Medieval Period

Ancient India: In ancient India, physical education was an integral part of education, with a strong emphasis on developing the body alongside the mind and spirit. Texts like the Vedas and Upanishads mention physical activity and yoga as means to promote health and spirituality. The Mahabharata and Ramayana also reflect the importance of physical strength and skill in archery, wrestling, and chariot racing. **Medieval India:** During this period, various forms of martial arts flourished across India, including Kalaripayattu in Kerala, Silambam in Tamil Nadu, and Gatka in Punjab, reflecting regional diversity in physical practices. These arts were not only for physical development but also for self-defense and military training.

Colonial Period

British Influence: The British colonial rule introduced the Western system of physical education in India, which was significantly different from the traditional Indian practices. Western sports and games, such as cricket, football, hockey, and athletics, were introduced in schools and colleges. This period marked the beginning of organized sports and physical education in India, although it was primarily accessible to the elite and served colonial interests.

Post-Independence Era

National Policies and Institutions: After gaining independence in 1947, India embarked on a journey to integrate physical education into the national educational framework. The establishment of the National Institute of Sports (NIS) in Patiala in 1961 marked a significant step towards professionalizing sports coaching in India.

- **Schemes and Programs:** Various schemes and programs were launched to promote physical education and sports at the grassroots level. The National Sports Policy of 1984, revised in 2001, aimed at raising the standard of sports in India. The Khelo India programme, launched more recently, seeks to revive the sports culture at the grassroots level by building a strong framework for all sports played in the country and establishing India as a great sporting nation. **International Success and Recognition:** Indian athletes' success in international competitions, including the Olympics, Commonwealth Games, and Asian Games, has significantly contributed to the growth of physical education and sports. These achievements have not only boosted the popularity of various sports but also highlighted the importance of physical education as a career option.

Contemporary Developments

Yoga and Indigenous Practices: There has been a global resurgence of interest in yoga, an ancient Indian practice. The United Nations' declaration of International Yoga Day on June 21, a proposal led by India, exemplifies yoga's international recognition. Additionally, traditional games and sports are being revitalized as part of the physical education curriculum.

Challenges and Opportunities: Despite these advancements, physical education in India faces challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, lack of professional training for educators, and underfunding.

However, the increasing awareness of health and fitness, coupled with India's demographic advantage, presents significant opportunities for the growth and development of physical education.

The evolution of physical education in India reflects a blend of traditional values and modern practices, aimed at developing holistic health and well-being. As India continues to grow on the global stage, physical education and sports are likely to play increasingly important roles in shaping the nation's health, culture, and international standing.

CONCLUSION:

Quality of physical activity programming also is critical; psychosocial outcomes and improvements in specific motor skills, for example, are likely the result of programming designed specifically to target these outcomes rather than just a result of increases in physical activity per se. These psychosocial outcomes also are likely to lead to increased levels of physical activity in both the short and long terms, thereby conferring greater health benefits. Unstructured physical activity or free play also confers unique benefits and is an important supplement to more structured opportunities. Quality physical activity programming that makes these activities attractive, accessible, and safe for children and youth of all skill and fitness levels is critical to ensure that all youth participate in these activities and can therefore derive the health benefits. Sedentary activities, such as screen viewing and excessive time spent sitting, may contribute to health risks both because of an independent of their impact on physical activity. Thus specific efforts in school to reduce sedentary behaviors, such as through classroom and playground design and reduction of television viewing, are warranted.

In sum, a comprehensive physical activity plan with physical education at the core, supplemented by other varied opportunities for and an environment supportive of physical activity throughout the day, would make an important contribution to children's health and development, thereby enhancing their readiness to learn.

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