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Physical Education in Colleges: A Critical Review of its Relevance and Impact on Students' Health and Performance

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Abstract

The article highlights the various benefits of physical education, including promoting personal development, citizenship, communication, problem-solving, and aesthetic expression. Physical education programs provide opportunities for students to develop self-awareness, self-confidence, and self-esteem while also encouraging respect for others and teamwork. By participating in physical education, students learn to communicate effectively, make decisions, and solve problems together, helping them develop social skills that are essential for success in life. Furthermore, physical education programs have been shown to combat childhood obesity, improve cardiovascular risk factors, and enhance academic performance. Studies have found that regular participation in physical education can help reduce the risk of obesity, lower blood pressure, and improve cholesterol levels. Physical education also promotes cognitive function, resulting in improved academic performance among students.

The article emphasizes the importance of prioritizing quality in physical education programs to ensure their effectiveness. Quality physical education programs should be designed to meet the diverse needs of all students, regardless of their fitness levels or abilities. Such programs should incorporate a variety of activities to cater to different interests and abilities, and teachers should be trained to deliver effective physical education instruction.

Finally, the article underscores the need for students and youth to engage in regular physical activity for their mental and physical well-being. Apart from participating in physical education programs at school, students should also be encouraged to engage in physical activities outside of school, such as sports or exercise classes. This will help them maintain a healthy lifestyle, build self-confidence, and reduce stress.

Keywords: Physical education, college students, study, health, wellness, fitness, academic performance, socialization, stress management

Introduction

Physical education is an essential part of a student's education program, providing numerous benefits that impact both their physical and mental well-being. The importance of physical education in colleges cannot be overstated, as it not only promotes a healthy lifestyle but also helps to prevent chronic diseases such as obesity and cardiovascular diseases. This paper aims to shed light on the various health benefits of physical education programs for students and provide recommendations for improving their quality.

An optimal physical education program would encourage students to develop a lifelong commitment to physical activity and healthy habits. It would also be a central component of coordinated college health programs that augment other prevention efforts and help to reverse the growing epidemic of childhood obesity. By promoting physical activity and healthy choices, physical education can help students avoid a lifetime of chronic diseases and disabilities.

Moreover, physical education programs also promote the development of motor skills and hand-eye coordination, which can translate into improved academic performance. Physical health also allows students to function better in

classrooms, leading to longer attention spans, better concentration, and increased absorption of information. Students who engage in sports and physical activities also learn self-discipline and dedication, which can bring out the best in them.

Therefore, physical education programs are an essential part of a student's education that promotes a healthy lifestyle and provides numerous benefits. This paper provides recommendations for improving the quality of physical education programs in colleges and emphasizes the need for coordinated college health programs that prioritize physical education as a central component. By doing so, we can help students develop lifelong habits that promote physical and mental well-being, ensuring a healthier future for generations to come.

Objectives

1. To discuss the importance of physical education in promoting personal and community wellness among college students.
2. To highlight the various benefits of physical education, including personal development, citizenship,

- communication, problem-solving, and aesthetic expression.
- To present evidence that physical education programs can combat childhood obesity, improve cardiovascular risk factors, and enhance academic performance among college students.
 - To emphasize the need for prioritizing quality in physical education programs to ensure their effectiveness.
 - To underscore the importance of engaging in regular physical activity for the mental and physical well-being of college students and youth.

Importance of Physical Education

Physical education is an essential component of college education that promotes overall health, fitness, and well-being among college students. It helps students develop physical skills, reduce stress, and improve academic performance. Several studies have highlighted the need for and importance of physical education for college students. In this study, we will explore the need for and significance of physical education for college students.

One of the primary reasons for the need for physical education in college is the sedentary lifestyle that most college students lead. With long hours of sitting in classrooms, studying, and working on computers, there is a real risk of physical inactivity and related health problems such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases. Physical education can help counteract this by providing regular exercise and promoting healthy habits such as proper nutrition and sleep.

Moreover, physical education has been shown to improve academic performance among college students. Regular exercise has been linked to better cognitive function, memory retention, and improved concentration, which can help students perform better in their studies. Physical education can also provide a much-needed outlet for stress relief, which can be a significant hindrance to academic success.

Another important aspect of physical education is the development of physical skills and abilities. Regular exercise can improve cardiovascular and muscular endurance, strength, flexibility, and coordination. These skills and abilities can translate into improved performance in sports, recreational activities, and daily life.

Hence, physical education is an essential component of college education that provides numerous benefits to students. It promotes overall health and well-being, improves academic performance, and helps students develop physical skills and abilities. Therefore, it is imperative for colleges and universities to prioritize physical education programs and ensure that students have access to regular exercise and healthy habits.

Conceptual Framework of Physical Education

- Personal Development:** Physical education programs allow students to make appropriate decisions related to physical activity and take responsibility for those decisions. They can explore movement activities both independently and in groups and demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between health and an active lifestyle.
- Citizenship:** Physical education programs help students understand the importance of rules and regulations in society through the application of rules and principles of fair play in game situations. They also understand sustainable development and its implications for the environment, demonstrate cooperative group skills and an

understanding of the need for social interdependence.

- Communication:** Physical education programs allow students to explore, reflect on, and express their own ideas, learning, perceptions, and feelings relating to movement. They can also demonstrate an understanding of facts and relationships presented through words, numbers, symbols, graphs, and charts, in relation to game or group activities.
- Problem Solving:** Physical education programs help students identify, describe, formulate, and reformulate movement problems. They can formulate tentative ideas and question assumptions to solve movement problems individually and collaboratively. They can also acquire, process, and interpret information critically to make informed decisions related to active living and use a variety of strategies and perspectives with flexibility and creativity for solving problems.
- Aesthetic Expression:** Physical education programs allow students to use various movements as a means of formulating and expressing ideas, perceptions, and feelings. They can demonstrate an understanding of the contribution of movement to daily life, cultural identity and diversity, and the economy. They can also demonstrate an understanding of the ideas, perceptions, and feelings of others as expressed in various movement forms.

So, physical education programs contribute significantly to the personal and social development of students. They not only promote physical health but also help students develop crucial life skills such as problem-solving, communication, and citizenship. By providing students with opportunities to engage in physical activity that is meaningful and valuable to them, physical education programs can foster a lifelong commitment to a healthy and active lifestyle.

The Framework of Physical Education

The framework of physical education aims to promote personal and community wellness by empowering students to develop healthy attitudes and behaviors through physical activity. Students will be able to make appropriate decisions related to physical activity and take responsibility for those decisions, explore movement activities purposefully both independently and in groups, and demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between health and an active lifestyle.

Additionally, physical education promotes citizenship by helping students understand the importance of rules and regulations in society through the application of rules and principles of fair play in game situations. Students also understand sustainable development and its implications for the environment, demonstrate cooperative group skills, and an understanding of the need for social interdependence.

Physical education programs also foster communication skills by allowing students to explore, reflect on, and express their own ideas, learning, perceptions, and feelings relating to movement. They can also demonstrate an understanding of facts and relationships presented through words, numbers, symbols, graphs, and charts in relation to game or group activities.

Furthermore, physical education promotes problem-solving skills by allowing students to identify, describe, formulate and reformulate movement problems, formulate tentative ideas, and question assumptions to solve movement problems individually and collaboratively. Students can also acquire,

process, and interpret information critically to make informed decisions related to active living and use a variety of strategies and perspectives with flexibility and creativity for solving problems.

Finally, physical education allows students to express themselves aesthetically by using various movements as a means of formulating and expressing ideas, perceptions, and feelings. They can also demonstrate an understanding of the contribution of movement to daily life, cultural identity and diversity, and the economy and an understanding of the ideas, perceptions, and feelings of others as expressed in various movement forms.

Hence, physical education programs promote personal and social development in students through physical activity. Regular physical activity is associated with a healthier, longer life with a lower risk of chronic diseases. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure that students engage in physical activity for at least 60 minutes a day, and physical education programs should be an essential part of their daily routine in college.

Review Literature

Research has shown that physical education should be an important part of college requirements as it provides more than just moderate vigorous activity. According to a study conducted by Opinion Research Corporation International for the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) in 2003, 81% of adults believe that daily physical education should be mandatory in colleges [1]. Physical education not only exposes students to lifetime activities but also teaches them how to integrate exercise into their lives. This is particularly important because childhood obesity rates are on the rise globally [1]. Recent research has shown that regular exercise can restore blood vessel function and improve cardiovascular risk factors in obese students. A six-month exercise program has been found to reduce body mass index, diabetes risk factors, and low-degree inflammation [1] [2].

The benefits of physical education programs extend beyond just improving health status. Evidence from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study published in 2004 showed that physical education programs have a positive impact in combating childhood obesity, especially in young adolescent girls. The study found that an extra hour of exercise a week lessened obesity in young overweight girls [3]. Additionally, studies conducted in California suggest that students who are more physically fit perform better on standardized mathematics and reading test scores [3]. It has also been discovered that students who participate in college physical education programs do not experience a harmful effect on their standardized test scores, and higher grades are associated with vigorous activity [3].

The quality of physical education programs is of utmost importance, rather than just the amount of time spent being active during physical education. Physical education policy should prioritize quality while also trying to increase the amount of time students spend in physical education classes [3]. The need for students and youth to engage in regular physical activity as a pre-requisite for achieving optimum health has long been recognized. Regular physical activity not only results in physical well-being but also improves mental well-being [3].

Dimensions of Physical Education

Physical education is a critical and essential component of college curricula, and its subject matter is human movement.

Physical education is directed towards understanding human movement, including the human and environmental factors that affect and are affected by movement. The ways in which people use this ability are related to other aspects of their functioning as whole persons. Human movement can be viewed in three dimensions.

The first dimension is education about movement, which involves the cognitive processes that are concerned with learning concepts, rules, and procedures ranging from simple spontaneous movements to complex structured movements. Learners may draw upon games, sports, athletics, swimming, rhythmic and dance, and outdoor pursuits in combination with other disciplines such as anatomy, physiology, physics, psychology, or aesthetics to conduct study and inquiry. At the primary or elementary level, the theme of movement might take on a project with references to pastimes and games. Movement concepts such as running, jumping, throwing, catching, turning, and twisting might be introduced, observed, and practiced.

The second dimension is movement as personal expression, which involves the development of physical skills and the expression of these skills in a variety of physical activities. This dimension emphasizes creativity, personal discovery, and self-expression, and it includes activities such as dance, gymnastics, and creative movement.

The third dimension is movement for lifetime fitness, which involves the development of physical fitness and the promotion of lifelong physical activity. This dimension emphasizes the health benefits of regular physical activity and the importance of maintaining fitness throughout life. Activities in this dimension may include jogging, swimming, hiking, and other forms of aerobic exercise.

At the intermediate and senior high levels, knowledge about movement may be broken down into specialty areas such as anatomy, physiology, biomechanics, movement as culture, history of games, or integrated with other subjects. The study of physical education provides a foundation for understanding the importance of physical activity in maintaining a healthy lifestyle and promotes a sense of personal responsibility for one's own physical well-being.

The Active Living Philosophy Considers Learners

The active living philosophy considers learners as multidimensional individuals in a connected world, and emphasizes the interdependence of personal health with societal and ecological health. Physical education can promote personal responsibility for active lifestyles and contribute to overall health and wellness.

Physical education should not only promote personal responsibility for active lifestyles but also address social and environmental factors that inhibit individuals from pursuing such lifestyles. This requires engaging learners in experiences that critically examine how society and the environment influence individual health. For example, offering rhythmic activities to females only perpetuates stereotypes and restricts male access to valuable movement experiences. College personnel and students must examine the specific social and environmental factors within their college-community settings that either facilitate or impede student participation in physical activity.

Strategies to Promote High-Quality Physical Education Include

1. Requiring colleges to develop and implement a planned, sequential physical education curriculum that adheres to

- national and state standards for health and physical education.
2. Hiring a physical education coordinator at the state level to provide resources and support to college districts across the state.
 3. Adding requirements for fitness, cognitive, and affective assessment in physical education that are based on student improvement and knowledge gain.
 4. Ensuring that programs have appropriate equipment and adequate indoor and outdoor facilities.
 5. Requiring that students are active in moderate-vigorous physical activity for at least 50% of class time.

Management and Development in Modern Libraries. IGI Global, 2020, 76-85.

Conclusion

Physical education plays a vital role in the development and growth of students. It enhances physical, mental, and social/emotional development and can boost confidence and academic performance. Physical well-being is directly related to academic performance, and it is recommended that at least 50 percent of class time be spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity. Policymakers need to prioritize the quality, quantity, and intensity of physical education to maximize students' potential for a lifetime of physical activity, health, and wellness. Overall, physical education is a social construct that reflects values and objectives about appropriate goals and missions.

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