

Challenges Faced by Principals in Implementing Physical Education in Public Secondary Schools in Githunguri District

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to establish the challenges faced by principals in implementing Physical Education in public secondary schools in Githunguri district. This study covered the following objectives; to find out the curriculum coverage, availability of trained personnel, status of facilities and the attitude of teachers and students towards Physical Education. The study adopted survey design and was guided by curriculum theory. The study targeted 30 principals, 180 Physical Education teachers and 720 students of the form 2 and 3 classes in the 30 public secondary schools in Githunguri district. The study randomly sampled 30% of the 30 schools. Purposive sampling technique was used to sample the 54 Physical Education teachers and 72 students. The study sampled 30% of the teacher and 10% of the student. This resulted to 9 principals, 54 Physical Education teachers and 72 students. Questionnaires for the students and interview schedules for the principals and teachers were used for data collection. Validity of the research instruments was ensured by discussing with the supervisor and colleagues. Reliability was ensured by undertaking a pre-test and calculating the Cronbach coefficient. The research utilized descriptive statistics and presented them in tables and graphs. The study found that there is no enough time provided for Physical Education. Physical Education is not adequately staffed and there are no facilities in school for Physical Education. The condition of the available facilities is poor. The attitude of the majority of Physical Education teachers towards the lesson is negative. The principals should be sensitized on the importance of Physical Education to understand their role in the implementation of the Physical Education curriculum. Every school should be mandated to provide the necessary facilities needed for Physical Education curriculum. Research findings may enable the Ministry of Education in development of Physical Education curriculum and to identify challenges facing its implementation in secondary. Academia also benefit from the study as basis for further study.

Keywords: Physical Education, curriculum coverage, secondary schools, teachers attitude and trained personnel.

Background of the Study

Physical Education is the process by which changes in the individual are bought about through movements' experiences according to (Brooker, 2006). Physical Education aims not only at physical development but is also concerned with education of the whole person through physical activities. Physical Education (P.E.) is a course taken during primary and secondary education that encourages psychomotor learning in a play or movement exploration setting in Kenya as asserted by (Arnold, 2000). This therefore illustrates how important the Physical Education is to the students. In order for them to improve their psychomotor, they need to exercise through playing or participate in games. It is crucial to health, fitness and well-being. It builds strength, maintains mobility, and challenges body and mind. It provides a foundation for active living and, at its best fosters interests which continue for a lifetime asserts (Pangrazi, 2007). Concerns have been raised concerning fitness and participation in physical activities of young children.

High schools students reported a dramatic rise in childhood obesity amongst both boys and girls in Scotland. The Surgeon General's Report in United States Department of Health and Human Services, 1996 demonstrated a clear link between inactivity levels and health problems in children and youth, government bodies and health promoters have developed many initiatives to improve young people's health and fitness. Ministries of Education, driven by concerns for young people's health and fitness, have developed new P.E. curricula in most Canadian provinces asserts (Luke, 2000). In the fall 1999, Nova Scotia released a new PE curriculum for grades 7 – 9, midway through a four-year phase-in period of new P.E. curricula for all grade levels says (Penney, 2001). The goal of this curriculum was to enable students to become physically educated persons "who lead physically active lifestyles" says (Krousas, 2009). It defines objectives on several levels from general "essential graduated learnings" to specific outcomes for each grade level, in each movement category. The curriculum presents five movement categories: active living, outdoor activities, sport experience, dance, and educational gymnastics.

In the United States, most schools do not even meet the minimum recommendations for physical activity of 50 to 200 minutes a week, according to a 1997 National Association for Sport and Physical Education survey according to (Bunker, & Thorpe, 2007). Even if the kids have a regular Physical Education class they may not be getting any real exercise. In some schools PE class was just another period of recess. Budget cuts and lack of teacher training is really a problem. The percentage of youngsters who are overweight has more than

doubled in the past 30 years.

According to Ongong'a, Okwara & Okello (2010) in their study on sports and secondary schools in Kenya revealed that in the Kenyan curriculum, Physical Education is included formally in the timetable and is allocated one period of forty minutes in the lower secondary section form 1 and 2 and two periods in the upper secondary section form 3 and form 4. Less formally, every school is expected to have a games department and a games teacher. In addition, the authors observed that the government of Kenya made Physical Education compulsory and examinable at school level in 2002. However, despite the effort of the government and Physical Education being integrated in the school's curriculum, the study revealed that there is little emphasis and impact of Physical Education in schools.

Physical education (PE) was introduced to Kenya by colonial administrators, settlers, teachers and Christian missionaries during the colonial period. Much emphasis was placed on military drills and activities which were performed in regimented movements and perhaps the most striking element of the pre-independence PE was the lack of relevance to indigenous culture and traditions (Wamukoya, 1994., & Nteere, 1982). After independence, PE was envisaged as contributing to healthier lifestyle, building inter-group relations and fostering integration. Amid various education commissions and changes in the education system in Kenya, PE continues to be regarded as a subject that offers no opportunity for advancement both within and outside the formal education structure (Wamukoya, 1994).

According to (Ongong'a, 2010) "Lack of policies for national PE; programme is elaborated but not totally carried out (and is in) need of some changes, it is not updated; Directors in PE are not specialists; government contributions are not enough; lack of infrastructure; lack of materials, resources, facilities and maintenance: there is not the appropriate environment for teaching; lack of time for teaching - the time assigned in the curriculum is too short to reach the objectives;; (there is) a national policy (but) the government does not take care of it; there are laws but they are not followed..." The commission recommends that PE be taught in all schools and some survival skills such as self-defense, fire drills, road safety and, where applicable, live saving in swimming be incorporated in PE in order to make the subject more appealing and meaningful (Koech, 1999).

Statement of the Problem

Despite the importance of Physical Education and despite the subject being incorporated in the Kenyan teacher's training curriculum and the government having made Physical Education compulsory and examinable. According to (Ongong'a, 2010) research indicates that there is virtually no inspection on implementation of this important curriculum, there is also little emphasis put on it in schools. It has been reported that some schools emphasize more on academic excellence. The researcher has also observed that there is limited literature on status of Physical Education in Kenya and more so in Githunguri district, this study intends to fill this gap by undertaking this study to find out whether there are adequate facilities to facilitate the implementation of Physical Education in schools, whether the schools cover the Physical Education curriculum, whether there are trained personnel to implement Physical Education in these schools and the perception of the teachers and students towards Physical Education.

Despite the importance of Physical Education, and despite the subject being incorporated in the Kenyan curriculum and the government made Physical Education compulsory and examinable asserts (Ongong'a, 2010) research indicates that there is virtually no inspection on implementation of this important curriculum, there is also little emphasis put on it in schools.

Physical Education has been and still is one of the key non-examinable subjects in the school curriculum. The commission was however very disappointed to find out that in some schools PE is not taught at all while in some other schools it is only taught once in a while. In most of the schools where PE was 'being taught', the learners were left on their own to play any game they pleased. In view of the important role of PE in the learners' physical and social development, and considering that Kenya is a sporting nation of international repute, there is need to strengthen this subject in schools (Koech, 1999). It is on the strength of this recommendation that the study is based.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to establish the challenges faced by Principals while implementing Physical Education in public secondary schools in Githunguri District.

Research Objectives

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

- i. To find out the curriculum coverage of Physical Education in public secondary schools in Githunguri district.
- ii. To examine the availability of trained personnel for implementation of Physical Education in public secondary schools in Githunguri district.

- iii. To establish the status of facilities for implementation of Physical Education curriculum in public secondary schools in Githunguri district.
- iv. To establish the attitude of teachers and students towards Physical Education curriculum in public secondary school in Githunguri district.

Limitations of the Study

The busy schedule of principals and teachers made it inconvenient thus leaving very little time to be interviewed and/or to look for requested data. Booking appointments also inconvenienced the teachers as was expected to be in classes teaching. The researcher had inadequate finance to cover a large sample size. The study was limited to a small number which affected the study outcome. The researcher tried and ensured the data collected reflects what is in the ground. Some areas were impassible due to poor road network and rainy season. The researcher used motorbike to access those areas which appear to be inaccessible.

Research Design and Methodology

The study used a survey design. The study population was drawn from the 30 public secondary schools in Githunguri district. The study involved one class of form 2 and one form 3 classes from each school. There were approximately 40 students in each class. This gave a total of 80 students per school. There were approximately 20 teachers in each school. The 30 principals from the schools were also targeted. This study drew a sample of 9 schools from the 30 public secondary schools in Githunguri district which is 30% representation of total schools in the District (Jwan, 2010). The schools were randomly sampled. 30% of the 180 teachers were selected through simple random sampling. The study purposively sampled all the 9 principals from the 9 secondary schools. This gave a sample of 9 principals and 54 Physical Education teachers. The teachers were used in this study because they gave data on the Physical Education programme in their schools. The P.E. teachers were randomly selected. The study used purposive sampling to sample all the 9 principals in the 9 schools. The study involved only one class of form 2 and 3 because they are most informed of how Physical Education is handled in their schools. There are about 40 form two and three students from each class in the district. The study sampled 10% of the students' population of 720 to give a sample of 72 students. This therefore gave a total of 135 respondents as the sample size. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used as research instruments. In addition, document analysis was employed to supplement the sources of information. The objectives of the study were analyzed thematically. They were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics was computed for presenting and analyzing the data. Findings were presented in form of frequency tables, graphs, pie charts and the necessary measures of variances for interpretation.

Results and Discussion

Curriculum Coverage of Physical Education Curriculum

The researcher studied the number of times physical education lesson is held, the adequacy of the time provided for physical education, the most important curriculum between school and physical education and the preference of teachers in spending more time on physical education than on school curriculum.

Table 1 Number of times Physical Education lesson are held

Number of times	Frequency	Percentage
Thrice a week	10	15%
Twice a week	11	16%
Once a week	45	66%
Not at all	2	3%
Total	68	100%

From Table 1, majority 45 (66%) of the student respondents indicated that they hold physical education once in a week. A few 11 (16%) held Physical Education lesson twice a week while 10 (15%) held PE lessons thrice a week. Some states that had a PE requirement in the 1980's no longer have one. A few states have increased requirements slightly. Other legislatures have stated that time allotted for PE should be increased, but have not taken assertive action to do so (Kinchin and Sullivan, 2003; Light, 2008). This indicates that Physical Education is not taken seriously in secondary schools in Githunguri district.

Table 2: The time provided for Physical Education is enough

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	13	19%
No	55	81%
I don't know	0	0%
Total	68	100%

From Table 2, majority 55 (81%) of the student respondents indicated that the time provided for physical education is not enough. Taking an example of United States in the implementation of Physical Education in secondary schools, it is found that Despite well-publicized efforts by the United States government to promote Physical Education in schools, the actual time students spend in PE has gone down in recent years (Luke, 2000). This indicates that Physical Education curriculum in schools is not allocated the required time by the schools management in Githunguri district.

Table 3 Preference between school curriculum and Physical Education curriculum

Response	Frequency	Percentage
School curriculum	17	25%
Physical curriculum	41	60%
Both are important	10	15%
Total	68	100%

From Table 3, majority 41 (60%) of the student respondents indicated that they find physical curriculum as more important than school curriculum. A few 17 (25%) indicated that school curriculum as more important than the school curriculum while 10 (15%) find both school and physical curriculum as important. Njoroge (2000) asserts that in all the teachers colleges, PE is obligatory for every teacher trainee and must be taken regardless of interest, age, gender or physical condition. Perhaps for this reason, student teachers in general seem to associate the subject with a low esteem. They generally lack enthusiasm, fail to understand the role of PE in child development and show little knowledge about the aims and objectives of PE as a subject. This indicates that Physical Education curriculum in schools should be encouraged in order to improve its implementation in secondary schools.

Availability of Trained Personnel for Implementation of Physical Education Curriculum

The researcher studied the number of teachers in charge of Physical Education, the presence of both male and female teachers in Physical Education department, the insurance by principals that there are trained teachers to handle Physical Education and the performance of students representing the school in games activities.

Table 4 Number of teachers in charge of Physical Education

Number of teachers	Frequency	Percentage
1-3 teachers	48	71%
3-6 teachers	20	29%
Above 6	0	0%
Total	68	100%

From Table 4, majority 48 (71%) of the student respondents indicated that the number of teachers in charge of Physical Education are between 1 – 3 teachers. A few 20 (29%) indicated that they have 3 – 6 teachers for Physical Education. There was no school which had more than 6 PE teachers. According to Luke (2000) there is a well-known obesity epidemic among young people. Recognition of this has led to new dietary guidelines and healthier food offerings at school. PE classes are forced to compete for limited class time and resources.

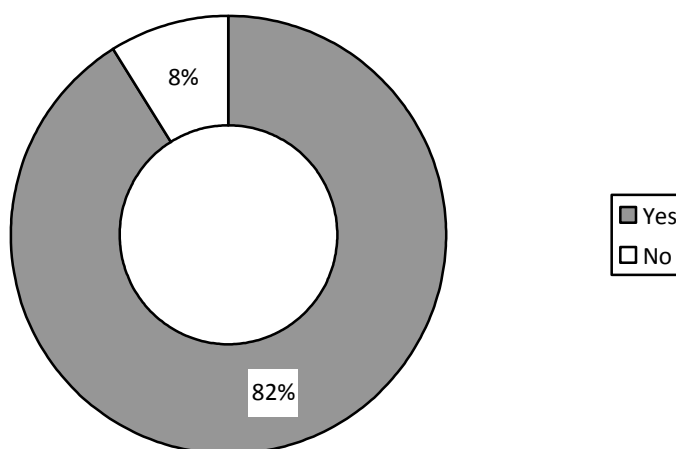


Figure 1 Principals should ensure that there are trained teachers/personnel to handle Physical Education

The Figure 1 findings show that a majority 56 (82%) of the student respondents indicated that the principals should ensure that there are trained teachers/personnel to handle Physical Education. A few (8%) indicated that the principals should not ensure that there are trained teachers to handle Physical Education. Physical Education teachers in secondary schools are either matriculate 10 years regular study and have one year diploma in Physical Education or retired army soldiers having no training in Physical Education (Penney, 2001). Whereas the situation even worse in private schools, where usually untrained teachers work as Physical Education teachers. This state of affairs leads to the narrow view of Physical Education, restricted to only games and playing. Physical Education needs to be promoted in Pakistan. There are two basic elements in the development of Physical Education: attitude towards Physical Education and physical facilities. This indicates that the students perceive training of Physical Education teachers as crucial in the implementation of Physical Education curriculum in secondary schools.

Table 5 Performance of students representing the school in games activities

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very good performers in class	39	57%
Good performers in class	8	12%
Average performers in class	21	31%
Very poor performers in class	0	0%
Poor performers in class	0	0%
Total	68	100%

From Table 5, majority 39 (57%) of the student respondents indicated that the performance of students representing the school in games activities is very good. A few 21 (31%) indicated that the students representing their schools perform averagely in class. There was no respondent who indicated that the students in games perform poorly academically. (Locke, 2002) related that Quaid-i-Azam regarded the pursuit of Physical Education and sports as an integral part of the educational process, it made strong an individual physically, mentally and morally. This education supports in learning discipline and develop the habit of team work. Physical Education is necessary for healthy mind and healthy body. This indicates that the students who participate in Physical Education are active and therefore influence their performance.

Status of Facilities for implementation of Physical Education Curriculum

The study investigated the frequency of replacement of Physical Education equipment in school, the condition of the facilities available for Physical Education, Physical Education facilities available being outdated and the facilities available in school for Physical Education.

Table 6 There are facilities in school for Physical Education

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	16	24%
No	52	76%
I don't know	0	0%
Total	68	100%

From Table 6, majority 52 (76%) of the student respondents indicated that there are no facilities in school for Physical Education. A few 16 (24%) agreed that there are facilities in school for Physical Education. Silverman and Subramaniam (1999) stated that attitude development is important because teachers, coaches and the society regard daily attitudes as a form of assessment for them and for assessing other peoples strengths. It was prudent to establish the attitudes of Teacher-Trainees towards P.E at college level. These Teacher-Trainees may carry-over their attitudes towards P.E to the children who will be under their jurisdiction upon graduation from college.

Table 7 The condition of the facilities available for Physical Education

Condition of facilities	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	0	0%
Good	10	15%
Poor	41	60%
Very poor	17	25%
Total	68	100%

From Table 8, majority 58 (85%) of the student respondents indicated that the condition of the facilities available for Physical Education is poor. In a study on the state and status of Physical Education worldwide (Hardman & Marshall, 2006) observed that the quality of facilities for Physical Education in most countries were below average and were limited in quantity. This was particularly the case in economically underdeveloped countries. This indicates that Physical Education facilities need to improve. This can be done by increasing the school's

budget allocation in Physical Education.

Table 8 Physical Education facilities available are outdated

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	8	12%
Agree	52	76%
Undecided	0	0%
Disagree	8	12%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	68	100%

From Table 8, majority 52 (76%) of the student respondents agreed that the Physical Education facilities available are outdated. This agrees with (Hardman & Marshall, 2006) who revealed that quality of facilities was rated as below average/inadequate in all Central and Latin American countries and 67% of African countries. In Europe, there was a marked geo-political differentiation in quality and quantity of facilities and equipment. There was also a problem of low/poor levels of maintenance of existing Physical Education sites in 83% of the African countries.

Table 9 Frequency of replacement of Physical Education equipment in school

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Quite frequently	7	10%
Frequently	7	10%
Rarely	38	56%
Hardly	16	24%
Total	68	100%

From Table 9, majority 54 (80%) of the student respondents indicated that the Physical Education facilities are rarely replaced in their schools. A few 14 (20%) respondents indicated that the frequency of replacement of physical education is frequently. The findings are reflected by Hildrebrand and Johnson (2001) who found that when college students take a P.E class and are competent in the activity, there is greater likelihood of continued participation throughout life. Similarly, Koca, Asci and Demirham (2005) opined that students have positive attitudes towards physical education because of the desire to be successful or spend their time without pressure of academic success in P.E lessons. This is important to Teacher-Trainees who may be having their certificate courses as terminal in formal education. This indicates that the students lack the required management of Physical Education facilities.

Attitude of Teachers and Students towards Physical Education Curriculum

The fourth objective sought to establish the attitude of teachers and students towards Physical Education curriculum in public secondary schools. The study probed the attitude of Physical Education teachers towards the lesson, the provision of more time by the Ministry of Education for Physical Education, extent to which Physical Education teachers show support for the lesson, importance of having a positive attitude towards Physical Education and the determinants of the attitude towards Physical Education.

Table 10 The Physical Education teachers have a positive attitude towards the lesson

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	6	9%
No	52	76%
No idea	10	15%
Total	68	100%

From Table 10, majority 52 (76%) of the student respondents indicated that the attitude of Physical Education teachers have a negative attitude towards Physical Education lesson. A few 10 (15%) had no idea while 6 (9%) agreed that the attitude of Physical Education teachers have a negative attitude towards the lesson. Positive attitude motivates students to engage in physical activities which contribute to their development, not only physically but also emotionally, socially, mentally while negative attitudes on the other hand tend to hinder such development (Shamshoum, 2003). This indicates that the teachers need motivation and awareness of the importance of Physical Education curriculum in schools.

Table 11 Positive attitude is important in order to enjoy Physical Education

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	41	60%
Agree	12	18%
Undecided	0	0%
Disagree	6	9%
Strongly disagree	9	13%
Total	68	100%

From Table 11, majority 53 (78%) of the student respondents indicated that it is important to have a positive attitude towards Physical Education in order to enjoy it. A positive attitude towards Physical Education and physical facilities are required to promote Physical Education in schools. Therefore, schools at all levels should develop and encourage positive attitudes toward physical exercise, providing opportunities to learn physical skills and to perform physical activities. The attitude towards Physical Education is mainly determined by curriculum content, class atmosphere, teacher behavior, dressing out, and self-perception (Krouscas, 2009). This indicates that the teachers need to have a positive attitude towards Physical Education in order for them to implement its curriculum in schools.

Table 12 Determinants of the attitude towards physical education

Determinant	Agree	Disagree
Curriculum content	26 (34%)	42 (66%)
Class atmosphere	47 (76%)	21 (14%)
Teacher behavior	38 (58%)	31 (44%)
Dressing out	21 (24%)	47 (76%)
Self-perception	27 (36%)	41 (64%)

From Table 12, majority 42 (66%) of the student respondents indicated that curriculum content of Physical Education does not determine the attitude towards physical education. A few 42 (66%) disagreed to the statement. A majority 47 (76%) agreed that the class atmosphere determines the attitude towards physical education. A majority 38 (58%) of the students agreed that teachers behavior is a determinant of the attitude towards physical education. A majority 47 (76%) of the students disagreed that dressing out and self-perception determines the attitude towards physical education. (Russell, 2002) indicated that Participation in physical activities helps physically vigor and promotes clear thinking mentally, it is common phrase that a sound mind is in a sound body.

Conclusions

It can be concluded that the time provided for physical education is not enough. The physical education curriculum is taken as more important than school curriculum by the students. The teachers prefer spending more time on Physical Education than on the school curriculum. It can be concluded that Physical Education is not adequately staffed. This affects the implementation of the physical education curriculum in the secondary schools. The schools do not have both male and female teachers in the Physical Education department.

There are no facilities in school for Physical Education. The condition of the available facilities is poor. The Physical Education facilities available are also outdated. The school management rarely replaces the Physical Education facilities. It can be concluded that the attitude of the majority of Physical Education teachers towards the Physical Education lesson is negative.

Recommendations

The principals should be sensitized on the importance of physical education curriculum for students so as to understand their role and involvement in the implementation of the Physical Education curriculum in secondary schools. Every school should be mandated to have trained personnel for Physical Education this will enhance the implementation of Physical Education curriculum in secondary schools. These principals should be advised on the need to include physical education facilities in the school budget. This will make the Physical education enjoyable and easy to be taught.

Summary of Findings

The findings on curriculum coverage of Physical Education in public secondary schools in Githunguri district revealed that a majority of the student respondents indicated that they hold physical education once in a week. Majority of the student respondents indicated that the time provided for physical education is not enough. Majority of the student respondents indicated that the number of teachers in charge of Physical Education is between 1 – 3 teachers. This affects the implementation of the physical education curriculum in the secondary

schools. Majority of the student respondents indicated that their schools do not have both male and female teachers in the Physical Education department. The findings on status of facilities for implementation of Physical Education curriculum in public secondary schools revealed that a majority of the student respondents indicated that there are no facilities in school for Physical Education.

The findings on the study of the attitude of teachers and students towards Physical Education curriculum in public secondary school revealed that a majority of the student respondents indicated that the Ministry of Education should add more time to Physical Education. Majority of the student respondents indicated that the attitude of Physical Education teachers towards the Physical Education lesson is negative. This indicates that the teachers need motivation and awareness of the importance of Physical Education curriculum in schools. Majority of the student respondents indicated that it is to a small extent that the Physical Education teachers show support for the lesson.

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