

Obstacles to Conducting Physical Education and Sports Lessons in Primary Schools From the Perspective of Subject Teachers

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Abstract:

This study aims to identify the main obstacles to conducting physical education and sports lessons in primary schools from the perspective of subject teachers. The research sample consisted of 30 physical education and sports teachers in the primary school stage from the provinces of Guelma and M'Sila. We utilized the descriptive method in this study, as it is suitable for the nature of the research topic. We reached the following conclusions:

- There are obstacles related to the material resources of the institution.
- There are obstacles related to the developmental features of primary school students.
- There are obstacles related to the features of the subject, its delivery method, and the curriculum contents.
- There are obstacles related to the perspective of the administrative and pedagogical staff towards the subject of physical education and sports.

Keywords: Obstacles , Physical education lessons, Primary schools.

Introduction and Problem statement:

The Ministry of National Education has clarified in a document addressed to the Directors of Education that physical education and sports is a mandatory subject prescribed at all levels of primary schools.

Specialized teachers, graduates of physical education and sports institutes at the national level, are responsible for teaching physical education lessons. Each teacher takes care of a number of educational groups in the primary school where they are assigned, and if necessary, in one or more other primary schools, as part of achieving the required teaching hours for primary school teachers.

The document also demonstrated that the time allocated for the subject of physical education and sports at this stage is one hour per week for each educational group in the five educational stages. The number of educational groups assigned to a subject teacher is estimated to be a maximum of fifteen groups.

The significant importance of physical education and sports in primary schools is undeniable, as it ensures the instillation of human values during childhood, the development of physical and mental capacities, and the refinement of talents by discovering and nurturing them early in children from different aspects:

Physical Aspect: Managing energy and coordinating the balance of movements on one hand, and what is necessitated to resist fatigue and external pressures that often hinder fulfilling goals on the other hand.

Skill Aspect: Controlling movements and acquiring motor skills related to physical and sports activities as a basic support for managing the body in various situations of daily life.

Emotional Aspect: Controlling impulses and emotions by complying to the values and rules imposed by the game, thus regulating behavior as an individual belonging to a group and lives in a community.

Aesthetic Aspect: Expressing through basic movements the grace of gymnastics and their coordination, adding an artistic aesthetic quality through body control and movement mastery (National Council of Programs, 2023).

By establishing the position of physical education and sports teacher in the primary school, we have taken a giant step towards advancing the subject, which would positively affect our students physically, mentally, psychologically, and socially.

Based on the aforementioned points, the following question arises:

- **What are the obstacles to conducting physical education and sports lessons in primary schools from the perspective of subject teachers?**

Study hypotheses:

- There are obstacles related to the material resources of the institution.
- There are obstacles related to the perspective of the administrative and pedagogical staff towards the subject of physical education and sports.

- There are obstacles related to the developmental features of primary school students.
- There are obstacles related to the features of the subject, its delivery method, and curriculum content.

The concept of physical education and sports lesson:

Physical education and sports lesson is regarded as the smallest unit within the curriculum. It is the basis of every educational program. It should cater to the needs of students, as well as their interests and preferences (Al-Sadiq, Al-Saffar, p. 200).

It is also considered an academic subject, similar to natural sciences and languages. However, it is different from these subjects as it not only provides students with motor skills and experiences but also equips them with a wealth of knowledge and information covering different aspects such as health, psychology, and social interactions. Furthermore, it covers scientific knowledge associated with human body formation through the use of physical activities such as exercises and different games (both group and individual) under the educational supervision of instructors who are prepared for this purpose.

Physical education is defined as " the process of directing physical and motor development in humans through physical exercise, health measures, and other methods that interact with educational tools to develop psychological, social, and moral aspects," This means that the physical education and sports lesson, as one of the practice aspects, also fulfills these goals because at the school level, it ensures comprehensive and balanced growth for students and meets their physical needs according to their age stages. It also accommodates their motor skills progression and offers opportunities for talented individuals to participate in different activities inside and outside the school. In this way, the physical education and sports lesson not only covers the time frame but also fulfills the educational purposes outlined by educational policy in the field of physical and health growth for students at all levels (Basiouni, Al-Shaati, 1992, p. 34).

2. Objectives of the physical education and sports lesson:

The essence of physical education and sports lesson is to contribute to fulfilling specific objectives for each lesson, thereby achieving overall general and comprehensive goals. Among these objectives are:

- Acquiring technical aspects for students to perform different sports skills and movements.

- Promoting students' love for teamwork and collaboration to improve collective work employing organizational methods such as drills, lines, and various formations.
- Instilling in students conscious sporting inclinations and positive attitudes towards physical education through knowledge, information, and athletic abilities and skills.
- Developing positive psychological traits in students that contribute to building and developing their personalities, such as discipline, obedience, courage, initiative, and bravery.
- Improving students' different mental capacities and working on their development through conscious thinking during sports activities and executing game plans, as well as exhibiting behaviors in various situations.
- Cultivating in students the values of beauty through expressive movement and innovative performance, as well as promoting good posture (Mahasneh, 2006).

3. Characteristics of the physical education and sports teacher:

- Self-control: The teacher who has self-control can also lead others.
- Self-confidence: The teacher should behave as if he expects the students to show their desires.
- Ability to face the first challenge to the system with determination and strength: Often, some students attempt to test the new teacher, and successfully meeting the challenge firmly prevents the recurrence of such attempts.
- If there is doubt about a student's mistake, experience has demonstrated that silence is better than giving a lecture on character and sportsmanship.
- Remember that the majority of students in the classroom tend to obey the teacher's directions and act accordingly.
- Know your subject well to avoid embarrassing situations resulting from an inability to answer a question in the core of your work, as such situations reflect poorly on classroom discipline.
- Consider that disobedience or showing some defiance or fallacy by some students is not a personal insult directed at you, and attempt to address the situation on that basis.
- Act quickly and according to a known and established system so that the student knows what to expect as a result of certain actions. The student's lack of knowledge of the established system causes anxiety and rises the likelihood of disrupting the system (Ibrahim, 2000, pp. 206, 205).

4. Features of Children in Primary School Stage:

A- Key Features of Children in the First Stage of Primary School:

Social Aspect:

- Dominated by self-centered behavior.
- Limited interaction to those he sees as close to him.
- Avoids appearing in front of others for fear of ridicule.

Psychological Aspect:

- Often quick to react.
- Moody (quick to anger, quick to joy).
- Gets bored quickly.
- Does not consider consequences.

Cognitive Aspect:

- Has some acquired knowledge from home and in his close environment.
- Loves to explore and discover.
- Enjoys imitation even at the expense of his own ability.

Motor Aspect:

- Physique is still fragile.
- Dominated by random (excessive) movements.
- Doesn't manage energy well, acts impulsively.
- Gets tired quickly and recovers his strength quickly.
- Weak in guidance and response factors.

B- Key Features of Children in the Second Stage of Primary School:

Social Aspect:

- Strong inclination to play with peers.
- Seeks independence from home and family elements.
- Aspiring to explore the outside world (beyond home, beyond school).

Psychological Aspect:

- Finds a release in play.
- Ability to focus on the task at hand.
- Shares peers' problems and stands by them.

Cognitive Aspect:

- Understands the concept of certain moral values (cooperation, voluntary contribution, helping others).

- Eager for stories and heroic games.
- Expanding vocabulary and skills, enhancing self-confidence.

Motor Aspect:

- Physical grows, particularly in terms of height, while systems remain somewhat fragile.
- Quick mastery of motor skills, even complex ones.
- Increased responsiveness and guidance factors helps fulfill more complex motor skills.

C- Key Features of Children in the Third Stage of Primary School:

Social Aspect:

- Seeks a balance between self-interest within and outside the family.
- Inclined to external pressures while respecting family values.
- Engages with peer groups and attempts to organize playgroups.
- Works towards gaining relative independence.
- Loves competition and starts distinguishing between genders.

Psychological Aspect:

- Slow development of the processes of differentiation and adaptation.
- Needs to feel a sense of fairness and take initiatives.
- Searches for independence.
- Acquires the rules of games and the concept of duties and rights.
- Aspiring towards body image and takes an interest in it.

Cognitive Aspect:

- Develops an understanding of certain moral values (cooperation, contribution, voluntary help...).
- Enriches his vocabulary, aiding in listening to and telling stories.
- Eager for heroic games.

Motor Aspect:

- Demonstrates improvement in coordination.
- Precision in executing movements.
- Good balance control.
- Mastery of natural movements.
- Quickly acquires different motor skills.

- Body flexibility during performance allows for prolonged focus (National Curriculum Committee, 2016, pp. 3-5).

Methodological Procedures for the Research:

1. Research Method: The descriptive method was utilized due to its suitability for the nature of this study. It relies on studying reality or phenomena as it exists in reality, concentrating on its accurate description, which can be expressed qualitatively or quantitatively (Boudouaoud, Atallah, 2009, p.123).

2. Research Sample: The research sample consisted of 30 primary school teachers from the provinces of Guelma and M'sila, selected randomly.

3. Research Tools: A questionnaire form.

4. Research Fields:

- **Human Field:** Physical education and sports teachers for the primary school in the provinces of Guelma and M'sila.
- **Spatial Field:** Primary schools in the provinces of Guelma and M'sila.
- **Temporal Field:** The academic year 2023-2024.

5. Research Variables:

- **Independent Variable:** Conducting a physical education and sports session.
- **Dependent Variable:** Obstacles to execution.

Research Results: We can summarize the responses of physical education and sports teachers regarding the obstacles to achieving a physical education and sports session in the primary school as follows:

Firstly: Obstacles Associated with the Material Resources of the Institution:

These were particularly presented through:

- **Unsuitable Locations for Sessions:** The areas designated for sessions do not meet the specific needs of the subject or ensure the safety and security of students. Most practice spaces are paved school yards, leading to difficulties in fulfilling lesson objectives, low comprehension levels among students, and a rise in sports-related injuries.
- **Lack of Covered Sports Halls:** There is a shortage of equipped indoor sports facilities that could be employed, particularly under difficult weather conditions (rain, heat).

- **Insufficient Equipment and Teaching Aids:** These are regarded as the backbone of activities and play a significant role in easing lesson difficulties. Most teachers report a lack of such materials, and even when available, they are insufficient in number, often damaged, and in need of repair or replacement to guarantee students' safety.
- **Inadequate Changing Rooms:** There is a lack of suitable changing rooms, and in some cases, they are completely unavailable.
- **Weak Budget Allocation:** The budget for buying tools and equipment is insufficient.
- **Lack of a Sports Library:** There is no library with books on individual and team sports and the importance of physical activity to enhance students' knowledge.

Secondly: Obstacles Associated with the Perception of the Administrative and Pedagogical Staff towards Physical Education and Sports:

Many teachers encounter negative attitudes from some principals, administrators, and other subject teachers towards physical education and sports. These individuals often view it as merely running, jumping, chaos, and a waste of time. This lack of cooperation creates psychological pressure on physical education and sports teachers.

Thirdly: Obstacles Associated with the Developmental Features of Primary School Students:

- **Behavioral Features:** The young age of the students introduces challenges such as a high need for movement, enthusiasm, and impulsivity, leading to chaos, distraction, and sports injuries of varying degrees. This makes it difficult for the teacher to control the session and interpret its procedural objectives.
- **Physical Limitations:** Students have fragile bodies at this age, making it difficult to endure physical exertion. They also struggle with distance estimation, visual-motor coordination, and self-organization in appropriate time and space, necessitating the teacher to put in extra effort.
- **Lack of Prior Knowledge:** Primary students generally do not have prior knowledge of physical and sports activities, raising a challenge for the teacher to impart the correct knowledge.
- **Special Needs Students:** Some classes encompass students with special needs who require special attention and care, creating a challenge in integrating them into activities with their peers.
- **Need for Constant Supervision:** The age of the students requires close monitoring of their movements and behaviors. Teachers often find themselves juggling between explaining the lesson content, applying it

practically, managing time constraints, controlling large numbers of students, correcting mistakes, etc.

- **Moodiness and Sensitivity:** The students' moodiness and sensitivity to criticism necessitates the teacher to be constantly cautious about how to interact with them.
- **Individual Differences:** There are considerable individual differences among students in mental, physical, motor, behavioral, and social abilities.

Fourthly: Obstacles Associated with the Features of the Subject, Its Presentation Method, and Curriculum Content:

- **Large Class Sizes:** The number of students in each educational group is very large, sometimes reaching up to 40 individuals. This impacts the delivery and progression of the subject content and creates chaos that distracts students.
- **Insufficient Time Allotted:** The 60-minute duration for each session is inadequate to complete the lesson, particularly given the students' eagerness to play, run, and relax.
- **Scheduling Issues:** There are problems with the timing of sessions. Early morning hours in winter are very cold, while afternoon hours in spring can be very hot without a covered area.
- **Unclear Objectives:** The curriculum content lacks well-defined objectives, making the teacher's task more difficult.

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