

The Effect of Teacher Training on the Implementation of Physical Education Instruction in Public Primary Schools in Nyamira South Sub-County, Kenya

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Abstract

Despite several importance of Physical education to learners, Physical education have not been well implemented in Kenyan schools especially schools in Kisii County therefore, this study aimed at evaluate challenges that hinder execution of Physical Education instruction in public primary schools in Nyamira South Sub-County, Kenya. It examines the impact of teachers' training on the implementation of the Physical Exercise instruction in schools. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and was guided by the Gross's Curriculum Implementation Theory. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and was guided by the Gross's Curriculum Implementation Theory. Data was collected using both simple random and stratified sampling where 278 teachers from public primary school interviewed. Questionnaires were used to collect the data. In addition PE observations were successfully made in the six zones of the Sub-County. Quantitative data obtained via a questionnaire was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 20). Means and standard deviations were used to describe levels of teacher training in PE. Thematic analysis was employed to analyse recurrent themes emanating from PE lesson observations. From the findings, it emerged that most of the teachers had certificate qualification and their knowledge and skills were acquired in college or higher levels of training. The proper training exposes public primary school teachers to proper PE instruction practices, such as, planning for PE instruction, use of diverse instructional techniques and knowledge of basic positioning skills. Therefore, teacher training was not a hindrance to implementation of PE. Nevertheless, teachers still showed apathy towards teaching the subject. This is contrary to an earlier finding from reviewed literature that teacher training is a predictor of implementation of PE instruction. The study recommends the need to maximize on the proper training in PE so that every teacher feels motivated to teach the subject. Moreover, similar studies should be replicated in public primary schools in other sub-counties so as to improve external validity of the findings. The knowledge gained from such studies will help stakeholders, parents, pupils and school personnel to make informed decisions concerning physical education.

Keywords: Effect, Teacher Training, Implementation, Physical Education Instruction, Public Primary Schools,

INTRODUCTION

Bailey, (2006) stated that Physical Education (PE), is a vital subject in the development of a student. The association between PE and examinable academic subjects is immense, in that learners become active participants in the process of

learning. Even though scientific proof of the importance of physical education (PE) and the fact that the 1948 UNESCO chapter enshrined PE as a fundamental human right, PE is in a dangerous situation worldwide.

However, early critics viewed this focus on health in physical education as being too narrow, thereby necessitating the inclusion of fundamental movements and physical skills for games and sports (Wood & Cassidy, 1930). PE is important as it teaches children the discipline of beneficial living and skills for active lifestyle (NASPE, 2004).

The state of Physical Education in Schools, absence of policies for national PE, programme is stated but not fully carried out, PE tutors are not specialists, lack of government's support, inadequate structures and facilities and lack of time for teaching were the major obstacles of PE in most primary schools according to Hardman and Marshall, (2000)

Physical Education is a compulsory subject in Kenyan primary and secondary schools as well as in teacher education (Njororai, 1996). The inclusion of PE and sports in the Kenyan school curriculum was informed, like in other countries, by the proclamation of the United Nations Physical Education and Sports Charter (UNESCO, 1978). Consequently, the country saw the need to recognize the role PE as an individual's all-round development. Besides, several other declarations, including the Berlin Declaration of (1999), the Moscow Declaration (1990) and the Punta del Este Declaration (2000), have underscored the importance of allocating PE time per week in both primary and secondary school levels.

The Berlin World Summit on Physical Education (1999) unearthed some inconsistencies and shortcomings in physical education implementation warranting further reforms in PE and sports. In response, Kenya has continuously sought to reform its PE syllabus to improve delivery of the subject. However, reforms have at times led to a reduction in the time allocated to PE teaching/learning in order to accommodate additional content. This additional content include Human Virus, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, Sexually Transmitted Diseases and Sexually Transmitted Infections (HIV,AIDS and STDs/STIs), gender and human rights, environmental conservation which were at one time embedded into the PE syllabus (Kenya Institute of Education [KIE], 2002). The name of the subject has also changed over time, starting from physical Education (PE) to physical and health education (PHE) and then, later, back to PE.

Physical Education in Kenya is modelled along the three areas of movement education, sport education and fitness education. The Primary Teacher Education (PTE) syllabus (KIE, 2004) emphasizes the need for pupils to acquire basic skills and physical activities in order to: promote growth and development, fitness, health, character formation, enjoyment, acquisition of lifetime sports and games. Movement, sport and fitness dominate the objectives of teaching/learning of physical education in schools in Kenya. These areas include the following: development of physical and neuromuscular skills; performing skilful and efficient movements through physical and mental coordination; developing knowledge and experience of movement concepts for expression and communication; developing good citizenship and national cohesiveness through sporting activities; appreciating

and participating in both national and international sport and dance for understanding, respect and preservation of own and other culture, and engaging in physical activities in order to promote health, fitness and general body growth and development (KIE, 2004).

Teacher training recurs in existing literature as one of the teacher-oriented factors that contribute towards required classroom practices. According to Bless, Smith and Kagee (2006), professional teacher training is a crucial factor in classroom instructional practices as well as general school practices. Preparation of pre-service teachers academically and professionally is therefore a vital step in securing teachers future array of classroom practices. It is on this basis that Ishumi (2009) argues that teacher training institutions have the responsibility to prepare teachers in the three dimensions of speculative, normative and analytical.

Morgan (2004) asserts that teachers who are not trained lack knowledge of PE and this contributes to uncertainty about what they do. Concurring with Morgan, Caputo (2009) argues that teachers who demonstrate good knowledge of PE skills and a readiness to participate have a positive attitude to PE in learners. Reviews of teacher training aimed at improving student achievement indicate that focusing on teachers knowledge of the subject matter, and how students understand and learn it, is what matters most (Young, 2012). From these sentiments, teachers and students must become lifelong pursuers of knowledge, understanding and skills. The reviewed study was conducted in secondary schools while current study focused on primary schools. The reviewed study was also a comparative study but the current study only focused on Kenyan schools with reference to Nyamira South Sub-County because teachers' professional knowledge and actual practices may differ not only among countries but also within a country.

Norman (2007) has studied the effect of teacher competence on teaching PE in an integrated early childhood classroom. The participants comprised 100 elementary teachers and 100 high school teachers and 100 professors. The study established that teacher education reflected little commitment for teachers to effectively teach PE in an integrated classroom. The above study targeted teachers' right from elementary early childhood centres to the university whereas the current study only focused on primary schools. The array of findings regarding teacher training though informing on potential gains towards physical training in general fail to relate development competencies that constitute appropriate teacher training in PE with availability of relevant training materials and facilities. Besides, studies were mainly from contexts where training is conducted using advanced and sophisticated training facilities and materials. It was therefore incumbent to examine challenges teacher training in PE poses to its instruction in a context such as Nyamira South Sub-County. Most public primary school teachers in rural areas such as Nyamira south sub-county mainly teach in schools in their home villages and are hardly exposed to technical know-how of emerging technology in PE.

In spite of importance of physical excises to the children, the main challenge is execution as it is not given seriousness it deserves. Also physical excises are done without teacher supervision and this makes PE look a haphazard play. Sometimes, teachers use PE time to cover syllabi in other subjects or remedial work.

Consequently, this study aimed assessing the challenges to implementation of PE in public primary schools in the County.

Research Objectives

- i. To assess the teacher training factors that posed a challenge to implementation of PE instruction in public primary schools in Nyamira South Sub-County, Kenya.
- ii. To determine relationship between teacher training and implementation of PE instruction in public primary schools in Nyamira south Sub-County.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted out in public primary schools in Nyamira South Sub-County of Kenya. The areas' topography is mostly hilly, consistent with the entire County which is marked by predominant features such as the Kiabonyoru, Nyabisimba, Nkoora, Kemasare hills and the Manga ridge. Therefore, the area provided an ideal setting for investigative implementation of PE instruction since physical activity and healthy living is necessary for manoeuvring the hilly terrain. The study used descriptive survey research design. The target population consisted of 1004 teachers in public primary schools from six zones in the Sub-County. The sample size of 278 was obtained using the Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table for sample size determination. The study employed both stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select the required 278 public primary school teachers. Stratified random sampling was used to distribute the sampled respondents proportionately according to their population in the six education zones. Data collection instruments consisted of a questionnaire administered to the sampled respondents. The observation checklist provided in-depth information to support the questionnaire responses. Data was analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequencies and percentages were used to describe prevailing levels of teacher training in PE. Thematic analysis was employed in analysing recurrent themes emanating from PE lesson observations. Pearson correlation was used to find out the relationship between the independent and dependent variable; namely, teacher training and implementation of PE instruction in public primary schools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section provides the results and discussion of the study in accordance to the objectives.

(a) The first research objective sought to assess the teacher training factors that posed a challenge to implementation of PE instruction in public primary schools in Nyamira South Sub-County, Kenya. The research sought to determine ways in which teacher training factors posed a challenge to implementation of PE instruction in public primary schools. The respondents were provided with eight items in a likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree and strongly agree used to examine elements of teacher training in PE. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent of agreement with each of the items. A summary of the responses was provided in Table.

Table 1: Teacher Training in PE Instruction

Training Items	SA	A	UN	D	SD
	N (%)	N (%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)
The physical exercise course adequately prepared me to know basic positions of exercise	77(31.8)	123(50.8)	2(.8)	30(12.4)	10(4.1)
The teaching methods course enables me to use different methods and styles of teaching PE	55(22.4)	118(48.2)	2(.8)	57(23.3)	13(5.3)
The practicum course prepared me to use real teaching skills in PE	53(21.5)	179(72.8)	2(.8)	9(3.7)	3(1.2)
Exposure to PE curriculum enables me to know the correct planning for teaching PE	24(9.8)	138(56.6)	2(.8)	60(24.6)	20(8.2)
The measurement and evaluation course enables me to build and use a group of tests and measurements in PE	37(15.2)	144(59.3)	5(2.1)	48(19.8)	9(3.7)
Facilities for training in PE were adequate	32(13.2)	150(61.7)	4(1.6)	44(18.1)	13(5.3)
Reference materials for training in PE were easily available	21(8.6)	170(69.7)	8(3.3)	32(13.1)	13(5.3)
The PE management course and organization course make me know the way of managing different of sports	26(11.0)	171(72.5)	5(2.1)	23(9.7)	11(4.7)

As indicated in Table 1, teachers largely agreed with all items measuring teacher training. This implied that teachers were adequately exposed to key requirements of PE instruction during pre-service. These included basic positions of exercise (82.6% cumulative agreement); use of different methods and styles of teaching PE (70.6% cumulative agreement); use of real teaching skills in PE (94.3% cumulative agreement); correct planning for teaching PE (66.4% cumulative agreement), and measurement in PE (74.5% cumulative agreement). The study established that PE teachers seemed have undergone proper training and therefore lack of training been unlikely to be a hindrance to implementation of PE instruction. Exposure to a variety of courses during training should enable them to adhere to correct practices when teaching. Such training courses include proper planning for content delivery, use of diverse teaching methods so as to cater for individual pupil needs and also to take care of the large class sizes, basic positioning and organizing as well as managing diverse range of sporting activities. These findings concur with Morgan (2004) who asserts that untrained teachers lack knowledge of PE and this contributes to uncertainty about what they do. Concurring with Morgan, Caputo (2009) argues that teachers who demonstrate good knowledge of PE skills and a readiness to participate have a positive attitude towards PE.

The respondents were further provided with an open ended item that sought information on other practices related to teacher training that they felt could have an impact on the teaching of PE in public primary schools. Their responses were as summarized in Table 1.

Table 2: Other Practices of PE Instruction related to Teacher Training

Question	Comment
Enumerate other practices of implementation of PE instruction related to teacher training	There is no motivation to tutors who claim low pay hence they don't appreciate the importance of PE Children to bring home made facilities and materials for PE Teaching practice session was too short to make one a teacher The school should provide pupils with facility to increase capacity of PE lessons Special needs students were not catered for

Table 2 clearly shows that PE teachers' felt poorly remunerated which led to low motivation and hence they don't appreciate the importance of PE; they indicated that they were not adequately prepared to handle students with special needs. Nevertheless, the study revealed that teachers had undergone appropriate training for PE instruction. The study findings complement the views of Bless *et al.* (2006) who advanced that teacher training is a crucial factor in PE instruction. The results also concur with studies by Morgan (2004) and Caputo (2009) that teachers who demonstrate good knowledge and skills in PE show readiness to participate. Opposing research was found in a study by Edmore (2012), who found out that teachers lack PE knowledge related to their college training to handle PE programmes. Such a contradiction implies that teachers' training in PE could be contextual and that some contexts may offer quality training while others may not. Indeed, some teachers in the study viewed the teaching practice session being inadequate to master requisite skills and knowledge and could find themselves concurring with Edmore's views. Therefore, the research findings underscored the fact that even when teachers are appropriately trained, they can still fail to implement PE curriculum as a result of confounding issues. The situation with Nyamira highlights the need for continuous appraisal of teachers in order to equip them with appropriate practices for PE instruction. This is supportive of the findings by Young (2012) who suggest that focusing on teacher's knowledge of the subject matter and how students understand and learn should be what matters.

(b) To determine relationship between teacher training and implementation of PE instruction in public primary schools in Nyamira south Sub-County. To address this objective the researcher computed a Pearson correlation coefficient of teacher training and implementation of PE instruction. The findings are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Relationship between Teacher Training and Implementation of PE Instruction

		Teacher Training	Implementation of PE Instruction
Teacher Training	Pearson Correlation	1	.172**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.007
Implementation of PE Instruction	Pearson Correlation	.172**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Analysed data presented in table 3 shows that training correlated positively and significantly with the implementation of PE instruction ($r=0.172$, $p<0.05$). This implied that there was a positive relationship between teacher training and implementation of instruction in the subject. Consequently, training has the potential to improve the implementation of instruction in the PE subject in primary schools. These findings are in agreement with Bless *et al.*, (2006) who supported that professional teacher training is a critical factor in classroom instructional practices as well as general school practices. Furthermore, the results corroborate a study by Morgan (2004) that teachers who are not trained lack knowledge of PE among primary school teachers contributed to uncertainty about what they were doing.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study established that teachers in public primary school undertake proper training for PE instruction. Teacher training programmes expose them to proper PE instructional practices, including content planning and delivery, use of diverse instructional methods and knowledge of basic positioning skills. Nevertheless, teachers still show apathy towards teaching of the subject. In light of the research findings, can be concluded that teacher training is an antecedent to effective implementation of PE instruction. On the basis of these findings the study recommends that there is need to maximize suitable training of PE teachers so as to actualize the teaching o the subject. Apart from training, teachers also need to be provided with incentives to raise their motivation and put into practice the skills they acquire from training.

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