

Evaluation of Physical Education, Sports and Recreation for the Gifted

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Abstract: *Physical education, sports and recreation for the gifted was the topic dealt with in this article. The concept of physical education as it refers to the body, with reference to various bodily characteristics was also discussed. Academic success and well-being of the gifted with regard to physical education has been stressed, special physical education program for the gifted being exceptional learners was discussed, and special instructional media and resources for the gifted as distinct for sports and games from the modern technology was addressed. Recreation, leisure services, camping and outdoor activities are also areas that were discussed in this work. Recreation and leisure being characterized by five descriptive terms was also addressed. Recreation for the gifted for developing their sophisticated routines in dance, tumbling, gymnastics, apparatus, and synchronized swimming have been discussed in this work. Assessment of the gifted in physical education using variety of methods was also stressed in this work. It was recommended that, classes for the gifted who are high achievers need to be taught by physical educators who know how to design and implement programs for such exceptional students.*

Key words: *Gifted, Sport, Recreation, Physical education, Learners*

I. Introduction

The gifted is blessed with a superior physical endowment. A high level of neuro-muscular coordination enables him to move with grace and develop skills rapidly, and he or she is usually highly motivated. The interschool athletic and recreational program and intramural laboratory usually provide the necessary instructional and resources media for students who are gifted (Winebrenner, 2001). The physical educators have the contribution to make to the gifted student with the physical education program. The challenges presented by students of exceptional ability will help to keep the physical educators alert, stimulated and enthusiastic about teaching. Some ways of which the physically gifted and creative students may help in physical education include using them in the leader's program, providing special challenges in the form of research, and reading on various aspects of physical education textbooks, work books and more conventional printed materials. Instructional and media such as films, filmstrips, videos, laser discs, CD-ROM, and large screen projections of televisive or video-taped images. Other instructional media and resources are employed for appropriate instructional technology in physical education for the gifted (Taber 2007).

II. The Concept of Physical Education

The word physical refers to the body. It is often used in reference to various bodily characteristics such as physical strength, physical development, physical prowess, physical health and physical appearance. It refers to the body as contrasted to the mind. Thus, when the word education was added to the word physical, it formed the phrase physical education. Laura, (2004) refers to the process of education that concerns activities which develop and maintain the human body. When an individual is playing a game, swimming, matching, working out on the parallel bars, skating, or performing in any one of the game of physical education activities, education is taking place at the same time. The author maintained that Physical education is an important part of educational process, it is not a "frill" "or an ornament" tacked onto the school program as a means of keeping students busy, but rather a vital part of education.

III. Physical Education and the gifted well-being, and Academic success

Winebrenner(2001) defined gifted as those who demonstrate outstanding levels of aptitude as exceptional ability to reason and learn competence documented performance or achievement in 10% or rarer, in one or more domains. Domains that include any structured area of activity with its own symbol system; such as mathematics, music and or set of sensorimotor skills such as sports, dance and painting. The author further explained that the term gifted when used in respect of students, children or youths means those who show evidence of high performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic or leadership capacity, athletic or in specific academic fields and who require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop such capabilities. Calgary Board of Education, (2013) defined gifted as a child

or youth who performs at or shows the potential for performing at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience or environment and who;

1. Exhibits high performance capability in an intellectual, creative or artistic area.
2. Possess an unusual capacity for leadership or
3. Excels in a specific athletic or academic field.

The first and perhaps the most important aspect of physical education is the direct bearing it has on the gifted student's physical, mental and social well-being. The student who is well educated physically is likely to become a healthy adult who is motivated to remain healthy. Although adults are often well informed about health and pursue healthy life-style that includes good nutrition, exercise, physical activities, and fitness, their children's physical health and well-being is frequently a cause for concern (Rogers 2012). Recognizing the threat of a sedentary life-style inherent in post-industrial work patterns, large numbers of adult can be found juggling, walking, eating healthy foods, and seeking out ways to incorporate movement and activities into their daily routines. But at the same time alarming numbers of children and youths often lacking appropriate adult supervision, can be found in front of television set on sunny week-days afternoons munching on snack foods (Eugene, 1992). The problem is compounded by approaches to physical education that have traditionally emphasized competition, games, sports, and native athletic ability, favoring those who are most talented and leaving the less able to view themselves as outsiders who will never make the great. Our society can no longer afford that approach. Winebrenner (2001) stated a principal theme of the physical education frame work that all gifted children regardless of disabilities, ethnicity, gender, native language, race, religion, or sexual orientation must be given opportunities not only to succeed in physical education, but to develop a lifelong commitment to the pleasure and the health benefits of physical activity.

A second reason for the importance of physical education today is its direct link with academic leaning. The author added that the healthy, physically active gifted students are more likely to be academically motivated, alert, and successful. In the pre-school and primary years, there are direct links between active play, physical agility and coordination, and academic success. As children gets older and enter adolescence, healthy physical activity becomes integral to their self-concept and their ability to take on new intellectual, social and emotional challenges. Throughout, physical education promotes the social skills and cooperation that are increasingly viewed by educators today as essential for success in school. Just as any well planned academic curriculum takes into account a wide range of learning modes and styles, the physical education curriculum, emphasizes a variety of cognitive, affective, and psycho-motor teaching and learning strategies ((Rogers 2012).

IV. Physical education for the Gifted

Kim (2006) explained that gifted and creative students in physical education class are typical because they also need a specially tailored physical education experience. Gifted students are those who are exceptional in motor skill abilities in many activities and maintain a high level of physical fitness. A gifted student may be a star athlete, but in general such student is simply a good all-round performer. In a game situation the gifted student seem to be in the right place at the right time.

Crace, (2008) observed that physically gifted students learn quickly and require a minimum of individual instruction. The gifted are usually enthusiastic about physical activities and practice skills without being told to do so. Any individual instruction they do require in the form of coaching rather than remedial correction. Taber, (2007) affirmed that the physically gifted students may also have special problems such as being impatient, by causing class disturbances during instructional periods. Haller explains that it is because the gifted already knows how to perform the skills or play the game and those not enjoy standing and listening but instead wants action and participation. Haller further explains that the gifted students may become bored and lose interest in physical education if the program does not constantly stimulate them.

Crace, (2007) pointed out that the gifted student are exceptionally and unique from other students therefore the physical educators should use variety of teaching styles, such as teacher-directed and student-initiated learning, to satisfy the learning styles of individual students and stimulate higher levels of thinking and creativity. Steinthosdotir and Sriraman(2008) postulated that teaching styles might include command, practice, self-check. Guided discovery, student-designed and student initiated teaching and self-teaching. Physical educators should also employ a variety of instructional approaches, including competence-based learning, contract learning, drill, information processing, leisure, mastery learning, programmed instruction and role-playing.

Yoon and Gentry (2009) examined that the appropriate style for physical education instruction is the cooperative learning. Assigning students to small learning groups (three to six members each) allows teachers and students to achieve a variety of goals, both social and cognitive. In addition, research have shown that cognitive learning produces higher achievement, improves cross-ethnic friendships and social skills, enhances self-image, and promote greater independence, improves role taking abilities (e.g. leadership) and a better classroom climate.

Warne, Anderson, and Johnson (2013) explained that the first step in cooperative learning is the formation of heterogeneous teams. The size of each team will vary according to the activity; however, groups of three to six students (mix as to ability, race and gender) have proven to be most successful. After the team has been formed, students' needs activities for team building and time to practice and receive feedback on appropriate social skills. The authors further explained that the specifics of cooperative learning lessons depend to a great extent on which method among many different cooperative learning approaches are chosen. However, the teacher must ensure positive interdependence and both individual and group rewards. A team can succeed only if all members are interdependent in their contributions towards a common goal.

V. Sports for the gifted

Albaker (2013) mentioned that there are many types of instructional media and resources for the gifted, as distinct from equipment for games and sports, are available to aid the physical educator. In addition to textbooks, workbooks and more conventional printed materials, resources includes films, filmstrips, videos, laser discs, CD-ROM, and large screen projections of televised and videotaped images. Physical educators should look for ways not only to incorporate a variety of instructional media into their teaching but also to make sure that the media are available and are included in the overall budget for physical education. Examples abound of appropriate instructional technology in physical education. The author emphasized that Heart monitors can provide students with feedback on their heart rate while they are performing cardiovascular exercises. In addition camcorders and video camera can be used to capture student performances for skill or strategy analysis. Computers can aid the teacher in the production of task cards or skill card and can also be used to provide information and instructional modules to individuals or groups. When connected to laser disc players, video cassettes players and other peripheral devices can capture student's interest through multimedia presentation.

Lee and Sriraman (2012) viewed that a wide variety of computer software program are available that lead the gifted students through tutorials on various sports or fitness concepts, offering both instructional and assessment procedures. An interactive laser disc system can present student with information generated by computer software linked to the laser disc player at different points in the tutorial. The player, instructed by the computer software, displays the appropriate live-action example. Interactive programs offer students a considerable amount of control over their own learning and the topics they wish to explore. Technology is also very useful in the assessment process for physical education of the gifted.

VI. Recreation and Leisure Services

Recreation, leisure services, camping and outdoor education represent areas closely allied to physical education and fields in which many physical educators work. Recreation and leisure services are concerned with those activities in which a person participate during hours other than works. They imply that the individual has chosen certain activities in which to engage voluntarily because of an inner, self-motivating desire. Such participation gives him/her a satisfying experience and develops physical, social, mental and/or esthetic qualities contributing to a better existence. (Paul, Slocumbs and Ruby 2000).

The kind of recreation and leisure that education is advocating can be characterized by five descriptive terms as follows:

1. Leisure time: to be recreation the activity must be engage in during one's free time. From this point of view; work cannot be one's recreation.
2. Enjoyable: the activity engaged in must be satisfying and enjoyable to the participants.
3. Voluntary: the individual must have chosen, of his or her own volition, to engage in these pursuits, there must have been no coercion.
4. Constructive: the activity is constructive; it is not harmful to the person physically, socially or in any other way. It must help one to become a better integrated individual.
5. Non-survival: eating and sleeping are not recreational activities in themselves. One may engage in a picnic in which a dinner is involved but the other facets of the affair such as the social games and fellowship are important parts of the recreational activity.

VII. Recreation for the Gifted

According to Susan (2005) physically gifted and creative student have a well-developed sense of kinesthetic awareness and know how to use their body properly, dancing with ease and grace showing a high degree of skill in free exercise, tumbling, gymnastics, apparatus, and synchronized swimming. Broecher, (2005) explained that the physically gifted or creative students in dance may be introduced to a new kind of music, or he or she who is skilled on apparatus may enjoy adding new moves routines. The physical gifted and creative students may not have attempted a wide range of activities but have experience those recreational activities

offered in the school physical education program; such as drama, music, art, crafts, games, sports, camping, literature, fairs, nature study, and other outdoor activities.

VIII. Assessment of gifted students in physical education

Assessment in physical education should address the major goals of physical education. A variety of methods can be used, including written tests, videotaped performances of skills, cooperative; learning activities, individual, small group, class project, problem solving tasks, small group or class discussion, task cards, worksheets, contracts, small group and class project, and home work (Winebrenner 2001).

Self-assessment is another means of providing students with information about their performance. Student can apply self-evaluation when given lists of performance objectives and directed to judge their own achievements. This procedure can be facilitated by the video taping of the student's performance for follow up viewing by the student. On a higher level self-assessment can offer opportunities for students to establish personal goals and make critical and valid evaluations as they monitor their progress, establishing personal goal (Rogers 2012).

Assouline, (2005) postulated that peer assessment is another means of student assessment which can be carried out by learners in pairs or group is an effective evaluation method for the gifted student as student develop pair assessment skill, they learn the importance of given and receiving support and constructive feedback. The author further explained that in pair assessment the student evaluator compares and contrasts another student's performance with criteria established by the teacher. The results can be communicated orally or through the use of a task card, rating scale or check lists. Peer assessment can be done live or can be videotaped. Grades should bare a close relationship to the course goal and learning expectation. Course grade should not be used to report such elements as attendance, cleanliness, personality, punctuality and wearing apparel, but rather assessment should require students to:

- a. Demonstrate and understanding of the application of information in new and familiar tasks.
- b. Explain why and how rather than merely perform movement.
- c. Integrate and connect understanding, analyze self-performances, observe others and experiment with this knowledge.
- d. Demonstrate imagination, persistence, and creativity and show a capability for problem solving.

IX. Conclusion/Recommendations

Physical education, sports and recreation are based on the premise that the quality and productivity of the gifted student's life can be enhanced through participating in a comprehensive, sophisticated and sequential physical education system that promotes physical, mental, emotional and social well-being. Education implies a focus on the whole gifted students as opposed to a narrow range of skills and abilities. It means teaching the gifted students as how to apply new knowledge and to develop the knowledge and skills needed to use those talents in achieving their personal goals.

As an integral part of the school curriculum, physical education, sports and recreation, should be taught or handled by qualified professionals who have been trained in physical education, or who have participated in a program of professional development focusing on the teaching of education. Classes for the gifted who are high achievers need to be taught by physical educators who know how to design and implement programs for such exceptional students.

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