

Historical Analysis of Physical Education

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In the history of Civilization, the physical education has been considered on the top priority area for the development and extension of their territory. The ancient history of Rome and Greece also has the evidences where the physical education and sports activities were the parameter to show the dominance of the country. The winners were not only admired by the people but also had been awarded with the great honour and jobs. Rome and Greece were supposed to have the developed ancient civilization in terms of education art and culture and prosperity. However, the strong military squad of this Civilization had the base of physical training or the physical educationist efforts to inculcate the strength and endurance in the youth of the society. The military strength of the country had the predominant character of rigorous physical training. Different sports were inculcated to help the soldiers for the battlefield. The general public: especially men were also trained in order to protect the territory of the country. For the purpose, different training centre in the name of Akhadas, gyms etc developed in the centre of the cities. The teachers were hired by the rulers to train the people. With the advancement of Civilization and realization of importance of physical training, private training centre were also developed by the learned people who themselves trained to give the training on the basis of their own experience and learning from their gurus and colleagues. They had developed their separate centres for physical training or recreational activities which in turn provide the platform for physical activities. These centres were run on private basis. A very few public centres were available but with limited facilities. The trained teachers marketed their skills and attracted the people for their services. The topmost philosopher and thinkers realized the importance of physical education and advocated the physical education as an essential ingredient for school education. They believed that free hand exercises could work for development of fitness among children. But for adolescent and adults, the hard strength-based training with proper equipments were suggested which was catered by the private Institutions/ centres. Slowly and gradually, the physical education in the form of physical activities and training becomes the integral part of almost every civilization in the different part of world. With the advancement of education policy adopted by the then rulers, the physical activities were also the part of the curriculum. However, the training and instruction was given by the same teacher who teaches other academic and social activities. Thereafter, the strong requirement of expertise in the concerned field was evolved then only separate teachers who have the experience and knowledge in the particular field were deployed for the task to educate the children and youth.

Indian civilization was also believed to have the ancient existence. The Epic period has now been proved by the available proofs now-a-days. The existence of Lord Rama via Ramsetu and Lord Krishna via structure of Dwarka city submerged under water gave a strength to the ancient Indian civilization more ancient than the other civilization in the world. Indian education system believed in the philosophy of gurukuls where the

teachers were treated at par rather superior to God. The teacher/Guru imparted the education whether theoretical or practical or skill or religious or political in his own place/ Ashram/Gurukul. India has a very rich culture where different types of activities other than academics were carried out in the ancient schools named Gurukul. These activities comprise of art, painting, music, sports, arm training, strength development, spiritual and value addition activities. The competition for these activities were conducted by the Acharya or Guru of the concern Gurukul among the students in their respective areas. Few students excelled in their interest areas. It has been seen that the learning for all the activities were taught to the students in detail. However, the priority areas were chosen individually. Mostly, the people of upper cast or the son of king/rich people were trained under their supervision. Students had to spend their years to earn the knowledge and skill. The ecosystem was like the residential school, or the students reside in the hostels. The important part of this education is to focus on the physical, mental and emotional health which was the by-product of physical education at large. The students were trained for hard and tough life. They were given exposure to extreme difficult environmental conditions. They need to work hard and earn food by begging or self-cooking. This training was given to them in order to compete with the unfavourable conditions, if arise in future life. Apart from this, the students were trained for different sports skills like horse riding, archery, fencing, javelin throw, long jump, long distance running etc etc. The different competitions were organised among the students in terms of fighting, wrestling, shooting, horse riding etc. The competitions were organised for the skills at ashram level as well as state level by the emperor or influential people. The base of these activities was somehow related to the development of strong armed forces. Once the students were trained and returned back to their respective homes or Kingdoms. They were invited for the different events in the name of marriage extension of their Kingdom boundaries or for the sake of dominance in the territory. We have the several examples in our great epics like Ramayan and Mahabharat where the profession of their sports skill in the name of marriage were endorsed by the different Kings to marry their daughter with the best sports person. Either the example of Sitaswayamvar that is the marriage with Ram or dropdiswayamvar where the marriage with Arjun was happened. Besides these activities, the wrestling and horse riding were the favourite sports in the Ancient India. When we move on to the Indian civilization as of now and with proved historical evidence, the sports like fencing, bullock cart/horse riding, free style wrestling were the common sports in the history of Ancient India with proven track record.

However, few opt for armed forces, few for their livelihood, few for agriculture and few for the teaching or preaching. The teaching learning-based education system continued in Gurukul till the modern education system float by Macaulay was introduced in India. This system focuses more on theoretical knowledge and fluent writing. These skills were actually required by Britishers in order to control the functioning within India. This system developed more clerical skills rather than the individual with vibrant personality and practical knowledge. This system greatly changed the mind-set of the people and introduce a certain type of complex in the people whereby the person who scored more in one time examination and fluent in speaking was treated as superior then the others irrespective of his/her limited knowledge, weak practical skills and weak physical appearance or strength.

Education Policy introduced by the Government of India after freedom focussed on the overall development of the student. But the scope was limited and a strong revision was realized over the period of time. The New

Education Policy introduced in 2020 advocated for the free and fair selection of subjects based on the individual interest of the student. The multiple avenues will be opened for the student of any subject stream. The focus is also made on the fitness and health among the students. The role of physical educationist is very challenging and important to realize the actual goal.

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