

Physical inactivity: biggest challenge to improving public health in India

Dr. Awadhesh Kumar Shirotriya¹

¹ Sports Officer, Birla Institute of Management Technology, Greater Noida (UP)

Received September 05, 2016; Accepted September 28, 2016; Published September 30, 2016

Abstract

The necessity to understand the importance of Public health is quite high in this scenario as recently India has witnessed the major attack of several deaths, causing diseases and most of them are occurring due to insufficient physical workout/movement of the individual. The advocacy of physical activity is to be one of the basic interventions through which actual health promotion takes place. The basis of Yoga and Physical Education are depends upon physical activities which strengthen our health and prevent us from diseases.

1. Introduction

“It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver” this quote of Shri Mahatama Gandhi reflects broad sense of relevance of health in our modern life; undoubtedly it is compulsory for everyone to understand the meaning and importance of health. Many people’s particularly fitness freak peoples believes that health is only related with good physical look but the fact is health covers our Mental , Spiritual , Emotional , Occupational , Environmental dimensions though Physical dimension is purely Overt and rest all others are Covert in reflection of an individual personality.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defined health in its broader sense in its 1948 constitution as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (10). We never visualize our continuous progress without possessing the good health habits. Health is the only parameter which reflects the progress of the country. Economy of India is scaling new heights day by day and we are also experiencing many changeovers in health sectors. Recently Union Budget 2016-17 were very much focused on Health sector, Government of India has introduced several health schemes and insurance for the citizen of India especially for the poor citizens.

1.1 Fundamentals of Public Health

The system of public health has been dynamic in India, and has witnessed many hurdles in its attempt to affect the lives of the people of this country, so far Public Health Models for improving health is in infancy stage in India and much more work is needed to support the system of public health in our country. Public health is a systematic discipline of inquiry which involves research, teaching and professional training to defend disease and promote health issues in various sets of population. Public health refers to all organized measures (whether public or private) to prevent disease, promote health, and prolong life among the population as a whole (05, 06). Its activities aim to provide conditions in which people can be healthy and focus on entire populations, not on individual patients or diseases. Thus, public health is concerned with the total system and not only the eradication of a particular disease.

1.2 Functions of Public Health Schemes

1. Need Assessment of the health problems and priorities.
2. Formulation of the policies and projects with cost-effective care.
3. Provide Training to public health workers.

4. Execute the policies and projects.
5. Monitoring and get ensure that all populations have access to the policies and projects.
6. Impact Analysis.

1.3 Why Public Health

Canadian professors William Robertson Davies once said "In an age where public health has never been better provided for, and medical men enjoy a respect formerly reserved for the aristocracy and the clergy, millions of people are unwell, or merely feel unwell, or are in dread lest at some future time they may become unwell" The necessity to understand the importance of Public health is quite high in this scenario as recently India has witnessed the major attack of several death, causing diseases and most of them are occurring due to insufficient physical workout/movement of the individual. List of Diseases Caused by insufficient physical activity are as follows:-

1. Chronic Diseases
2. Cardiovascular Diseases (Heart Valve Problems, Arrhythmia, Heart Attack and Stroke)
3. Some form of Cancer
4. Diabetes
5. Hypertension (High Blood Pressure)
6. Coronary
7. Cerebrovascular diseases
8. Overweight/obesity
9. Psychological Disorders (Anxiety and Depression)

A lack of physical activity is one of the leading causes of preventable death worldwide. Government Agencies and NGO's related to public health are need to partner with schools, corporate houses, planning agencies, recreational agencies, healthcare organizations and housing societies to plan a program for promoting physical activities . The advocacy of physical activity is to be one of the basic interventions through which actual health promotion takes place. According to World Health Organization (WHO) Childhood obesity is one of the most serious public health challenges of the 21st century. Obese and Overweight children's can be easily found in every nook and corner of the country and this problems has reached epidemic levels in India (09).

1.4 Remedial Measures to combating with Physical Inactivity

We are living in the era of Smartness and Smart phones make our life LESS SMART due to its many attractive features. New tech savvy generation of the nation wants to enjoy football and cricket through smart phone features only and surprisingly most of the parents are also preferred to see the engagement of their kids with smart phone games, this may be due to increase the crime rate in India. Sports and Physical Education have been identified as important role in improving public health, School physical education is seen as an ideal place for the promotion of punctilious physical activity. The obesity epidemic among children and adolescents has become a major public health concern; actually it has become a burden in modern societies. Outdoor playing not only improves the physical dimension of the child but also strengthen the mental health of an individual too. Sedentary life style has become a part and parcel of our life now most of the youth wants to spend their leisure time in Malls or cinema hall where less physical activity is measures and limited choices are available to involve in some sort of physical activities. In nineteenth century we could not think to relate physical education with public health but now globally Physical Education can recognized by the authorities for its public health value now schools has become very proactive in promoting a physically activity to prevent and control childhood obesity and other chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease (01). To understand the importance of physical and mental fitness in leading a life of health our government is taking serious note on this issue in an recent development taken place on 6th May, 2016 Minister of State for Ayush Shripad Yesso Naik said in Lok Sabha during Question Hour "Yoga has not been made compulsory in all schools in coming academic session and they were told that those students who wished to enroll themselves in it should be allowed to do so We have told them that whoever wants to do Yoga, they should be allowed to do Yoga. Otherwise physical training (P.T.) is adjusted in the same period.

Minister also said Yoga has been made compulsory for police personnel and plans are afoot to make it compulsory also for defense personnel (11).

This initiative has taken place just because of increasing diseases in the society. The basis of Yoga and Physical Education are depends upon physical activities which strengthen our health and prevent us from diseases. Qualified professional of physical education can provides selfless service to the community they also train people about ways of getting fit and active because qualified physical education professional have also undergone with basics concepts of Health Education and Yoga during their teachers training period.

Undoubtedly the wealth of a nation consists in the number of healthy and fit citizens. We cannot skip the value of health while dreaming to build modern India. Physical Education demonstrates a significant positive contribution to increasing daily physical activities as Physical Education, a school curricular subject has a number of goals, including providing students with the knowledge, skills, abilities, and confidence to be physically active throughout their lifetime.

1.5 Positive Health and Wellness through Physical Activities

It is well documented that any type of physical activities improves the quality of life, Sports and Physical Activities can make an adequate share to the well-being of people as regular physical workout. Engaging in sport and physical activities, including physical fitness activities, plays a significant role in promoting health and wellness (10, 07). Once should do at least 30 minutes physical workout/exercise in a day to add more years to your life because exercising causes the body to produce endorphins, chemicals that can help a person to feel more peaceful and happy. People who regularly participate in aerobic exercise have greater scores on neuropsychological function and performance tests that measure certain cognitive functions, such as attention control, inhibitory control, cognitive flexibility, working memory updating and capacity, and information processing speed (03, 09, 08).

1.6 The Benefits of Physical Workout/Exercise

1. Positive influence on depression (Sound Mental Health)
2. Improved self-esteem
3. Improves Mood
4. Control Blood Pressure
5. Stronger Muscles and Bones
6. Stemming Obesity
7. Improves Immune system
8. Reduce Risk of some cancers
9. Improves Qualities of life
10. Increase chance for long Living

2. Concluding Suggestions:

1. Creation of a functional, reliable Public health management system and start proper marketing from all levels should be framed. Deployment of qualified physical education professionals in this framework.
2. Increase awareness of Physical fitness programs and promotion of physical activity in different community settings and population groups.
3. Health Education should be included in school curriculum and frequent seminars/workshops will also organize.
4. Increased emphasis of schools on improving standardized test scores has been a barrier to advancing physical education practices and policies now it is high time to revamp of Physical Education curriculum and it should make mandatory from kindergarten to university level. Once again education policies makers must emphasize on daily Physical Training /Exercises.

5. Subsidies Sports Facilities should be provided for every citizen of India. Educational Institutions and residential colonies can provide their sports facilities as part of their CSR initiatives. Governments should also take serious note to provide grants or incentives for providing sustainability in this initiative.
6. Reviewing infrastructure planning and environmental policies at national and local level to ensure that walking, cycling and other forms of physical activity are accessible and safe for everyone.
7. Outdoor Gymnasium will enhance the quality of workout without any time frame. Making use of available resources may be the fruitful initiative.
8. Fitness marks (Report card) should be maintained by the school authorities to getting more involvement of students in Physical activities and Sports.
9. Plan and implement a multi-functional intervention to promote healthful living and increase physical activity to affect improvements in BMI among children's aged 5-15 years old. Monitoring and evaluation is very much required to check the efficacy of the program.
10. Regulate Dietary habits of the children's as well as youth of the country.
11. Multi Age Fitness Program should be started which must include:-
 - Walking
 - Jogging /Running
 - Cycling
 - Callisthenic Exercises
 - Yoga
 - Swimming
 - Playing Sports/Recreational Games
 - Camping /Outdoor activities

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Corresponding Author:

Dr. Awadhesh Kumar Shirotriya,
Sports Officer,
Birla Institute of Management Technology,
Greater Noida (UP)