

EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT IN AMBO LAZARIST CATHOLIC SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

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Abstract

The study focused on the educational practice of physical education for students with hearing impairments at Ambo Lazarist School for the Deaf. The main objective of this research is to investigate the educational practice of physical education (PE) for students with hearing impairments (SWHI) in that particular school. To fulfill this objective, a mixed research method was used. Researchers using mixed methods have used embedded design. The population of the study was 58 SWHI, including one physical education teacher and two school principals. The sampling technique of this study was comprehensive and purposive sampling. And the sample of the study was 24 SWHI, 1 PE teacher, and 1 school principal. Data gathering instruments were a questionnaire, a structured interview, and an observation checklist. The findings of this study indicated that the level of identification, teaching strategies, and opportunities at Ambo Lazarist Catholic School for the Deaf for students with hearing impairments is low.

Keywords: practice, physical education, student with hearing impairment

1. Background of the Study

Adapted Physical Education (APE) is an individualized program of developmental activities, exercises, games and sport designed to meet the unique physical education needs of individuals (Luo, 2000).

And also as suggested by the school board of Brevard County (2006) the Adaptive Physical Education domain applies to all populations with special disabilities. Objectives will be consistent with those of regular physical education and sports. Movement, skills, and sports should be learned, but equipment, rules, and environmental structure may need to be modified to allow for maximum participation and benefit.

According to Luo, (2000) about evolution of Adapted Physical Education (APE), the following main events have occurred about 3000 years ago, in China depicting therapeutic use of gymnastics for individuals with disabilities were highlighted. And after that in 1879, corrective physical education established at Harvard for correcting certain pathological conditions. And then between WWI and II, development of physical therapy and adapted sports were emerged. And in 1940s, fundamental changes were initiated in physical education in some universities, public schools, and special schools. Calisthenics, gymnastics, and corrective physical education supplanted in the course contents by game, sports, and rhythmic activities modified to meet the individual needs of the students.

And after the above series of events has been occurred the knowledge base for including children with disabilities (CWDs) in adapted physical education, where CWDs are educated within regular or separate classes utilizing adapted frameworks of curriculum development and teachers' practice has evolved in the 1950s, mostly in the United States.

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Based on the experience gained among teachers and scholars, theoretical and practical recommendations have been developed and practiced in many schools across the United States and Canada, leading to the establishments of the International Federation of Adapted Physical Activity (IFAPA) in the mid-1970s (Lidor and Hutzler, 2019).

The Ethiopian Constitution accepts the international declarations and conventions, and states education as a human right. And also as a country Ethiopia aims at an education system that is open to all learners, regardless of poverty, gender, ethnic backgrounds, language, learning difficulties and impairments. The principle behind this policy is that all children and students are included. Also the Government wants to ensure that there is equity and fairness in the Ethiopia education system.

In Ethiopia, similar to other countries of the world physical education is given as one type of school subject like biology, chemistry, math's and etc. The physical education school curriculum is serving students from KG – university level (Gizachew, 2012).

2. Objectives of the Research

2.1. General Objective

- To investigate about the educational practice of Physical Education for students with hearing impairment in Ambo Lazarist Catholic School for the Deaf.

2.2. Specific Objectives

The following are the study's specific objectives that have been investigated to know the educational practice of physical education for students with hearing impairment in Ambo Lazarist Catholic School for the Deaf.

- To determine the identification mechanism of students with hearing impairment in the school.
- To find out Physical Education teaching strategies for students with hearing impairment.
- To identify the opportunity students with hearing impairment get in the teaching process of Physical Education.
- To explore about challenges that students with hearing impairment face in learning Physical Education.

3. Research design

The approach that the researchers have used to accomplish this study is mixed approach. Because the basic assumption of mixed approach is that it uses both quantitative and qualitative methods in combination and provides a better understanding of the research problem and question than either method by itself (Creswell, 2012).

From the mixed approach the researchers have selected embedded design. Because embedded design enable the researchers to collect quantitative and qualitative data concurrently. And also the researchers have questions that require different data gathering method, so embedded design is appropriate when a researcher has different questions that require different types of data (Creswell, 2012).

3.2. Population, Sampling Technique, and Sample

3.2.1 Population

The researchers have conducted this research on the school of Ambo Lazarist catholic school for the deaf. The population of the study includes school principal, physical education teachers and students with hearing impairment. The reason behind selecting the above population is the objective of the research, which means that the research's objectives are related to the above three populations.

The number of the participants and grade level of SWHI is illustrated in the below table.

Participants	Male	Female	Total
Physical education teacher	1	-	1

Students with hearing impairment (SWHI)	36	22	58
Principal	2	-	2
Total	39	22	61
Grade level of students with hearing impairment.			
1 st	8	11	19
2 nd	7	8	15
3 rd	7	6	14
4 th	4	7	10
Total	26	32	58

Table 1 the number of participant and Grade level of students with hearing impairment

3.2.2. Sampling technique

The participants were selected from the school by non-probability sampling. And from non-probability sampling researchers have used purposive and comprehensive sampling. The researchers chose purposive sampling because it allows researcher for specifying the characteristics of the population of interest and the tries to locate individuals who have those characteristics or who have more information (Creswell, 2012). And also researchers take comprehensive sampling because some of the participants number is small, so comprehensive sampling is best when the number of the population is small (Creswell, 2012).

The researchers have taken samples from the populations namely: the school principal, physical education teacher and students with hearing impairment.

By purposive sampling researchers have identified the students with more information i.e. students who enrolled in higher class, and as the table 3.2.2 illustrates the number of the student with hearing impairment who enrolled in higher class (Grade 3&4) is less than that of the lower classes (Grade 1&2), and after this, by comprehensive sampling researchers have taken all of the students with hearing impairment who enrolled in higher class.

And again by deploying comprehensive sampling researchers have included physical education teacher and the school principal.

3.2.3. Sample

The sample of participants that have been included in the study is illustrated as follows:

Participants	Male	Female	Total
Principal	1	-	1
Physical Education Teacher	1	-	1
Students with Hearing Impairment	11	13	24
Total	13	13	26

3.3. Instruments

The tools or instruments that the researchers have used to conduct this research are: questionnaires, structured interview and observation checklist. As these tools indicates the researcher's source of information is mainly rely on primary sources than secondary source.

3.3.1. Questionnaire

The first instrument is questionnaire. And questionnaire can let us gain more information with a short period of time (Creswell, 2012).The researchers have given questionnaires to students with hearing impairment and the physical education teacher to know the opportunities as well as teaching strategies of Physical Education that are tailored for students with hearing impairment. The questionnaire that prepared for SWHI consist 10 close ended questions and for teacher the questionnaire consists around 3 close ended and 2 open ended questions. The questionnaire that has been administered for both SWHI and PE teacher were developed by the researchers.

The researchers have also translated the Questionnaire for SWHI into afaan oromoo language and informed about the procedures by using sign language. The reason behind the translation of the language is that most of the SWHI can't read English words.

3.3.2. Semi Structured Interview

And then the researchers have implemented Semi Structured interview for the school principal to know the practice of the school in detail. And interview can usually yield richest data, details, new insights; and it can also provide opportunities to explore topics in depth (Creswell, 2012). In semi structured interview there are around 6 open ended questions.

3.3.3 Observation Checklist

Finally, the researchers have used observation checklist to determine practical class activities and relationship between students and teachers. Moreover, the researchers can also depend on the outcomes of observation because the process of observation mainly relies on a researchers seeing and hearing things and recording these observation rather than relying on subjects, self-report responses to questions or statements (Creswell, 2012).And also in this research observation checklist there are 6 variables which needs to be verified and to administer the observation checklist researchers have taken 2 sessions of physical education practical classes.

The reliability of this research has been checked through methodological coherence i.e. the appropriateness and thorough collection, analysis and interpretation of data. And audit trials i.e. the transparent description of all procedures and issues relative to the research project (Creswell, 2012).

3.4. Data Collection Procedures

The data collection procedures have taken up to seven days. In this time the questioners, structured interview, and observation checklist were administered after having the consent of the school. After having the approval of the advisor, the researchers have gone to the school and administered questionnaire for PE teacher, semi structured interview for the school principal. After these researchers administered questionnaire for SWHI and observation checklist for the practical class. Then finally researchers have again administered observation checklist to strengthen the result that are previously obtained.

Generally, the researchers have taken 24 students with hearing impairment out of grade 3 and 4 as a sample, and collected full information from 20 students.

And the researchers have successfully distributed and collected the structured interview for the school principal and questionnaire for the physical education teacher and deployed the observation checklist.

3.5. Data Analysis

The data that researchers collected have been analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively because the approach of this research is mixed approach. And for analyzing quantitative data, researchers have used percentages. Researchers use

percentages because using percentage can let researchers to analyze complex data in a more specific and understandable way.

And data gathered through open ended questionnaire, structured interview, and observation checklist were analyzed qualitatively. First researchers have organized the data. Then explored and coded the organized data. After exploring and coding the organized data researchers have described the findings and also form themes. And then as illustrated in chapter four interpretations and discussion of the findings were described.

4. Results and Discussion

This section tries to present, analyze and interpret the collected data. The results of the study have been illustrated without losing their meanings and then discussion was made by comparing the results with literatures.

The data was analyzed, presented and discussed with the critical view of the obtained results by the means of questionnaire, structured interview and observation checklist. And also in the process of analyzing, researchers have identified around 5 themes namely: Characteristics of respondents, Identification of SWHI in the school, teaching strategies employed to teach SWHI in the school, Opportunities to teach physical education for SWHI in the school and Challenges related to teaching physical education for SWHI in the school.

As it was mentioned in many parts of this paper, the main purpose of the study was to investigate the educational practice of physical education for students with hearing impairment in Ambo Lazarist Catholic School for the Deaf. The researchers have narrated the data by forming five thematic issues. And these issues are analyzed and discussed as follows:

4.1. Characteristics of Respondents

In this section the researchers determine the characteristics of the respondents which included gender, and their academic positions.

No	Participants	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
1	Principal	1	100%	-	0	1	100%
2	Physical Education Teacher	1	100%	-	0	1	100%
3	Students with Hearing Impairment	11	45.83 %	13	54.17 %	24	100%

In the table 4.1 there are 1 male school principal, 1 male physical education teacher, 11(45.83%) male students with hearing impairment and 13(54,17%) female students with hearing impairment.

4.2. Identification of SWHI in the school

The researchers have asked about identification mechanism of the school in Question number 4 of the structured interview for the school principal. And as the data from the structured interview depicted that: Before SWHI come to the school, the school's principal in collaboration with other government bodies identifies SWHI. And the way of identifying students with hearing impairment was by communicating with education office, social affairs and by travelling to country sides to raise awareness. After doing the above things the school has managed to identify and gather SWHI in one roof. And after the school enters the students, the school has thought about an in-depth identification SWHI i.e. the magnitude of hearing of SWHI. However, the school was unable to manage the identification SWHI's hearing because of the inaccessibility of audiologist.

Identification of SWHI minimally requires: Observing student's interactions with parents, teachers, and peers; Interviewing the student and significant others in his or her life; Examining school records and past evaluations results; Evaluating developmental and medical histories; Using information from checklists completed by parents, teachers, or by the student; Evaluating curriculum requirement and options; and Evaluating the student's type and rate of

learning during trial teaching periods (Salvia, 2010). Conversely, the principal’s reply about the identification of SWHI is in disagreement of the procedures that have to be taken.

4.3. Teaching strategies employed to teach SWHI in the school

Except the questions in structured interview for the school principal, all of the instruments have questioned about the teaching strategies of the school.

The results that are obtained from Questionnaires for SWHI have been analyzed as follows:

No	Conditions of the school	Frequency	Percentage
1.	My teacher motivates me to participate in physical education practical class.	Agree – 20	100%
		Undecided - 0	0%
		Disagree – 0	0%
		Total – 20	
2.	When I learn in field the teacher supports me in areas where I face some difficulties.	Agree – 16	80%
		Undecided - 4	20%
		Disagree – 0	0%
		Total – 20	
3.	My physical education teacher considers individual difference.	Agree 17	85%
		Undecided 2	10%
		Disagree 1	5%
		Total – 20	
4.	My teacher shows the desired activities in practical class by using sign language.	Agree – 20	100%
		Undecided - 0	0%
		Disagree – 0	0%
		Total – 20	
5.	My teacher utilizes different teaching methods that are appropriate to my ability like: demonstration and lecturing method.	Agree – 15	75%
		Undecided – 3	15%
		Disagree – 2	10%

In Question 1, about 20(100%) of the student have witnessed that their physical education teacher motivates them in the teaching process of physical education.

In Question 2, about 16(80%) of SWHI have agreed on the support that their physical education teacher gives them in their difficulty areas and around 4(20%) SWHI have not decided whether there is a support or not.

And in Question 3, around 17(85%) of SWHI have acknowledged that their PE teacher considers individual difference, and about 2(10%) of SWHI did not decided whether their teacher considers their difference or not and 1(5%) SWHI didn’t agree on the question.

The Question number 4 revealed that the school is successfully teaching PE by using sign language because all 20(100%) of the SWHI agreed on that specific question.

The Question number 5 showed that 15(75%) of SWHI have agreed on their teacher that he/she utilized different teaching methods for teaching them PE, and 3(15%) of SWHI have not yet decided on the issue of utilizing different teaching methods and 2(10%) of SWHI have showed that their teacher didn’t utilize any kind of teaching method in order to teach them PE.

Except question number 2 of the questionnaire that is prepared for PE education teacher all the 4 questions are targeted towards knowing the teaching strategies of the school.

The first question is about preparation of lesson plan, and the teacher has answered “yes” for this question. And in Question number 3 researchers have find that the teacher didn’t allow student in activities other than the prescribed activities.

The rest of the two questions are open ended questions that ask about teaching strategies and modification mechanism of the teacher. For the question regarding teaching strategy researchers have gained the following answer: the teacher uses a teaching strategy that are mainly used by other regular physical education teachers teaching strategy like teacher centered method, demonstration and lecturing method.

Similarly, The answer that researchers obtained from the last question i.e. modification mechanism is that the teacher uses only sign language to modify the teaching process of physical education to SWHI.

And finally, all the questions that have listed in the observation checklist have also aimed to know the teaching strategy of the teacher towards teaching physical education for student with hearing impairment. The observation checklist has 6 variables which are stated and presented as follows:

As the researchers observed in the practical class, the Teacher’s ability of motivating and allowing the students with hearing impairment to practice seems good. And also the Teacher has a good manner of conduct and willingness to listen student’s problem. Then the issue of identifying and considering individual differences of students with hearing impairment in the practical session of the lesson also seems good.

Moreover, the researchers have witnessed the teacher’s use of teaching aids as there were ropes, balls, pads. And also the teacher’s ability to modify instructions for students with hearing impairment seems to focus on giving the preferred activities by using only sign language as a modification basis. And finally the teacher also seems to give attention to safety rules.

No	Conditions of the school	Frequency	Percentage
1.	My school administrators help me to participate in sport activities.	Agree – 10	50%
		Undecided -10	50%
		Disagree – 0	0%
		Total – 20	
2.	My school have enough teaching material that helps me in learning physical education	Agree – 13	65%
		Undecided – 7	35%
		Disagree – 0	0%
		Total – 20	
3.	My school’s Physical structure is suitable for the teaching and learning process of physical education.	Agree – 20	100%
		Undecided - 0	0%
		Disagree – 0	0%
		Total – 20	
4.	My families support me with the necessary materials I need in order to participate?	Agree – 2	10%
		Undecided - 1	5%
		Disagree - 17	85%
		Total – 20	
5.		Agree – 8	40%
		Undecided - 3	15%

	My families encourage me to participate in physical education class.	Disagree – 9	45%
		Total – 20	

Most of the above results about teaching strategies are inconsistent with many literatures. as (vize, 2019) stated, teachers can modify the classroom by: establishing a 'stop and look' strategy which is based on a visual signal, teaching the class using a predictable patterns of activities, and establishing an emergency signal, using key signs for the activities that will be done in each term. And also as suggested by (torreno, 2019), Arranging the environment with easy access to supplies can prevent accidents and improve participation in activities. And also working with paraprofessionals and individual encouragement can promote the teaching practice of physical education and ease frustration over physical difficulties. Moreover, Teachers can significantly improve educational outcomes of SWDs by implementing specific strategies. For example: teacher's creativity can open new opportunities to learn (Torreno, 2019).

4.4. Opportunities to teach physical education for SWHI in the school.

In order to find reliable data about the opportunity of the school regarding teaching PE for SWHI the researchers have asked many kinds of questions by using different kinds of data gathering instruments like questionnaire and structured interview. Now researchers will discuss it as follows:

In Question number 6-10 of the questionnaire for SWHI have targeted to dig out about the opportunities of the school.

The Question number 6 has yielded the answer that 10(50%) of SWHI have agreed upon the idea that there is a commitment in the side of school administrator to help them to participate in the sport activities and the rest of 10(50%) of SWHI have said vice versa.

In Question 7 around 13(65%) SWHI have agreed on the material provision that their school offers regarding physical education and other 7(35%) SWHI did not agree on that provision.

As for Question 8, all 20(100%) SWHI have agreed on the physical structure of their school is suitable for them to do exercises. We have asked this question because of the predictability of having a multiple disability like hearing impairment with physical disability.

When we come to Question 9, it is about the family support, around 2(10%) SWHI have agreed on that their parents give them the necessary support they need in participating in the physical education class and 1(5%) SWHI have not decided on the support and the rest 17(85%) SWHI has disagreed on the question. This means most of the families of SWHI did not acknowledged the benefits of physical education for their children.

And finally Question 10 has also revealed that there is a low rate of family encouragement for SWHI regarding the physical education practices, because around 10(50%) SWHI have disagreed on this specific question and 7(35%) of SWHI has agreed and the rest of 3(15%) SWHI have not decided yet.

And From the questionnaire that the researchers have given to PE teacher there was one question which tries to find out about the time allotment for the period of physical education and the answer to this specific question was a negative answer, which means that the time allotment for the physical education period is not enough as expected.

And from the structured interview that has been conducted, there are around 4 question that try to find out about opportunities of the school towards teaching PE for SWHI. The numbers of those questions are 1, 2, 5 and 6.

In question number 1, researchers have managed to find the answer that says "the parents of SWHI come to the school once a month and at that time the school and parents negotiate about the overall welfare of SWHI including PE. And the second question is about the collaboration of school with other organization: "regarding the issue of PE the school didn't have any kind of contact with other organization."

The 5th question was direct, because it was asking the principal what opportunity the school possessed in the area of PE. And the answer was that "we have acquired some sport materials like: shoes, balls, and cloths from foreign country called Ireland and also this country has made a promise to support the school in any kind of issue it faces.

The last question is about what the school did in order to maximize the participation of SWHI in PE. In this question researchers have reached to the conclusion that the school have planned to extend the time allotment of PE periods from only Tuesday and Friday to all the five working days of the week. And also the school has hired one individual with hearing impairment who is active in sport activities to train SWHI in the afternoon sessions. And also the school has notified to get support from the city administrator about the issue of PE.

According to many literature including (torreno, 2019) it was stated that “to make the practice of teaching physical education for students with hearing impairment work, general classroom teachers, specialists, parents and students themselves must work together to create the best educational environment”. This means that many stakeholders including family must involve in the creation process of best educational environment. And also as (Gizachew, 2012) stated “Scheduling” or time allotment is regarded as a challengeable issue which controversies with the result that the researchers gained through Questionnaire for PE teacher. So, the issue of time must be given due attention as well as other aspects. Furthermore, according to many literatures the notion of “familial involvement” is a mandatory thing in order to cultivate the practice of physical education for SWHI into its peak level.

4.5. Challenges related to teaching physical education for SWHI in the school

The researchers have managed to ask about the challenges only to the principal of the school via structured interview. And it was also a direct statement that asks about what challenge the school face in teaching PE for SWHI did.

“The district governor has less focus on the issue of physical education to SWHI. And there is a limited knowledge about how the SWHI can be successful individuals in areas of PE and also the families of SWHI didn’t collaborate with the school in maximizing the participation of their children in PE sessions.

And also as stated in many literatures there are many other challenges that can hinder the development of practice of teaching physical education like Finance, shortage of equipment; Facilities, Qualified teaching personnel, Class size, Scheduling, Training for physical education teachers (Gizachew, 2012).

5 Conclusion

From the above reviewed literatures one can conclude that physical education is the integral part of the total educational activities which is beneficial for mental, physical, social and psychological aspects of an individual’s life through planned and selected physical activities. Therefore, one individual have to understand that physical education plays a great role in the society, if efficiently and effectively practiced, Especially for student with disability including student with hearing impairment (fekede, 2012). Hence, based on the findings of the study researchers can conclude as follows:

- ✓ The school’s practice of identifying student with hearing impairment seems to be less than expected and have a shortage of getting audiologist.
- ✓ The study showed that the teaching practice of physical education of the school have some hindrances like rigidity of teaching method. However, there is also some commitment in the school like teaching the SWHI in sign language.
- ✓ The respondents answer has revealed that there is a low rate of family encouragement for SWHI regarding the physical education practices.
- ✓ Despite the fact that there are some opportunities like commitment among the school in reforming the time schedule regarding teaching physical education, there is still many opportunities that the school, teachers, parents and other stakeholders can offer.
- ✓ The school district governor less focus on the issue of physical education to SWHI, limited knowledge about how to accommodate the practice of teaching PE for SWHI, and collaboration of parents with the school in maximizing the participation of their children in PE sessions is all regarded as a challenge in Ambo Lazarist Catholic School for the Deaf.

6 . Recommendation/implication for future research

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested and also the researchers would appreciate if the concerned bodies give their valuable attention.

I. Measures to be taken at school level:

- (Muga, 2003) stated that the current state of routine identification practice needs intensive training of screeners before more rigorous techniques are implemented. Therefore, the school's practice of identifying student with hearing impairment needs further attention among the all stakeholders.
- And also awareness creation strategies should be designed to the families and other stakeholders so that they could support and encourage the practice of PE for SWHI.
- The school should make and build communication about the benefits of PE with all the concerned bodies.
- SWHI have to participate in and outside the school environment in sport activities like other students without hearing impairment. Therefore, the school has to facilitate such opportunities to enhance the social interaction skill of SWHI.
- The school has to support and encourage teachers to produce and use relevant teaching strategies to promote the teaching learning process of PE for SWHI.

II. Measures to be taken by teachers:

- The learning environment of physical education needs some sort of modification. Thus, PE teachers should workout the necessary modification of educational materials, methodology, facilities, equipment and environmental conditions in order to address specific educational needs of students with hearing impairment.
- As researchers discussed before training in the area of adapted physical education is a crucial thing in order to equip the physical education teacher with the necessary knowledge.

Furthermore, researchers want to reflect the saying of the school principal, while researchers were conducting the research the school principal have said that "Dyspraxia is the major problem of students with hearing impairment. And as the term indicates it is one kind of learning difficulties that is stated under the types of learning disorder that manifests its effect on the development of motor skills, difficulty pronouncing words, problems with physical capabilities and coordination."

From the above paragraph one can easily understand that the problem of students with hearing impairment did not end with hearing only but extends its effect as time goes and when the level of support is decreased. And also because of Dyspraxia, students with hearing impairment encounter a problem in physical coordination which is highly related to learning physical education. Therefore, one practitioner must be alert of these issues in teaching physical education for student with hearing impairment.

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