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ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

Students' Perceptions towards Motivational and Demotivational Factors for Health and Physical Education

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ABSTRACT

Health and physical education helps a person to promote health status and prevent him or her from diseases in life. National Education System Plan (2071) recommended health and physical education as an obligatory subject in the schools' curriculum, but at present it is an optional subject at the secondary level. In this context, this study aims to explore the students' perception towards motivational and de-motivational factors of health and physical education for teacher education. To accomplish the objectives of the study, phenomenological research design under qualitative inquiry was applied. The data were collected through unstructured interview with the B.Ed. students of the constituent campuses under the public university. The informants were selected purposively. Decreasing of students in health and physical education for teacher education was the problem of this study. The results showed that the main motivational and de-motivational factors regarding health and physical education are: existing curriculum, teachers' competencies, pedagogies applied in teaching-learning activities, availability of infrastructure facilities, employability after completion of the study, public recognition and evaluation practices. This implies that students, teachers and policymakers should work together to reform the subject's sustainability and recognition.

KEYWORDS: Employability, motivation, pedagogy, public recognition, teacher education

INTRODUCTION

Motivation is a state of willingness to do something which is at the heart of the learning. It is a process of inspiring people to act and achieve their goals. It is derived from the word 'motive' which means needs, desires, wants, or drives within an individual (Petri & Govern, 2013). A motive is an agent of motivation; it is a process of stimulating people to accomplish their goals. There are two types of motivation namely intrinsic and extrinsic (Sansone & Harackiewicz, 2000), which affect the performance of the learners in different ways. Intrinsic motivation is a highly autonomous form of motivation and

extrinsic motivation refers to a behavior that helps a person to gain reward, benefit rather than enjoyment. Praise and blame, reward and punishment may encourage and discourage students towards the learning process (Devi, 2014). So, motivation is a psychological factor, which affects a person's predetermining goals.

All biological drives such as sleep, thirst, hunger, relief from pain, fear, curiosity, desire to gain power, and dominance are known as intrinsic motivation. Professionals who have more intrinsic motivation can get competence in their jobs (Asún et al., 2020). Any incentive, allowances, bonus, promotion and demotion, appreciation certificate, and prizes are known as extrinsic motivation. Positive reinforcement gives pleasure and satisfaction whereas a negative incentive gives a feeling of pain and dissatisfaction (Long, 2005). Motivation and warm feelings do not last; it is like a blowing balloon (Petri & Govern, 2013). So, achievement, responsibility, recognition, advancement, creative and challenging work, and the possibility of growth and development come under the motivational factors.

Teacher education is an academic program, which educates the prospective teachers to have their better academic future. It is essential to advance the necessary skills and competence to develop intended skills, attitude and love for the profession (Remmiya, 2017). It provides content and pedagogical knowledge to prospective teachers to enhance academic and professional competencies, which helps students to live independently (Srivastava, 1999). It is known as a training that has specific goals and improves one's capability, capacity, productivity and performance, and develops both skills and knowledge (Pokhrel & Behera, 2016). It encompasses teaching skills, sound pedagogical theory and professional skills.

Teacher education in health education first emerged in the nineteenth century as a university program in the USA. Then the profession of health education profession has been evolved (Makar et al., 1975). It is concerned with the optimum growth and development of student teachers especially; organic health, emotional and social development, knowledge, attitude, practice, spiritual and moral characteristics (Yadav, 2015). So, it is a foundation of all stages of education and the quality of teachers depends upon the nature of the teacher education program.

The largest ongoing teacher education program is the pre-service teacher education, which is provided by different universities. The purpose of the program is to develop academic and professional competencies. In Nepal, teacher education started with the founding of the Basic Training Program in 1947 but it was institutionalized in 1971 (Asian Development Bank, 2017). Padma Shamsher, the then Prime Minister (1945 to 1948) established 14 basic schools in different parts of the country and one training center for teachers of basic schools in Kathmandu based on the Indian curriculum. The inclusion of physical education in 11 subjects were taught at school level (Joshi, 2003). Since then training was mandatory to be a teacher and extra allowances were provided to trained teachers.

As a recommendation of the Nepal National Educational Planning Commission (NNEPC) 1954 to 1955, the College of Education (COE) was established in 1956 to prepare trained manpower to teach in schools. Initially, it was known as Normal Training and focused on primary teachers' training. A five-year plan of education was prepared in the summer of 1956, which endorsed the existing national teachers training centers that required to be immediately expanded into a professional four-year college of education for the of elementary and secondary teachers and other educational leaders (Joshi, 2003). After the implementation of the report of the National Education System Plan (NESP) in 1971, the college of education was renamed as the Institute of Education (IOE) under Tribhuvan University (TU). In 1982, it was renamed in the Faculty of Education (FOE)

according to the recommendation of the Royal Higher Education Commission (RHEC), which is still in existence (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2017). Then, FOE was made powerless; as a result, teacher education started declining over the years.

Health and Physical Education (HPE) was given a prime importance since 1954. It was contained at primary, lower secondary and secondary levels. HPE was introduced as a part of education under a normal school after the founding college of education in 1956. After the establishment of TU in 1960, the college of education became a part of TU and four years B.Ed. program was reduced into two years intermediate and two years of bachelor in education (Faculty of Education, 2020). There was a turning point in the history of HPE that came in 1971 when a bold education plan National Education System Plan (NESP 1971 to 1976) was launched in the country, which created a 'boom' of the students in teacher education because of these motivational factors; training was mandatory for becoming a permanent teacher, the salary of teachers was increased and made as per other comparable jobs, different modalities of training were developed and the possibilities of getting jobs in schools and education offices was greater than other government jobs (Joshi, 2003). NESP recommended HPE as a compulsory subject in the school curriculum. Since 1973, HPE was started at intermediate and bachelor level as a major subject. It was separated as health education and physical education at bachelor level from 1992 to 1996. Since 1997, it was reintegrated as HPE, which is still in existence. At master's level, health education and physical education are separated. Master's degree in health education was started since 1994 and physical education since 1996. FOE also started M.Phil. and Ph.D. programs in health education (Gnawali, 2013). In this way, the HPE curriculum is not in the fixed framework.

In the initial days, in my observation, HPE was a compulsory subject in the school level curriculum, a number of students were increased, public recognition and job opportunity were also good but at present, I have experienced that a number of students has been decreasing each year. Many affiliated campuses removed it as a major subject. In this rationale, this study is an attempt to investigate the factors that are responsible to motivate and de-motivate the students towards health and physical education in teacher education.

METHODOLOGY

This research adopted phenomenological research design under the qualitative approach and interpretive paradigm. Students' lived experiences were interpreted, using this phenomenological approach. Phenomenology is a science of pure phenomena, which is the interior experience of being aware of something. It is concerned with the lived experience of people (Groenewald, 2004). I used this paradigm because this focuses on the informants' experience in their life world and emphasizes on the subjective interpretation of phenomena.

In this research, information was gathered using unstructured interview as a research tool. The informants in this study were the students of B.Ed. fourth year with HPE as a major subject from the constituent campuses of a public university in Nepal. Both informants and campuses were selected purposively. The informants were interviewed until data saturation. Interviews were taken in the HPE department room of the selected campuses. An hour to each informant and two informants in each day were requested for interview. I met each informant more than three times. After their campus hour (about 2:00-4:00 PM), information was gathered through interviews. Informed consent was taken before participating in interview. The interview was recorded with the permission of the informants and later stored in my personal laptop. The pseudonyms of the informants were used for confidentiality.

The gathered information was analyzed textually. Before analyzing them, they were transcribed after multiple listening of the recording, coded using a highlighter and making notes in the margin, organized and categorized into seven different themes. The information was interpreted in the discussion, followed by each result. Software called Zotero was used for the in-text citation and referencing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The collected information has been analyzed and discussed under seven themes in this section. They include the following:

Students' Views on HPE Curriculum

Since 2015, four year B.Ed. program has been implemented in TU (Faculty of Education, 2020). The experience of students towards the curriculum of HPE as a major subject has not been found satisfactory in terms of its structure. They shared that the content has become more theoretical and overloaded because of the integration of health education and physical education. The success rate of students in HPE is much below the expectation. One of the informants Sarita said:

The curriculum of HPE needs to be separated as health education and physical education. Because of the integrated curriculum content is too much and practical activities are difficult for the students like me; the contents are not updated, relevant and standard. The curriculum needs to focus on job opportunities.

There may be several factors that influence HPE in teacher education programs; among them, curriculum is the one. It is structurally overloaded with contents and the remaining contents are traditional and fairly weak. Most of the informants wanted a separate health education curriculum rather than a curriculum integrated with physical education. This implies that if two different curricula for health and physical education as major subjects are developed separately, they will attract students towards their learning. Though health and physical education are interrelated and interdependent, they are different (Kemparaj, 2003). Kemparaj strongly pointed out that curriculum needs to be separated.

In B.Ed. program, most of the students are married girls and found to be rearing their babies. Because of the pregnancy and post-natal care, they cannot participate in practical activities and attend regularly. Another participant Babita shared her experience as:

I have a small baby; I am unable to take part in practical activities. My parents do not allow me to go to the campus, leaving my baby at home. I do not have practical skills, but I know about different educational plans and teaching learning strategies. I am hopeful to become a HPE teacher with theoretical knowledge but I'm poor in practical.

This account reveals that they have difficulties in participating practical activities under physical education because of family norms and values. Although a research finding showed that the girl students were more motivated than the boy students to participate in physical education and sports for aesthetic and social reasons. They have higher selfesteem and pride (Dechamma, 2012). The parental perception towards physical education affects the girl students' perception of physical education. But here the phenomenon is vice versa. The girl students do not prefer physical education as their specialization.

The informants explained that the curricula of HPE need to be revised in a certain period according to the nation's aspiration and students' demand. The content should be updated in the revised curriculum. Many practical activities are prescribed in

the curricula, which are not practiced in physical education. But in reality, they are just taught theoretically. TU has set the vision 2030 and it included some reform areas such as revising curriculum as per the need of market, capacity building of faculties through different programs, development as IT-friendly and involvement of faculty in research work (TU, 2020a), which helps to inspire enthusiasm and motivation towards teacher education.

Teaching Competence

Competencies refer to knowledge, attitude, skills and abilities that are needed to accomplish the given task in a given context efficiently (Moynihan et al., 2015). Teaching competence is the right way of transferring knowledge, application and skills to the learners. It depends on students, teachers' qualities and the classroom context. The content knowledge, planning, motivation, presentation, communication, evaluation and classroom management skills are the dimensions of teaching competence (Anitha, 2013). To manage the challenges of the teaching-learning process, competent teachers are needed.

Teachers need academic and professional competence, which can be achieved through teacher education and a rigorous study of the content to be taught. It leads the prospective teachers towards value-oriented and quality of life. One of the informants Saral said:

I am going to be a school teacher. I need teaching competence. I hope I will be a competent HPE teacher. The course of teaching practice is backbone of teacher education. It provided me a lot of opportunities to be a good teacher.

The informants were hopeful to become competent HPE teachers with a strong background in theoretical and practical activities based on pedagogies. They stated that the course of teaching practice is the heart of teacher education, which provides the maximum opportunities to be a competent teacher. They learn to develop different educational plans, their implementation and evaluation skills that are needed to be a teacher. The teacher education program is very important to develop personality and self-confidence. More emphasis should be given to teaching practice as medical and engineering courses (Srivastava, 1999). But in reality, the teaching practice program has become only a ritual and there is neither sincerity by the supervisors nor by student teachers (Asian Development Bank, 2017). Though there are some weaknesses in the implementation of teaching practice, it is the main identity of teacher education.

Students' Experience Regarding Pedagogy Applied

Universities are fully autonomous for preparing pre-service teachers and curriculum accordingly. They need to give priority to professional development, especially practical activities and training programs for prospective teachers. One of the informants Lalita said: "Teachers always apply lecture and note-taking methods. No new innovative strategies and technologies are adopted. ICT is not used. Only chalk and talk method." HPE is a theory cum practical course in its nature, but majority of the teachers impart just theoretical stuff to the students. The informants stated that the instructional pedagogies which were applied by teachers are teacher-centered, especially using the lecture method. There were innumerable instructional pedagogies mentioned in courses, but they were limited in the paper. They were read but not applied. There was no ICT lab and devices also. Consequently, there was very difficult to expect innovative and latest teaching approaches and methods from teachers. They need to adopt ICT and practical based pedagogies. Online teaching is a new paradigm in Nepal with the outbreak of

COVID-19, but because of the demand of time, it has been practiced by hook or crook. Another participant Sarita expressed her experience:

Because of my job, I am irregular and hardly attend my practical classes; I cannot recognize all my teachers. I am weak both in theory and practical classes, but I can recover theory class by self-study but practical is difficult. Online teaching would be better for theoretical subjects.

Usually, students attend in practical classes than theoretical classes. In practical classes, attendance is compulsory and evaluation is done during their participation. The informants accepted that because of many circumstances, they could not attend the classes. So, they depended on self-study, especially a few days before the final examination. They accepted their weaknesses, which have been caused by several reasons. They can acquire theoretical knowledge from many sources, but practical performance is not possible without participating and practicing.

The B.Ed. program is based on training and preparing professionally competent manpower for the educational sector. Because of their unfavorable situation to be regular, a blended mode of teaching-learning approach is needed. The Open and Distance Learning(ODL) policy 2006 provided the provision for working people through the ODL system as supplementary to the existing system of education (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2006).

Job Opportunities: As the Main Factor

Education is for all-round development of a person and quality of life thereafter. Students look for and prefer the subject, which has job scope in the market. In this sense, one of the informants Lalita said:

My aim is to be a school teacher, but there are fewer job opportunities in schools and many senior graduates are jobless even today. There are no posts vacant for the HPE teachers in schools. The non-HPE teachers are teaching HPE subjects at the school level.

The main job placements for the HPE graduate is school teachers, NGOs and INGOs as health educators. The informants expressed that job opportunity is rare after passing the B.Ed. program. Though there are many probable job vacancies such as health education teacher, sports teacher, school supervisors, curriculum experts, administrators, health motivator and health educator, but the HPE graduates are unemployed. Non-professionals and semi-professionals are teaching HPE subjects even today. Due to lack of fair policy, there are no vacant posts for the HPE teachers in schools. Though teacher education has many weaknesses, it is mandatory to be a teacher. Hopefully, another participant Suraj said:

I hope that in near future policymakers will make policies that every school has to manage an HPE teacher or sports teacher and health educators at the community level. Then there will be so many job opportunities. There will be the HPE subject as a compulsory subject at secondary level.

The informants were hopeful that shortly, the policymakers will make a policy that HPE will be a compulsory subject at secondary level and a teacher will be provided in each school and health educators at the community level. Then, job opportunities will be created and students will be motivated towards HPE. Job areas need to be widened by linking with policies. In this regard, Babita added, "Teachers Service Commission also does not announce the vacancies for HPE teachers."

Very few or negligible seats are announced by the Teachers Service Commission. The HPE graduates are compelled to compete in other subjects like the social study. Public Service Commission also does not announce the post of health educator for the B.Ed. graduates. Job opportunities need to be created and linked with the future policies.

Public Recognition

Appreciation, satisfaction, reputation, acknowledgment, respect, value and importance are given by the public, which are known as public recognition. Recognition is a powerful feeling and more important than cash incentive in one's professional life. People must feel valued and respected while doing something (Long, 2005). If a student cannot enjoy and respect in his or her study, it leads to de-motivation since neither he or she gets job opportunities nor good prestige. Good public recognition motivates and poor public recognition de-motivates a person. One of the informants Suraj said:

Society does not accept HPE as a major and important subject. I feel inferior to say myself as a student of HPE. HPE is dominated by public health and other biomedical subjects. It is omitted from the list of compulsory subjects at in secondary level. The Civil Service Commission and Teacher Service Commission do not give chance to compete for HPE graduates.

Though health education is daily life related and life skills-based education, it is dominated by medical science and public health. Preventive measures are dominated by curative measures. HPE is not a compulsory and separate subject in the secondary level curriculum. At the basic level, it is integrated with general science and creative art and it is taught by non-HPE teachers. There is not a post of HPE teachers in schools. The Teachers Service Commission does not announce a call for the HPE teachers. The HPE graduates are not eligible for the post of public service commission as health officer. NGOs and INGOs do not prefer health education graduates. In this way, public recognition of HPE is poor. So students are de-motivated towards health and physical education. They want to study valuable subjects with high employability.

Experience in Infrastructure Facilities

The infrastructure facilities determine the excellence of education, which ensures the smooth teaching and learning condition. It is different from one campus to another. In this study, one of the informants Mohan shared her experience as:

Classrooms are much larger than necessary; furniture is age-old, fixed and dusty. The floor is dirty, and the walls were not clean. Basic facilities such as drinking water and toilet facilities are good, but ICT is not used. But there are sufficient outdoor and indoor games and sports facilities.

The informants shared their experience that classrooms were much spacious than necessary. The furniture was fixed, age-old, dusty and students unfriendly. The floor was dirty and the walls were not clean, but the facilities of indoor and outdoor games and sports were sufficient. ICT was not integrated though FoE of TU has introduced ICT courses for the bachelor's and master's level. The use of ICT makes teaching more comfortable and effective. ICT enhances teacher-student's relationships through online learning (Anitha, 2013). It helps the teacher educators to improve and update their teaching competence. It helps active learning by providing feedback and sharing ideas.

Although there was no well-equipped ICT lab on campus, electronic equipment like mobile phones, tablets and laptops can be used as ICT devices. The main problem is a lack of the ICT proficient teachers. The prospective teachers should be well-familiar with ICT. Because of the COVID-19, an alternative education system is being sought after, instead of the face to face mode. The irregular and job holder students are looking for an alternative system.

Students' Experience towards the Evaluation System

A summative test is taken to evaluate the students' achievement. For the theoretical portion, a paper-pencil test is taken at the end of the session and for the practical portion, external evaluation is done after the completion of the theory examination, which demands students to perform a particular action to be done. The subject teacher is appointed as an internal examiner and the external examiner is appointed by the Office of the Controller of Examinations (TU, 2020b). The internal evaluation is done based on attendance, performance, discipline and so on. The external evaluation is done by observing performance and oral tests (viva voce). Saral expressed his views:

I do not have any recommended books prescribed by the curriculum. I have just guess papers. I have not been to the campus library yet. The practical evaluation is nominal and just a formality. After attending the examination, good marks can be obtained whatever the performance.

The informants expressed that they were irregular in their classes, so practical activities are more difficult to them. They did not have the books recommended by the curriculum. Without hesitation, they expressed that they had not visited the campus library for four years. They depended on guess papers and supplementary question-answer solutions available in the market. Their goals were how to pass the exam. Their study was examoriented. They had started their study only after the publication of the exam schedule. Without any hesitation, they agreed to this bitter fact.

They acquired only theoretical knowledge, not behavioral as the aim of teacher education, but only for the sake of passing the final examination. The pass rate in the annual examination is very low because of such study. Though they passed the examination, they secured average marks.

CONCLUSION

Health and physical education in teacher education is needed to produce manpower for disease prevention and health promotion. Especially health education teachers, sports teachers, health educators, supervisors, planners and curriculum designers need this type of education, but the number of students has been decreasing each year. Students are the main stakeholders of this program, so they experienced updated and employability curriculum, fair policy, enough job opportunities, use of innovative and critical pedagogies, availability of resources, fair and scientific evaluation, and good public recognition. They require motivational factors, but there are un-employability and un-updated curricula, unfair implementation of policies, conventional pedagogy, unfair and unscientific evaluation system and poor public recognition, which are supposed to be as de-motivational factors. The informants claimed that lack of job opportunities after graduation and public recognition were the main de-motivational factors. Most of the factors are affected by existing policies. So policymakers need to pay attention towards it for the subject's recognition and sustainability.

This research has some limitations; this study did not include teachers and policymakers as study population. Though it has some limitations, the results of this study have been implacable for students, teachers, planners, policymakers and those who like to involve in the education sector. So, the HPE curriculum needs to be updated to have better status in the field of academia.

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Prithvi Academic Journal, Volume 5, May 2022 [pp. 128-137]

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