# ABILITY IN DISABILITY: THE ROLE OF THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER IN DEVELOPING ABILITIES

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#### **Abstract**

Disability is a condition where impairment and diseases interact with social and environmental elements to bring about a line-up of limitations or disadvantages. This circumstance or function hinders or limits individuals' (people with disability) ability to perform intellectually, physically and mentally among others in accordance with societal norms for people of similar defined characteristics in a normal setting or environment. The disabled have needs like any other person; sense of belonging, love and acceptance, education, shelter, health care, protection and lots more. In sports provision have been made for people with disability to partake in to feel joy and happiness for being accepted the way they are. The Physical Education (PE) teacher (well groomed) is expected to play a role in this where he or she would bring out hidden abilities from the visible disabilities. Thus, a Physical Education teacher who must be able to get along well with other people and be above racial and ethnic prejudices should be able to unearth the ability in the disability of the disabled. He or she should be able to work and interact with all people. They (he or she) have to see eye to eye with their students, with members of staff and with the school authority. They have to have respect for the right of others and be devoted to the promotion of democratic ideals in their class. This they (the teachers) could do by making this category of people (people with disability) learn better. If this is done the abilities in the disabled would be unearthed.

Keyword: Education, Physical Education, Healthcare, Disability, Disabled.

## Introduction

No matter one's sex status and state; everyone has the ability to excel, ascend higher and be effective. It is only left for the said individual to accept the fact that his or her present condition; mostly in negative terms can be assuaged. In essence, even if one is disabled there is ability in such disability.

# **Concept of Disability**

Disability is a function (that is a circumstance) limiting a person's or people's ability in performance; this could be physically, mentally, intellectually among others in accordance with social norms (Adebayo & Moronkola, 2019). These are expectations for individuals of similar or defined characteristics in a normal setting or environment (Moronkola, Lazarus, Osianya, Olowasanu & Ademokeya, 2016). Disability is an impairment; a disorder. Haruna (2017) presented: this disorder may be physical, sensory, intellectual, emotional, mental and cognitive.

According to the World Health Organization (2011), disability is a physical or mental problem that limit one or more of the major life activities (behaviour such as

breathing, hearing, seeing, speaking, and walking learning working of an individual. Children with disabilities and other special needs are those who have (or are at an increased risk for) a long time physical, developmental (Shepherd, 1991), behavioural or emotional condition and who also require health and related services beyond those typically required by children (Okunrotifa, 2006). This includes orphans, the vulnerable and children with autistic disorder (Tijani et al, 2019).

Wall (2003) reiterated: a child with special needs is perceived as one who: "Deviates from the ordinary child such that he/she requires special attention, special devices and other areas that could make life more meaningful and worth living those who require special education service in order to benefit from the regular school curriculum. They are those whom learning difficulties or disabilities compel to require additional help in order to achieve their full educational potentials within the curriculum"

# The Disabled (Persons with Disabilities)

The World Health Organization (2001) reiterated: a person with a disability is not defined by their condition. According to Stephanie (2015) each person is a unique individual; thus, a good place to start about the disabled is to have an understanding of types of disabilities and their impact. This is because, a disability is a functional limitation (Shepherd, 1991), a restriction of an individual's ability to perform an activity (Bob & Jim, 2006; Ralph, 1996).

## **Types of Disabilities**

Different types of disabilities exist. These include: autism, visual impairment, hearing impairment, mental retardation, multiple disabilities (Okunrotifa, 1996), others are paedic impairment, intellectual learning disability, speech or language impairment, and traumatic brain injury, among others (Shepherd, 2015). Children with special needs may have mild learning disabilities or profound mental retardation, terminal illness, developmental delays, occasional panic attacks or serious psychiatric problems (WHO & UNICEF, 2008). Below are the categories of disabilities among the Nigerian citizens:-

- a. Hearing Impairment:- This can be referred to as a child born deaf or one who lost his hearing before he held developed language and speech.
- b. Visual impairment:- a person as blind if his/her field of vision is defective
- c. Intellectual Disability, Speech-language Impairment, Autism spectrum disorders
- d. Children with Additional Needs:- The children in this category appears to be more inclusive and represents children with disabilities of any kind, socially and emotionally disadvantaged such as children with minority ethnic backgrounds, children under poverty HIV/Aids, orphans, Street children, abused children, gifted children and slow learners (WHO, 2011).

# **Concept of Stigma and Stigmatization**

The concept of stigmatization can be viewed as a negative identity of recognition of certain group of people. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (2010) explained stigma as feeling of disapproval of people about particular illnesses or ways of behaving. Deduced from the above definitions, stigma is hatred, a curse, mark of dishonour, harassment, isolation and intolerable phenomenon placed on the people with varying degree of disabilities. Some people feel bad associating with other citizens, especially, those with pronounced degree of physical, mental and emotional disabilities.

According to UNICEF (2008), people with disability are denied opportunities to participate in different activities of the society. They even have limited access to school due to stigma and discrimination associated with the disability. There is no doubt that stigma or stigmatization against people with disabilities further deepens both physical and emotional imbalance being experienced by this group of people and their family members in Nigerian society. This therefore, deny them the opportunity to develop and show-case their endowed potentials.

#### **Causes of Disabilities**

Ogundeji, Adeniyi, & Arulogun (2014) identified malnutrition, injuries from falls road traffic accidents, domestic accidents, travel accidents-sea and air; chronic diseases like diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular disease, HIV/AIDS and communicable diseases. Mental impairments, birth defects as well as landmines are also included (Okunrotifa, 1995).

#### **Needs of the Disabled**

Ashin, Olayi & Ikwem (2015) posited: the challenges associated with the being disabled are problematic, thus, like everyone they (the people with disability) have various needs (Okunrotifa, 2006). Particularly for individuals with disabilities, services to them are expensive ventures that require collaborative efforts by government, voluntary agencies/churches as well as other organizations (Adebayo & Moronkola, 2019). This is to combat associated stigma people do place on them (people with disability) they reiterated. The needs for people with disability are basic necessities of life that is very germane to one's existence.

The disabled according to Adebayo & Moronkola (2019) need a sense of belonging; love and acceptance, education, shelter, protection, health care services, access to efficient transport, government public buildings and many others (Ralph, 1996). Disabled people like many people look forward to attaining fulfilled life; they desire to achieve their life goals and aspirations, have a successful career life, desire to get married, have a happy marriage and "settled home" (Okunrotifa, 2006). Of all these needs, consideration should be given to the health needs of the disabled (Ashi et al, 2015). They reiterated: "it is only someone who is alive and healthy that would think of achieving other needs". After this attention should be focused on the education and their social needs; especially, through Physical Education. This is where the Physical Education teacher vitally comes in.

## The Physical Education Teacher

Teaching is a process or an art where knowledge is transferred from one person to another (Adeyanju, 2005). Nevertheless, Nemine (2014) described teaching as a subset of education; and that a good grasp of the concept of education is the basis of what is expected from teaching. The teacher is a major factor in the successful direction of quality education. As often said, the level of the education of the teacher determines the level of education of the nation (Okunrotifa, 2006). This is one reason why teachers would (will) have to continue to learn despite that teaching is poorly paid.

Teaching is not everybody's business; it is a hard decision to take to become a teacher, the manager of the 'mind' (Nemine, 2008). The teacher is interested in developing the all-round persons' intellect, his/her emotion, and social, spiritual

including his/her physical makeup (Nemine, 2014). The teachers' focus is on the learner (Adeyanju, 2015). His concern is making the child learn the best that nature provides him/her and guide as well as evaluates following the psychological principles of education (Inengite, 2013). The teacher is spiritually committed and can be emotionally concerned about the promotion of learners' development. The teacher encourages the maximization of the learners' potentials so as to make him/her an acceptable and productive member of the society (Adeyanju, 2015).

You cannot just decide to jump into the profession unless you have the calling (Nemine, 2014). The teacher makes lots of sacrifices, they look out for ways of coping with learners' individual differences in perception (Okunrotifa, 1995). The teacher breaks down his/her topic into learnable 'whole'. He or she generates variety of examples to clarify his teaching of concepts and principles; selects appropriate learning experiences, sometimes (out of class) visits, use activity packed methods to teach, designs and develop instructional materials to teach and diversify learning modes. All his/her activity is directed at meeting the learners learning needs under a non-threatened environment (Adeyanju, 2005).

Physical Education being an integral part of total education (Okunrotifa, 2006) and it involves basic movements, muscular endurance, strength, speed and to run (Gankon, Udo, Anchau, Udoudoh, Atare, Jatau, Usman & Oladeji, 2016). Enshrined in these involvements are creative rhythmic activities — (marching, galloping, hopping etc); measuring physical fitness components — muscular endurance, (stress-up, minute run, walk-bench, squat thrust), strength (pull-up, sit-up), speed (50 metres dash). Other involvements could be in athletics, ball games and racket games (Gankon et al, 2016).

All these activities are needed by people with disabilities especially in school settings which would require qualified Physical Education teachers. Of course there are benefits for these categories of humans (people with disabilities). These activities would benefit their health in many ways (Shepherds, 1991). They help in muscular development, visual activity, increase in aerobic capability and cardiovascular health and balance and coordination (Ogundeji et al, 2014). Also, calories are burnt, build endurance, develop concentration and self-discipline (Ashi et al, 2015), strength and flexibility are built, bone strength is increased and health is improved due to shift between walking, running and sprinting, maintains a normal heart rate and blood pressure, improved metabolic function and increases bone density and reaction time (Inengite, 2013).

Teachers can be viewed as individuals who, by virtue of their adequate training in the field of education and the curriculum of Physical Education (Okunrotifa, 2006; Inengite, 2013), become specialists in the discipline (Nemine, 2008), and engaged in the dissemination of knowledge, skills and worthwhile values of the subject area at any cadre of the Nigerian educational system. In other words, teachers (Physical Education) refer to the professional in the discipline and engaged in the training and preparation of the Nigerian students for effective citizenship (Tijani & Yaro, 2019). It is the task of every Physical Education teacher to inculcate moral and physical values that are of great significance to human and societal development by way of bringing about the desirable changes in the learners (National Policy on Education, 2004).

As the life wire in the selection of effective social and integral studies contents and generalization, teachers occupy a place of pride in the school programme, hence,

the need for quality instructional objectives. According to the National Policy on Education (2004), no education system may rise above the quality of its teachers. Tijani & Yaro (2006) asserted: as nerve centre in the implementation of ... programmes in the institutions of learning, teachers should possess the following professional characteristics:

Mastery of Subject Matter:- Teachers; knowledge of the interdisciplinary and interrelated nature in terms of content, facts and generalization of Social Studies education will go a long way in developing in the minds of the respective learner's respect for the dignity and the interdependence of man in relation to problems and prospects experienced in this ever changing world.

**Pedagogical Competence:-** The enormous task which Social Studies education is meant to serve in the society underscores the need for teachers of the discipline to be competent in selecting the appropriate, suitable and variety of instructional resources cum methodology for the dissemination of the subject matter of this course of study.

**Evaluative Competence:-** Evaluation is the process of making value judgment about the worth of a thing. It includes obtaining information for use in judging the worth of programme, product, procedure or objective in education. Social Studies teachers should be aware of the evaluative procedures in terms of quality of assessment that cut across the three educational domains, which are cognitive, affective and psychomotor development of the learners (Tijani & Yaro, 2019).

The teachers should realize that evaluation in Physical Education (and any other education subject) is not a mere assessment, but purposeful and reformatory in nature (Adeyanju, 2005). As such, it is geared towards providing:

- a. Feedback based on students' strengths and weaknesses which will enable the students seek their teacher's assistance towards improving on their academic performance in the subject (Adeyanju, 2005).
- b. Attitude and worthwhile social values necessary for creating good human relations and harmonious living among the Nigerian citizens with a view to galvanize support for citizens with special needs in the country (Tijani & Yaro, 2019).

The concern in education (Physical Education) should be geared towards moral development (Adeyanju, 2005, Tijani & Yaro, 2019) and physical and mental aspects of their learners (Okunrotifa, 2006). In this context, therefore, Okam (2010) challenged the teachers to display knowledge, professional skills and commitment to socio-civic and physical function of education in society. Physical Education requires physical and social interaction in the society of Nigeria. Thus, the Physical Education teacher of the 21St Century Nigerian should and must have a good knowledge of the subject and the world over especially, in the area of abilities and disabilities (Inengite, 2013; Okam, 2010; Okunrotifa, 2006).

Therefore, the teachers should devise ways to enable learners make their own contributions in terms of bringing about positive changes in the Nigerian society even in physical activities. However, it is disheartening to note that in most secondary schools, Physical Education is handled by non-professionals (Okunrotifa, 2006), who are not knowledgeable about the pedagogical principles of the discipline (Inengite, 2013), coupled with population explosion in the Nigerian school system (Tijani &

Yaro, 2019). This in turn constitutes hindrance to the achievement of the desired impacts of Physical Education in the Nigerian society.

# Making the Teaching of People with Disability Better

Now that people are equipped with learning types, it would (will) be necessary to become aware of the needed principles that would (will) empower one (the teacher) to teach meaningfully, especially as a Physical Education teacher. A few of the principles are discussed below:

- 1. **Begin your teaching from what learners are already familiar:** Adeyanju (2014) reiterated: after starting with what they (the learners) know, from there take them to the unfamiliar. Precisely, you should proceed from the known to the unknown. Learn to remind people of what they know already, then call on their previous knowledge, this procedure would (will) make them ready for new knowledge. While keeping in touch with the interest of learners, present the new knowledge beginning from simple to complex. Help learner to analyse and to synthesize using relevant local and useful framework.
- 2. **Teach in whole parts:** There has to be meaning, organization and structure in whatever information you present. Whole learning has been accepted to be better than presented in 'part' since learners would (will) always be at different states of learning, some are slower. To use the approach of holistic presentation, you would (will) need to take care of the slow learners; you can do this by breaking down the fill holes to what can be presented for them to understand. The use of concrete presentation is better than abstract presentation (Nemine, 2014).
- 3. Concrete presentation is better than abstract presentation: Learners gain sufficiently when abstract ideas are learned with concrete evidences and supported with relevant activities. When imagination becomes relevant to what is observed, the higher level of thinking is easier to attain.
- 4. **Teach beginning from inductive to deductive process:** You are to teach particular facts with examples to young learners before exposing them to general rules and principles. In the art laboratory, the teaching of printing can begin with the child hand and palms printing using ink on paper. You can go to making hand and palms impression on clay to show them the idea of printing from the surface of a cut 'Imo' sheet. It is pertinent to ensure that both induction and deduction go hand on hand and side by side.
- 5. The child interest, needs, reactions and his/her mental make-up: The learner should be the centre of learning, therefore his/her interest and needs are very crucial to learning. You would (will) learn about each learners' home background 'child study'; you need to master his/her actions/reactions, and have added knowledge on what he/she is able to learn. You must be very patient with learners to teach them. Do remember that teaching is intricate and very challenging. You would (will) have to learn to be flexible, learn to adapt and to 'accommodate' your pupils.
- 6. **Good and Healthy relationship:** Enjoy the students (learners) seeing I see them always as good raw materials ready for 'mould'. Respect them and lead them rather than enslave them. Do remember always that your duty is to ensure that your teaching is learner centred. The teachers should see learners as human being

and not as objects to be misled; you are to contribute meaningfully to their development. Remember you are a guide to them, learners have their distinct potentials and limitations. Your communication could make you an effective teacher (Adejanyu, 2005), especially for the teaching of people with disabilities.

# **Physical Education**

Physical Education is the process of maintaining the body and the mind to maintaining the body and the mind to become physically fit, mentally and emotionally sound (Inengite, 2013). Physical Education is more than mere running and jumping, as thought of by people. According to Gambari, Suleiman, Omonu & Ekioutosi (2015) posited: it is a part of the curricular programme of the school, and as a subject area which can be studied. It occupies a central point in the training of a healthy and productive individual who would contribute positively to growth, economic and productivity of the nation (Handman & Marshall, 2000).

It is worth noting that amongst the pupils and students in schools are people with disability. These disabilities can be classified into physical, sensory, visual, intellectual, mental and emotional olfactory and gustatory impairment (Haruna, 2017). There is need to note that disability as diverse is evolving; as new forms of disability keep emerging. That is to say it (disability) is multidimensional or multifarious experiences which not only affects the body but also the person's ability to function equally in the society (Adebayo & Moronkola, 2019). That is why qualified teachers, especially, those well-grounded in disability issues should be available to play a role in developing pupils and students in meeting their needs.

## **Qualities of a good Physical Education Teacher**

There are good qualities and personal characteristics which are important in other that an individual can function well on effectively as a physical education teacher. Generally these include:

- 1. Intelligence and educational qualification: An individual has to be intelligent and sharp to be a good Physical Education (P.E) teacher, similarly he has to possess relevant educational training or background. The teacher must have adequate knowledge of anatomy, physiology, psychology and sociology to be able to deal adequately with the children or pupils under his care, to be able to understand their needs socially, psychologically and physically and to be able to work efficiently within the framework of the school and society.
- 2. Health and appearance: Physical Education (P.E) is a strenuous occupation. It is very demanding physically, mentally, emotionally and socially. A good teacher has to be healthy and has to be free from diseases e.g. malaria today, headache tomorrow and stomach pain some other day etc. Physical Education exists in close relation to Health Education (H.E) in most settings particularly in our schools. Often the Physical Education teacher is required to teach health education. If he is healthy, the tendency is that he will practically influence the health habits to his pupils. If he usually goes around dirty it will be very difficult to impress his pupils to practice what he teaches. He must have stamina (endurance ability).
- **3. Attractive personality:** A good Physical Education (P.E) teacher must be morally upright, dependable, must have integrity, must have the desire to help other people and he must have a good sense of humour. These traits will make

him open to students in such a way that students would (will) be willing to confide in him and in that way he would be in a better position to control their emotions and behaviour positively. A teacher who goes around frowning (looking steam) would scare off students because they would (will) think him unapproachable.

- **4. Motor ability:** A good Physical Education (P.E) teacher must be mobile and must not be sluggish. He must not be round, he must be strong, flexible etc, and in addition he must be knowledgeable about the skills and strategies of many sports. It is of additional advantage if he can personally execute or play various sports as these would make students believe that he knows what he's doing or teaching. This would also help him have confidence in himself as a physical education teacher. He'll be able to motivate pupils better.
- **5. Human relationship:** A Physical Education teacher must be able to get along well with other people and must be above racial and ethnic prejudices. He had to be able to work and interact with all people. He has to see eye to eye with his students, with members of staff and with the school authority. He has to have respect for the right of others and he has to be devoted to the promotion of democratic ideals in his class.
- 6. Competence in oral and written English and ability to co-ordinate activities: A good Physical Education teacher must be able to speak well. Good English does not mean high urge of vocabularies, he must be able to speak simple English to communicate his ideas smoothly. He should not be stammering in other words he has to be articulate. This is important because to an extent, PE classes involve lecturers and discussions in which he has to lead the class. He also has to give instructions in practical classes. Sometimes, a physical educationist is required to give impromptu speeches and at other times he's required to defend the importance of his profession.

## **Characteristics of a good Physical Education Teacher**

The main function of PE is to help students to learn a particular content but this must always be seen in relation to the objectives of PE and the ultimate goal of education which is to help students develop into competent citizen who know and understand the world they live in and their relation to others.

To help achieve these, there are many tasks in which the high school (secondary school) P.E teacher should try to be involved. These tasks include:

- 1. Teach physical education (teaching skills, behaviour, rules strategies etc.).
- 2. Teach another subject area like health, guidance and counselling and recreation.
- 3. Organize and direct the schools extra-moral and recreational programme.
- 4. Coach school teams and serve as the athletics trainer.
- 5. Teach and give first aid (must have a working knowledge of first aid).
- 6. Officiate matches time keeper or as a referee etc.
- 7. Plan exhibitions and demonstrations in your school to attract people and bring their interest into playing the sport.
- 8. To promote the school's public relations
- 9. Help to plan the budget.
- 10. Assist in planning the facilities
- 11. Assist in the planning and if possible in the purchase of equipment.

- 12. Help keep health records by conducting periodic screening tests.
- 13. Help promote school safety
- 14. Conduct occasional or periodic tests for sports knowledge, skills and ability and physical fitness.

#### **Conclusion**

Disability is a condition where impairment and diseases interact with social and environmental elements to bring about a line-up of limitations or disadvantages. This circumstance or function hinders or limits individuals' (people with disability) ability to perform intellectually, physically and mentally among others in accordance with societal norms for people of similar defined characteristics in a normal setting or environment. Thus, a Physical Education teacher who must be able to get along well with other people and be above racial and ethnic prejudices has as a role to play in unearthing the ability in the disability of the disabled. He or she has to be able to work and interact with all people. He or she has to see eye to eye with his students, with members of staff and with the school authority. They (he/she) has to have respect for the right of others and be devoted to the promotion of democratic ideals in his or her class. This they (the teachers) could do by making this category of people learn better. If this is done the abilities in the disabled would be unearthed.

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