

## EXISTENCE OF REALITY SHOCK IN INDIAN PHYSICAL EDUCATION: AN INTERPRETATIVE APPROACH

LOKESH RAGHAV<sup>1</sup>, SAYED KHURRAM NISAR<sup>1\*</sup>, SUFIA ANJUM<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Physical Education, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, INDIA.

<sup>2</sup>Ayesha Tarin Modern Public School, Aligarh, INDIA.

\*Email: s.khurram.nisar@gmail.com

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### ABSTRACT

*This paper explains and explore the theoretical development of reality shock and traces its prevalence in Indian physical education. The various dimensions and theoretical backdrop of reality shock discussed, with emphasis to the education and teacher education. The contemporary issues and status of teacher education and school education related to physical education covered in depth. Finally in reference to the pressing issues in physical education the scope of reality shock is emphasized and discussed.*

**Keywords:** Reality shock, physical education, 21<sup>st</sup> century education, status of school PE.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Reality shock is a universal phenomenon faced by individuals in the beginning year of service when preparation and skills do not meet the demands. Novice teacher transits and face a conflict between reality and expectation of their preparation competencies (Dhar, 2013; Hutell, & Gustavsson, 2011; Kramer, 1974; Tynjälä & Heikkinen, 2011). The understanding of the phenomenon can be developed by the works of Veenman (1984) that offers a more historical perspective on this phenomenon in education. He describes “reality shock” as the collision between the idealistic beliefs nurtured during teacher training and the challenging, sometimes harsh, realities of daily classroom life. This confrontation often leads to a significant shift in teachers' perspectives, from a theoretical and idealistic viewpoint to a more pragmatic, reality-based approach.

In the context of education, “reality shock” takes a slightly different form. It represents the gap between the theoretical knowledge that student teachers acquire during their education programs and the practical challenges they confront in their early teaching years. Botha and Rens (2018) delve into this aspect, highlighting the significant difference between academic preparation and real-world scenarios in teaching. This discrepancy can impact the effectiveness and emotional well-being of novice teachers, as they navigate the complexities of their profession. The concept of “reality shock” is a multifaceted phenomenon, extensively discussed across various professional fields. In the corporate sector, it refers to the disparity between an employee's preconceived notions about a job and the concrete experiences they face in the workplace. Arigbe (2018), emphasizing the stark contrast between the expectations held by individuals before joining a company and the actualities they encounter

in their roles. This divergence often leads to a reassessment of their initial perceptions and job satisfaction. Reality Shock is seen as a situation where new employees' initial enthusiasm and expectations clash with the actual, often less appealing aspects of the work environment. This concept underscores the contrast between the optimistic anticipation of a new job and the potential disillusionment upon encountering the day-to-day realities of the workplace, leading to a revaluation of career choices and job satisfaction (Arigbe 2018).

In summary, “reality shock” is a pervasive issue in various professional domains, marked by a disjunction between expectations and reality. Whether in corporate settings (Arigbe, 2018), educational institutions (Botha & Rens, 2018; Veenman, 1984), or the broader HRM and labor landscape, this phenomenon poses significant challenges, impacting individuals' professional development, performance, and overall job satisfaction.

To existence of Reality shock in physical education one need to understand the nature, objectives and targets of physical education in the context of society and education through the literature produced by the educational agencies and the concerned authors at global and national level. The following definition of physical education was collected through the review of the literatures available -

Central Advisory Board of Physical Education and Recreation (1950) “Physical education is the process of education through physical activities. It is the development of the total personality of the child to its fullness and perfection in body, mind and spirit”.

Secondary Education Commission Report (1953) “Physical education is the indispensable part of all health programs. it's various activities should be so planned has to develop deep physical and mental health of the students, cultivate recreational interest and skills and promote the spirit of teamwork sportsmanship and respect for others. Physical education is therefore much more than drill or a series of regulated exercises. People choose all form of physical activities and games which promote the development of the body and mind”

A national plan for physical and recreation, A report by ministry of Education, Govt. of India (1956), “Physical education is education it is education through physical activities for the development of the total personality of the child to its fullness and perfection in body mind and spirit fully stop immediately it is concerned with the development of physical fitness. In striving for such fitness however physical education has to train the child's mental moral and social qualities around it's awareness of environment and develop alertness presence of mind resourcefulness discipline cooperation and the spirit of respect sympathy and generosity towards other qualities that are essential for a happy and well-adjusted life in a free and democratic world physical education can thus make a very valuable contribution to our national life”.

Ministry of Education and National Planning for Physical Education and Recreation (1958), “The aim of physical education must be to make every child physically, mentally and emotionally fit and also to develop in him personal and social qualities that will help to live happily with others. Physical education programme should also aim to build good citizens of the country.”

Physical Education (PE) is a multifaceted discipline that emerged as a response to societal health and fitness concerns, emphasizing lifelong participation in physical activity and development of physical competence. It encompasses learning and developing through a variety of activities, often sports-based, to promote physical, social, and mental well-being. Its core purpose includes not only enhancing fitness and combating sedentary lifestyles but also supporting healthy living and active participation in physical activities throughout life (Penney & Chandler, 2000). PE is an interdisciplinary field that emerged as a response to societal health and fitness concerns, focusing on promoting lifelong participation in physical activities. It's an integral part of the broader physical culture, encompassing school sports, physical activity, and lifelong learning. PE involves learning and developing the body, often

through sports, and aims to broaden physical, emotional, and cognitive awareness. It's recognized for its unique contribution to overall development, with a particular focus on bodily practices, including sport, physical recreation, and exercises (Coulter & Chroinin, 2013). PE is a multifaceted and socially constructed discipline that encompasses more than just sports or health-related activities. Emerging in response to societal health and fitness concerns, PE has evolved to emphasize lifelong participation in physical activities, fostering personal, social, and physical development. It is recognized for its intrinsic value in promoting physical, personal, and social growth, as well as health. PE is not solely about proficiency in sports or physical activities; it's about the educative process of becoming physically educated throughout life. It aims to provide children and adults with opportunities to learn and grow through movement, encouraging a broad range of activities for physical and mental well-being. However, there's a risk of PE becoming reduced to mere sports participation or fitness instruction without an educational focus, emphasizing the need for a balanced approach that integrates physical activity with broader educational goals (Lynch & Soukup, 2016).

PE is an educative practice that goes beyond just sports or fitness. It aims to develop individuals, especially children, as they interact with the world physically, promoting a continuous learning process. PE is transformative, focusing not only on physical skills but also on fostering critical thinking and self-discovery through movement. It integrates broader values such as democracy, human rights, and social justice, nurturing physically literate individuals who can critically engage with physical culture. This multidimensional approach makes PE a key component in holistic education (Quennerstedt, 2017). PE is a dynamic and socially constructed discipline that has evolved significantly over time. Initially emerging as a response to societal health and fitness concerns, PE has developed a focus on lifelong participation in physical activities, emphasizing the importance of physical activity for health and well-being. It is part of a broader physical culture that includes sports and health activities. PE is not just about physical exercise; it involves teaching and learning a range of physical and social skills, developing physical competence, and enhancing mental well-being. The discipline is underpinned by two philosophical views: the body as an object and the view of the whole person, encompassing body, mind, spirit, and well-being. This multifaceted approach to PE reflects its role in schooling the body, promoting overall development, and contributing to a healthful lifestyle (McEvilly, 2021).

In conclusion, PE is a diverse and evolving field, extending beyond sports to emphasize holistic development. It responds to health concerns by encouraging lifelong physical activity and integrates values like democracy and social justice. PE fosters not just physical skills, but also critical thinking and self-discovery. Recognized for enhancing personal, social, and mental well-being, it strives to balance physical activities with educational objectives, addressing the body, mind, and spirit. This approach makes PE vital in education, promoting active engagement in physical culture and overall development.

## **2. PHYSICAL EDUCATION ISSUES IN INDIA**

In the landscape of Indian education, PE is grappling with issues that critically undermine its efficacy and prominence. This section undertakes a comprehensive analysis of these challenges, drawing upon diverse academic perspectives to present a cohesive understanding of the state of PE in India.

The societal underestimation of PE's value, discussed by Dutt (2018) and Ray (2019), reflects a widespread misperception of PE as merely a leisurely pursuit rather than an integral component of holistic education. This misconception has led to its reduced integration within the academic framework and a lack of adequate curriculum development, hindering the engagement and overall development of students.

The gap between theoretical training and practical application in the field of PE is strikingly evident, as noted by Dixit (2014). The lack of commitment and innovation among student teachers, coupled with substandard conditions in teacher training institutions, contributes to a dissonance in the quality of PE instruction. This issue is further elaborated by Majagaonkar and Khade (2020), who point out the deficiency in specialized PE teachers, adversely affecting the delivery of quality physical education. Swain, Pradhan and Palei (2014) identify the organizational challenges faced by PE teachers, including time constraints and limited resources. The absence of essential facilities like indoor stadiums further impedes the effective implementation of PE programs. Betram and Kaleeswaran (2017) extend this argument by emphasizing the critical need for engaging curricula, sufficient funding for sports, and the use of technology to promote physical activity awareness.

Arockiaraj (2017) sheds light on the structural inadequacies within South Indian schools, where limited and irregular PE sessions are often encroached upon by other academic demands. Such barriers are exacerbated by gender biases, notably impacting adolescent girls' participation in PE activities. These observations find resonance in the work of Raj (2018) and Sharique (2020), who also lament the logistical hurdles and insufficient facilities that plague PE programs across India. PE's marginalization in Indian schools, as highlighted by Kuldeep Singh (2016), underscores a preference for academic subjects at the expense of physical well-being. This trend is particularly alarming in the context of escalating health issues like obesity among Indian children, predominantly in urban settings. These challenges reflect a multifaceted crisis in Indian PE, ranging from infrastructural deficits to cultural misconceptions and educational system disparities. Addressing these issues requires comprehensive reform, including infrastructure enhancement, curriculum reform, and a societal shift in recognizing the value of PE for the holistic development of students. This is essential for integrating PE effectively into the Indian educational paradigm.

It is evident that there are significant issues within the realm of PE in India, which not only undermine its importance in the educational system but also contribute to the phenomenon of 'reality shock' among students. As highlighted by Kuldeep Singh (2016), the structural inadequacies pointed out by Arockiaraj (2017), and the gap between theoretical understanding and practical application noted by Dixit (2014) are all stark examples of how the value and benefits of PE are overlooked. This leads to a substantial impact on students' health and overall development. Therefore, it is imperative for the Indian education system to re-evaluate and elevate the status of PE, ensuring its integration as a critical component of holistic education. This shift is essential not only to align with educational ideals but also to mitigate the adverse effects of reality shock experienced by students due to current deficiencies in PE implementation. After a thorough examination of the issues in physical education in India, it becomes evident that there is a significant 'Reality Shock' present in the Indian physical education system.

### **3. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF REALITY SHOCK**

The concept of Reality Shock was formulated by Merlene Kramer in 1974, within her nursing publication titled "Why Nurses Leave Nursing." However, it is worth noting that the term "Reality Shock" had been employed by various authors both in unpublished and published research documents prior to this. In fact, based on the records available in research databases, the term was initially introduced by Wagenschein in 1950, within an unpublished master's dissertation. Interestingly, Wagenschein applied the concept to the realm of novice elementary school teachers at the time (Mauksch, 1963).

The compilation offers a comprehensive glimpse into the wide-ranging domains and viewpoints through which the notion of "Reality Shock" has been examined throughout time. Encompassing disciplines like education, medical (pharmacy) nursing, and beyond, it vividly



illustrates the progression of ideas and scholarly investigation concerning the phenomenon wherein individuals encounter a striking dissonance between their anticipations and the actualities of their chosen roles or vocations.

The research on the evolution of reality shock has provided valuable insights into its historical roots and implications. By tracing its origins in teaching and examining its current use in educational settings, we can better understand the impact of reality shock on individuals and develop effective strategies to mitigate its adverse effects. The study of reality shock is particularly relevant in today's rapidly changing work environments and educational contexts, where individuals often face significant challenges adjusting to new roles and responsibilities (NEP, 2020). By applying our knowledge of reality shock, we can help individuals navigate these transitions more effectively and support their personal and professional growth.

#### **4. SYMPTOMS OF REALITY SHOCK IN EDUCATION**

In educational settings, “reality shock” is a critical transitional phase for novice teachers, characterized by the shift from theoretical training to confronting the practical complexities of teaching. This concept, confirmed in fields like nursing, highlights the gap between academic preparation and professional demands. Studies indicate that teacher training programs often inadequately equip educators for the multifaceted nature of teaching, leading to feelings of unpreparedness and stress, potentially resulting in high teacher turnover (Caliskan, 2012).

Furthermore, research into student teachers' practicum experiences reveals that reality shock is closely linked with encountering ethical dilemmas, such as conflicts between formal and informal curricula, and challenges in adhering to educational standards while managing personal and institutional expectations (Liu & Liu, 2022). These dilemmas impact not only professional development but also emotional well-being, emphasizing the need for practical, hands-on training in teacher education programs.

The role of career resilience in buffering the effects of reality shock is also notable. Traits like adaptability, social skills, and optimism aid in navigating the teaching profession's practical challenges (Kodama, 2017). Finally, Veenman (1984) describes reality shock as a multifaceted challenge encompassing workload stress, emotional instability, and attitudinal shifts, necessitating continuous adaptation and mastery by novice teachers to reconcile theoretical training with classroom realities.

#### **5. SYMPTOMS OF REALITY SHOCK IN TEACHER EDUCATION**

In India, there are numerous issues in the professional preparation of teacher education in front of the world countries globally. India saves third last place in the education system in the World (Nath 2015). For India to meet the needs and challenges of the global community, it appears that the country does not have enough qualified teachers. Because the Indian educational system and teacher preparation programmes do not follow the same path as the labour market and do not emphasise updating stale skills, students and recent graduates have an easier time finding work (Groot & Maassen Van Den Brink, 2000; Leuven & Oosterbeek, 2011; Unni, 2016). Several issues were raised by recommending several commissions, committees, and national education policies, highlighting the inferior condition of teacher education preparedness/programme and related issues. Current teacher education in India facing many problems, including outdated curriculum (Commission 2009; Education 1964; NCTE 2009, 1986; NEP 2020; Verma 2013).

## **6. SYMPTOMS OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN INDIAN TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME**

Physical education “is the only curriculum subject whose focus combines the body and physical competence with values-based learning and communication, provides a learning gateway to grow the skills required for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” (UNESCO 2015). At the beginning of writing, researchers criticised the lower quality of teacher education as one of the leading phenomena globally (Darling-Hammond 2005; Wang et al. 2010). Such a phenomenon seems true not only in general teacher education but also in physical education teacher training. In addition to global research and a second worldwide survey II data on physical education, the lower status of physical education seems everywhere in the World, whether it will be Asia, Africa, Central and Latin America or Europe. They showed an aggregate of 28 % lower status of physical education teachers globally, whereas 60 per cent in the African region, 33 per cent in Asia and Latin/Central America, 15 per cent in Europe, 67 per cent in the Middle East and 75 per cent in North America (Hardman 2008). In support of that, another study recommended the pressing need of high-quality physical education teachers and quality physical education teacher programmes (UNESCO 2015).

## **7. SYMPTOMS OF REALITY SHOCK IN INDIAN SCHOOLS PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

In Indian schools, the status of physical education (PE) is marked by a range of systemic issues. Bhawra et al. (2023) note that both government and private institutions allocate insufficient time to PE, typically 40-50 minutes per week, which is considerably below the recommended levels. Additionally, they highlight a disparity in the availability of physical activity infrastructure, especially in private schools, where facilities like playgrounds are limited. Addressing the quality of PE instruction, Tiwari & Tiwari (2020) find that only half of the schools in Dehradun have qualified PE teachers, leading to a predominance of theoretical rather than practical PE classes. This lack of practical engagement contributes to a declining interest in physical education among students. Similarly, Hardman (2004) points out that in many Indian schools, PE is often seen as a lesser, non-educational activity and faces cultural challenges, especially in rural areas where girls are discouraged from participating.

The UNESCO 2021 State of the Education Report highlights the critical shortage of qualified PE teachers in India, impacting the frequency and quality of PE classes (UNESCO, 2021). This is echoed by Prajapati et al. (2023), who emphasize the need for more PE classes and qualified instructors, along with modern professional development opportunities for teachers to enhance the quality of PE. Pantovic (2018) discusses the perceptual issues in PE, such as the monotony of lessons and the burden of equipment, which negatively affect student engagement. Savita (2020) further elaborates on the challenges posed by high pupil-teacher ratios and deficiencies in teacher training, which affect the ability to provide effective and inclusive PE programs. Together, these studies paint a picture of a multifaceted crisis in physical education in Indian schools, ranging from inadequate infrastructure and teaching resources to cultural and perceptual barriers, all of which necessitate comprehensive reforms and increased investment in the field of physical education.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

It was evident from the above discussed studies that the Indian PE teacher education and the status of PE in Indian schools is not in a desired form to keep the pace with the ongoing change in the education and society. The radical changes influence every aspect of life. In a

scenario where subjects like Math, Science, Technology and Engineering (STEM) is promoted by the global industrial sources with the excess focus on digitalization subject like PE find itself in a great stress to match the expectation of change and evolve its philosophy and associated curriculum including the means and method with the change professional practices. Due to previous traditional status of physical education and the teacher preparation the PE teachers bound to experience the phenomenon of reality shock in the beginning of their career. Further, the global change Like 21<sup>st</sup> century education and the new education policy NEP (2020) the in-service PE teachers also become prone to reality shock as their skill set, competency and knowledge need to be framed to match the expectation. In such situations the understanding of reality shock will enable the policy makers, researchers and the administrators working in/for PE to understand the dimensions and the factors that set the shock in the PE teachers in their professional spheres of working or preparedness.

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