

Leadership With special reference to Physical Education

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Man is a social animal. He wishes to celebrate his happiness with the society and also wants to share his sorrows with the society. Each and every one of us wish to interact with one another, may it be a direct interaction or the indirect one. May it be a real one or the virtual. When two or more persons who interact with one another, have shared goals, are somehow interdependent and view themselves as member of the group, form a group. Thus group can be classified into two that is true and not true social group. True social groups like members of a club, associations, teams interact with each other, they have their shared goals, are interdependent and view themselves as a member of the group whereas not true social group is a kind of gathering of some people at any place like bus stand or a theatre. True social groups seem to be closely knitted and have a better bonding between the members. Unlike not true groups true social group is much more than mere gathering.

True Social Groups often exert powerful effects on their members. According to Moreland, (1987) true social groups often exert powerful effects on their members and they affect

- 1) Their member's task performance.
- 2) Co-ordination & co-operation amongst members.
- 3) The decisions members make (Henry et al 2000)
- 4) And of course, leadership (Vecchio 1997)

As far as leadership is concerned, it is a topic which comes under social psychology. Definitions vary but most psychologists and social psychologists view leadership as the "Process through which one member of a group (its leader) influences other group members towards attainment of shared group goals." A leader is the group member who exerts most influence within the group.

The Great person theory of leadership and charismatic leaders both have certain traits and qualities of leadership. On one hand some say that it is a quality which is supposed to be inborn and on the other hand few others view it as the acquired one. Charismatic leaders have certain solid bases for their charismatic effects.

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Leaving aside the conflict of leadership quality, inborn or acquired, everyone feels that there is always a need of competent leadership in every field of life may it be Arts, Science, Agriculture, Technology, Religion, Politics, Industry, Sports or Education etc. Above mentioned each and every field is facing problems in their respective areas and these problems need to be addressed efficiently. It seems that wrong policies have been adopted in several fields. Leadership has much to do with the problems we are facing now. Right kind of leadership has to be chosen to show the path of service to the humanity.

It may be because of the bankruptcy of leadership in every field of life such as Politics, Industry, Culture, Intellect, Education and Physical Education that we come across in all sorts of problems like murders and crimes, pollution, materialism, unemployment, injustice etc.

Leadership in Physical Education is supposed to be on the shoulders of Physical Education Professionals such as Teachers, Coaches, Instructor and others who with the help of their professional and personal qualities and qualifications are leading the profession.

The responsibilities of leaders of Physical Education is-

- 1) To develop the personality of the child i.e. all six aspects of personality, so that where ever they go, they perform well.
- 2) To develop true citizenship, so that the nation progresses and humanity is served.
- 3) To develop leadership qualities so that where ever they go they can lead well.

Curriculum of Physical Education provides ample opportunities (through its different activities) for the development of true leadership qualities among the students and practitioners.

As Physical Education provides ample opportunity to the students to develop their leadership qualities, it should not be confined to the students of schools and colleges only, rather it should be a continuous lifelong activity. Curriculum should be so designed that a person is involved in it throughout his life.

Leadership qualities can be learnt and taught on the playground itself. We learn to obey the orders and follow the instructions of the speaker in the Lok Sabha just like following the decision of the umpire in cricket ground; we learn to respect the defeated candidate of the election as we do with the defeated

players in wrestling and other games; if we learn to shake hands with the leader of the opposition with full respect similar to shaking hands with the losing teams in different competitions; we learn to follow the moral values throughout our life just like the rules and the regulations of different games and sports in physical education; we learn to have faith in our leaders by following the captain of the team; we learn to be within the limits of the law of the land and to be within the constitution of the country through the teaching of change of the batons within the changing zone in a relay race. If Physical Education fails to develop these leadership roles then perhaps everything is meaningless or worthless. We have to learn and teach that group effort is always better than individual effort and leads the team to victory. We have to learn and believe that skilled leadership gives success. If we do not teach and tell our players and students these things then what do we physical education teachers do in the playgrounds. What is the carryover value of physical education then? How will we call physical education, a real education then? On what grounds then it will be right and justified to call physical education as an integral part of general education? Hence it is a compulsion for physical education teachers that we try to develop these human and leadership qualities in our students through games and sports in the playfields itself. Things learnt through games and sports are long and everlasting.

Let these habits be created in the playgrounds itself and that too at a very early stage. It is a matter of habit formation from the beginning itself and once formed and understood, it will have a great carry over value throughout life. Old habits die hard.

May be it is due to the lack of quality leadership that we are unable to reach the medal tally in the field of games and sports and even if we achieve some it is limited. Neither shield, goal, medal and century is physical education (tools only) nor it is a business of the people between the age of 15 to 30 only, it is a profession in its true sense and has got to fulfill greater aims and the responsibilities, towards the welfare services of the whole society.

Each and every person of the society, each and every corner of the country today is badly searching for a personality like Gandhi, an educationist like Malviya ji, a philosopher like Vivekananda, a player like Dhyan Chand, a business icon like Tata. All of these are giant leaders, complete human beings with expertise in their respective fields.

Thus we see that leadership is essential in all walks of life in every society and effective leadership training of students can be done through Physical Education and Sports. Thus the importance and responsibility of Physical Education professionals increases a lot.

Physical Education programmes like Competitions, Games, Group activities, Dance programmes, Recreation, Adventure Sports and other Sporting and Challenging activities provide so many opportunities to the students to inculcate leadership qualities in them. This will not only benefit the field of Physical Education and Sports but would benefit the society, country and humanity in the longer run.

As far as the competitive sports are concerned our leaders have to prepare our athletes to control their emotions, accept decisions of officials, give their best effort, be modest in winning and maintain their dignity in defeat. This again will not only add to the glory of sports but also to the whole life of whole child, making this world a better place to live in.

Leonard suggests that winning has become a way of life in sports, blinding us to other possibilities. We all know if change is to occur in values, it probably will come about through charismatic leadership. Such models are available, who either teach through precept or example.

The leaders have to set behavioral patterns before the society. A top level performer once said "I was brought up to be a good loser, even though I don't think any body hates to loose more than I do". It is important to be a good loser than a bad winner. It is better to lose sportingly than to win unsportingly. Mike Marshall (baseball player) said "Victory does not elate me, nor does defeat depress me. The only victory for me is in the quality of the competition, not in the final score." He feels that society has placed too much emphasis on the score, the outcome and the winning has a complete misapplication of values.

The real meaning of leadership should not be undermined in the field of Physical Education. People who boycott, drop, withdraw or go with doping are never Olympians in true sense. The core and the real meaning of leadership has to be understood properly and we the physical education personnel have to work hard to produce quality leaders so that wherever they go, they can lead the way.

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