

## **Teaching Physical and Health Education in Private Schools: A Prospect for Nigerian Teachers Without Jobs**

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### **Abstract**

*A key component of the formal educational process, physical and health education is essential to a person's overall development. Since most private schools cannot afford to hire full-time physical and health education teachers, they have decided to hire part-time teachers instead. This allows physical and health education teachers to work profitably in three to five schools each week, which can help lower Nigeria's alarming unemployment rate. Therefore, this study looked at physical and health education programs in private schools and their potential for Nigerian instructors without jobs. The ideas of physical and health education in the classroom were examined. The idea of teaching physical and health education part-time was examined critically. Related topics were also covered, including Nigeria's unemployment rate, sports facilities and equipment in private schools, and physical education and health education in private schools. Among other conclusions drawn from the literature review, the researchers determined that physical and health education programs should be properly implemented in private schools because they are essential for fostering the physical, social, and psychological development of all children. Therefore, among other things, It was suggested that education regulatory bodies ensure that private schools hire certified physical and health education teachers and that unemployed teachers take advantage of the opportunity to teach part-time in private schools.*

**Keywords:** Physical and health education, Sport, Teachers, Private school, Unemployment

### **Introduction**

The school is a social institution entrusted with the formal education system of the youth in the society and physical and health education (PHE) instruction is an imperative aspect of the formal education system as it impacts a student's physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and environmentally. Physical education, according to the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association (AHA & ASA; 2015) is an indispensable aspect of a learner's comprehensive, well-rounded education program and a means of positively affecting life-long health and well-being. Ngwoke et al., (2021) stated that physical education, as part of a school

program, is a systematic pedagogy in sports, training, practice, gymnastics, physical activities, and hygiene. However, the goal of health education is to empower people to choose healthy behaviors on their own volition by equipping them with knowledge and information about health issues. It is a collection of educational opportunities intended to enhance the health of people and communities by boosting awareness or changing attitudes (Kumar & Preetha, 2012). While, Şenol and Şenol (2023) noted that in order to improve children's health knowledge, health education activities were implemented that included physical activity, personal hygiene, injury prevention, sleeping habits, healthy nutrition and living a healthy lifestyle.

PHE is an integral part of the formal system of educational process vital for living a healthy lifestyle. Sports as a vital component of PHE has the capacity to foster the physical, intellectual, social and moral aspect of life and throughout history, they have also served as a bridge for international communication, a means of tearing down borders, and a peacekeeper (Momoh, 2017). In the opinion of Bolarinwa (2021), While schools serve as both a location for instruction and co-curricular activities, it is noted that most private secondary schools do not offer co-curricular activities related to sports. Thus, there is no opportunity for students to develop their talents related to participating in sports. And this can be a result of most private schools' inability to employ full-time physical and health education teachers.

Nigeria is currently face with immense unemployment challenges, despite the decision of the Federal Ministry of Education to incorporate entrepreneurship courses into the curricula of Nigeria higher institutions through their regulatory bodies such as National Universities Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) in order to empower graduates to start their own businesses after graduation.

Studies has proved that there are various entrepreneurship opportunities in PHE (Atare, 2021; Iortimah et al., 2021; Senne, 2016; Uko & Atare, 2016). And one of such opportunity that is not utilized maximally by graduates of PHE is part-time teaching of PHE and Sports coaching in private schools, which will enable them to be engaged profitably in three to five schools weekly and this can help in curbing the devastating unemployment rate in Nigeria. Hence, this study seeks to review teaching physical and health education in private schools and the prospect for Nigerian teachers without jobs.

### **Physical and Health Education in the School Curriculum**

It has been determined that school physical and health education programmes are crucial for promoting children's good behavior and physical activity levels. According to Amarkhil et al. (2023), PHE has several social and cultural functions in contemporary societies, including psychological and sociological ones. Physical education and training have achieved a high international standing after a decade of rapid expansion. Almost every country in the world incorporates PHE into its curriculum since it is a subject that is crucial to a country's capacity to grow its workforce, and Nigeria is no different (Bichi, 2018).

The National Policy on Education is a declaration of intents, expectations, goals, prescriptions, standards, and requirements for high-quality education delivery in Nigeria. It serves as the national guideline for the efficient administration, management, and implementation of education at all governmental levels. In Nigeria, the purpose of education is to enable students to live in and make meaningful contributions to society by providing them with the necessary mental, physical, and social skills, which will also aid job creation and poverty reduction (National Policy on Education [NPE], 2013).

The post-independence curriculum reform efforts led to the 1969 curriculum conferences which prescribed better diverse curriculum, and suggested the inclusion of PHE as an educational subject notably in basic schools (Apara et al., 2022). The NPE was revised in 1981 to acknowledge the status of PHE instructors and to identify the advantages of teaching PHE, particularly in primary schools. It also discussed the roles that PHE instructors play in effectively managing sports and health, and it outlines various strategies that should be implemented for PHE programmes in our schools to be successful. Nigeria's movements for curriculum reform began before independence and heightened on post-independence era (National Policy on Education [NPE], 1977). These initiatives paid off in the 1970s, in part, with the NPE ushering in a period of PHE growth that was favorable. PHE was recommended to be taught in all its phases in schools. This new status generated much enthusiasm and some policies were therefore formulated to guide performance which were spelt out on the National policy on Education, which are (i) The quality of instruction of all levels has to be oriented towards promoting Emotional, Physical and Psychological well-being of all children (ii) the government will increase the supply of specialist teachers for physical education (National Policy on Education [NPE], 1981). The policy and document also listed PHE as core subject at the Junior Secondary School and an elective course at

the Senior Secondary Level. These achievements were due to unanimous demands of Nigeria Association for Physical, Health Education, Recreation, Sports and Dance (NAPHER.SD) members principally.

Ensuring that sports are a fundamental component of the curriculum at all educational levels, including primary, secondary, and tertiary, was one of the goals of the National Sports Policy of Nigeria (National Sports Policy of Nigeria [NSPN], 2009). According to Aparar et al. (2022), PHE has been denied a much-needed place in the curriculum since the merger, and it may soon be removed or completely incorporated into another topic, which would be bad for the subject. They also noted that there was an issue with the way teachers were teaching their students. According to Adegbamigbe et al. (2023), PHE status is also steadily declining in Nigerian schools. In order to support young people's holistic development, it was initially suggested in the NPE (2009) paper that sports be made mandatory at the primary and secondary school levels of the official education system. All elementary and secondary schools must have access to sports facilities in order for their establishment to be authorized. However, according to Bolarinwa (2021), the primary objective of these programmes is the sound development of motor patterns and movement abilities that make up the human movement repertory. In Nigeria, the PHE curriculum is taught across the whole educational system, or the 6-3-3-4 system. PHE is an important subject in elementary and junior secondary schools, respectively, and is taught at the higher education level. Bichi (2018).

Nigeria wants its citizens to be able to educate themselves, according to a thorough analysis of the country's educational policies. Unfortunately, a comprehensive analysis of the PHE curriculum's content from elementary school to university runs counter to the goal of creating graduates who will work for themselves (Olorundare & Kayode, 2014). And the reason for this is that the majority of students only encounter the academic components of the PHE curriculum, not the practical ones. Due to the unfavorable attitudes of parents, teachers, policymakers, and school administrators, the PHE curriculum is not implemented properly in majority of the schools in Nigerian (Oluwasanu et al., 2021; Ngwoke et al., 2021; Oyedele et al., 2020).

### **Physical and Health Education in Private Schools**

In Nigeria, the number of private elementary and secondary schools is rising and has surpassed that of public schools. Nigeria's private nursery, primary, and secondary school establishments are very profitable due to the country's growing child and adolescent population,

the fact that education is a fundamental human right, and the desire of all parents and guardians to see their children in school and receive a good education. Children from middle-class and upper-class homes are increasingly being educated at privately owned schools, according to Oluwasanu et al. (2021).

The Nigerian government should ensure that there are enough sports programs available in Nigerian primary and secondary schools, according to the National Sports Policy of Nigeria (NSPN). The annual intra-zonal sports tournaments, the elementary and secondary sports competitions, and the inter-house sports competitions are some examples of these programs (National Sports Policy of Nigeria [NSPN], 2009). It is possible to draw the conclusion that the organization tasked with overseeing quality assurance in Nigerian education is not carrying out its responsibilities effectively, which explains why many private schools have a negative attitude about PHE.

Without a thorough understanding of PHE guidelines, no student can succeed within the confines of a school. Providing enough time for kids to participate in physical education improves their academic achievement (Donnelly et al., 2016). However, the majority of PHE programs in Nigerian private schools encounter a number of obstacles that harm students' physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and environmental development. According to Adegbamigbe et al. (2023); Abayomi et al. (2017); and Alairu (2020), the majority of private schools' PHE programs are taught by non-professionals. However, Oluwasanu et al. (2021) found that a large student body without an equal number of PHE teachers in many private schools hindered the delivery of PHE classes. When it comes to teaching PHE, private schools have more obstacles than public ones, according to Ngwoke et al. (2021). Oluwasanu et al. (2021) confirmed this, citing insufficient time allocated for the subject's effective instruction.

### **Sports Facilities and Equipment in Private Schools**

Another challenge facing PHE in private schools in Nigeria is availability of sports facilities and equipment. It can be stated that as important as scientific laboratories is to science students, that is how sports facilities are important to students athletes. It is observed that most private schools in Nigeria lacked adequate spaces for sports fields and this was contrary to the NSPN that mandated every primary and secondary school to have a playground for sport as a prerequisite for their approval (National Sports Policy of Nigeria [NSPN], 2009). The delivery of PHE classes was compromised by most private schools due to inaccessibility of sports facilities

and equipment (Oluwasanu et al., 2021). Federal Republic of Nigeria's Sports Policy (FRNSP; 2009) stated that the third tier of government is responsible for overseeing community sports, recreation activities, and primary and secondary schools, among other grassroots sports. In evaluating the quality of learning environment in Nigeria schools, Federal Ministry of Education (FME; 2020) stated that "schools where sporting facilities and equipment are available but not adequate; sporting facilities and equipment are not available; and sporting facilities and equipment are absent are judged fair, poor and very poor respectively and one key issue to consider when evaluating quality education in Nigeria schools is the availability, use and impact of sporting facilities and equipment as appropriate" (pp. 26-27).

In a study among students in University of Porto, Portugal, the researchers observed that adequate sports equipment is imperative to promote and motivate students' participation in sport (Cortés, Correa-Díaz et al., 2016). Diejomaohet et al., (2015) reported that sports programmes can only be organized successfully with the availability of sports facilities that met the required standards of the governing bodies. While, Joel et al., (2024) stated that having access to well-maintained sports facilities and equipment will inspire young athletes to participate in sports and enhance their performance in reaching personal objectives. Ademola (2015) claimed that in order to improve secondary school students' participation in sports, sports facilities and equipment are important. Ngwoke et al., (2021) reported that a key factor in the effectiveness of any PHE program in secondary schools is access to facilities and equipment. Furthermore, it should be noted that PHE programs in secondary education are crucial for developing athletes with potential for national team status.

It was revealed in the findings of Oyedele et al., (2020) that the provision of sports facilities has positive relationship with physical activity engagement among students of private secondary. Edirin et al., (2018) opined that for the development of sport at all levels and the training of future athletes, the accessibility of appropriate facilities should be accorded the highest priority. Sports equipment need to be appealing and pleasing to students and for this to happen, Hanak et al., (2020) stated that all used equipment should be inspected and undergo any necessary maintenance, repairs, or replacements and used equipment must be stored with care.

Nevertheless, despite the crucial role of facilities and equipment in the operation of school sports, Oyedele et al., (2020) and Abayomi et al., (2017) observed that most private schools in Ibadan and Osun State respectively lack spaces for sporting facilities to engage school children in

sport activities. Furthermore, the use of safety equipment is critical in predicting athlete involvement in extracurricular activities and to stand out in sports greatly rely on the proper supply and maintenance of facilities and equipment for the smooth running of sports (Joel et al., 2024).

### **Nigeria's Unemployment Rate**

The unemployment rate in Nigeria is alarming and it is affecting the social and economic of the country. Education stakeholders have long lamented the sad tendency of postsecondary schools producing graduates who go out on the streets every day looking for jobs that do not exist. (Gabadeen & Raimi 2016). According to Onuma (2016), Nigerian government efforts to halt the trend have been launched in an attempt to address the issue of unemployment in the country. This include but not limited to the inclusion of entrepreneurship as a compulsory course for all Nigeria tertiary students. However, this initiative has no substantial effect on the alarming rate of youth unemployment in Nigeria. Youth unemployment is a pandemic that is fast becoming a world-wide challenge, as there appear to be no country in the world that is not affected directly or indirectly by the crisis of unemployment (Lafiaji-Okuneye et al., 2024). Globally, more than 621 million individuals between the age of 15-24 years are not profitable employed, placing the youth unemployment rate globally at 15.28% in 2020 (International Labour Organisation [ILO], 2022). The condition is devastating in Nigeria as more than 21.72 million youth aged between 15 to 35 years are unemployed (National Bureau of Statistics, 2021). The problem of youth employment is acknowledged as one of Nigeria greatest priorities. The waste of human resources and debilitating effects of unemployment necessitate urgent address of the issue of unemployment (Atare, 2021).

Youth unemployment has reached alarming proportions due to increased population growth, rapid expansion of the education system, high level of rural-urban migration, corruption, lack of good governance, inadequate infrastructural facilities, lack of human capacity development, political conflict, neglect of agriculture, the effect of globalization process, among other factors were responsible for the high rate of unemployment in Nigeria. These factors have far reaching social, economic and social implications for individuals and households and the society at large (Uko & Atare, 2016; Kayode et al., 2014). One of the objectives of National Sports Policy of Nigeria was to promote sport as a means to generate employment and create wealth (National Sports Policy of Nigeria [NSPN], 2009).

### **Physical and Health Education Part-Time Teaching**

Studies has showed that PHE is an important subject that should be offer by school children of all ages. Bolarinwa (2021) and Momoh (2017) affirmed that PHE afford school children holistic development. Samphina Academy (2024) stated that health education help to increase children awareness on communicable diseases, sensitizes them on need for change of lifestyle by avoiding dirty environments, improved life of personal and environmental hygiene, eating healthy diet, avoiding sedentary lifestyles that may lead to health issues, and getting regular exercise to improve blood circulation.

The aforementioned can only be actualized through a PHE instruction. Unfortunately, most schools do not give credence to PHE as a subject and would only employ few teachers for the whole subject in the school regardless of area of specialization. Most of the times, finance for remuneration seems to be the complaint. As most private schools lack the financial resources to employ full-time PHE teachers, therefore, resolving to employ part-time teachers, who will not receive full salary in order to reduce cost. This decision, therefore gives room for the unemployed PHE teacher to have sources of income from three to five schools weekly. Ojuokaiye (2024) stated that one strategy to address Nigeria's growing unemployment rate is to look for alternate sources of income, such as PHE part-time teaching in schools. Exploring part-time teaching as a specialized subject teacher like PHE in a roving capacity in schools can ameliorate the unemployment challenge. This is because the teacher will be able to afford the essential needs to survive the challenging times. Therefore, unemployed PHE graduates should avail themselves of the opportunities of part-time teaching in private schools as a specialized teacher. They should thorough enquiry on the availability of part-time teaching positions in private schools by checking for vacancies on school websites, job portals and local newspapers. PHE unemployed teacher having explored school websites among others will possibly get the opportunity to get employed as part-time teacher.

### **Conclusion**

This study examined the opportunities for PHE teachers without jobs as well as PHE instruction in private schools. Consequently, it was determined that PHE is essential for fostering each child's physical, social, and psychological growth, and as such, PHE programs ought to be appropriately implemented in private schools. Private school owners are constantly in need of PHE



teachers due to the significance of PHE in the curriculum, and the majority will settle for part-time teachers due to the financial burden of hiring full-time teachers.

### Recommendations

It is based on the reviewed literature that the following recommendations were made;

1. The agency saddle with the responsibility of supervision for quality assurance in education in Nigeria should carry out their duties appropriately.
2. Education regulatory bodies in Nigeria should ensure that private schools employ qualified physical and health education teachers.
3. Unemployed physical and health education teachers should avail themselves of the opportunities of part-time teaching in private schools.
4. The education agency responsible for giving approval for the establishment of private schools should ensure that all prerequisite (especially playground space and sports facilities) are met before issuing approval.

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