



Investigating factors influencing the management of physical education activities in Primary Schools

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Abstract

This is a descriptive study aiming to explore some factors influencing the management of physical education activities at primary schools in Binh Dai district, Ben Tre Province, Vietnam. The study conducted a survey by using a questionnaire of 18 items. The questionnaire was delivered to 31 administrators and 122 teachers of public primary schools in the district. The results indicate that the management of physical education activities were mainly affected by four main factors which are related to administrators, teaching staff, students' families, social environment and instructional facilities.

Keywords: factors, management, physical education activities, Primary schools

Introduction

Vietnam is in the period of renewal and integration with other countries in the region and the world. Facing the increasingly strong development of society, it is required that educators should change the scheme of education to develop students comprehensively in virtue, mind, body and beauty to meet the demands of labour force to serve the industrialization and modernization of the country. In particular, primary education is the foundation and the initial basis which forms and develop students' personality. The curricula of physical education in schools aim to equip students with basic motor knowledge and skills, form exercise and sports habits to improve health, develop physical strength and stature contributing to the goal of comprehensive education of the country. Physical education also plays an extremely important role in the development of the country's sports industry. Physical training and sports in schools are identified as crucial part in improving health and fitness, fostering quality and moral standards, training strong will for students which satisfying the requirements of industrialization and modernization of the country. Physical education classes are also a potential environment to discover and foster sports talents for the country. Although the implementation of physical education and school sports over the past time has been received the support of local government and achieved some encouraging results, however, the reality shows the quality of physical education work in schools is still unremarkable. In order to have a basis for proposing solutions to improve the management of physical education work at primary schools in Binh Dai district, Ben Tre province, the researchers conducted the study entitled "*Investigating factors influencing the management of physical education activities in primary schools*". The study was mainly carried out in 4 primary schools (Tran Hoan Vu, Bui Si Hung, Binh Thang, Vo Van

Lan) in Binh Dai district, Ben Tre province, Vietnam.

Material and Methods

Participants

The actual survey subjects include: 12 administrators of primary schools (4 principals and 8 vice principals); 18 heads of physical education division at primary schools and 122 teachers from 4 public primary schools mentioned earlier in Binh Dai district, Ben Tre province.

Methods

The study was a mixed designed which including quantitative and qualitative data. For quantitative data, a questionnaire was designed with 18 items asking about the factors which affect the administration of physical education work in primary schools in Binh Dai district, Ben Tre province.

To gain the qualitative data, semi-structured interviews with four administrators and eight teachers who were randomly chosen from the samples of the study.

The questionnaire was a five-point scale design and the scale used to evaluate the questions consists of 5 levels according to the average score of the levels as follows:

- Average range from 1.0 to 1.80 - Completely unaffected
- Average range from 1.81 to 2.60 - unaffected
- Average range from 2.61 - 3.40 - Moderately influential
- Average range from 3.41 to 4.20 - Quite influential
- Average range from 4.21 - 5.0 - Very influential

Results and Discussion

Factors related to administrators

The four first items of the questionnaire aimed to ask about the factors which are related to administrators and the results are displayed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Factors relating to the administrators

No	Variables	Mean	SD
1	Principal's perception about the role of physical education activities at primary schools.	4.42	0.62
2	Principal's management capacity and skills for physical education activities at primary schools	4.37	0.66
3	Principal's sense of responsibility and enthusiasm for physical education activities at primary schools.	3.94	0.74
4	Principal's knowledge and experience on physical education activities at primary schools.	3.85	0.79
	Mean	4.14	0.29

The results shown in Table 1 indicate that factors related to administrators in the schools received much agreement from the participants. The overall mean score is 4.14 which is ranked in quite influential. It means that the participants have confirmed that 4 factors in the first cluster of the questionnaire regarding the influence of administrators. However, the degree of influence among factors in this group is different. Of the four items, item 1 and item 2 had higher agreement with Mean = 4.42 and mean = 4.37 respectively. Thus, principals of primary schools are one of the factors influencing the quality of physical education practice at primary schools in Binh Dai district, Ben Tre province. They must be the people with full and profound awareness of the meaning, role and importance of this activity. The deep awareness of this issue will be a guideline to help the principal make accurate decisions and have close instructions in the organization and implementation of

activities. Good awareness will lead to proactive, positive and creative attitudes and actions. On the other hand, a high sense of responsibility coupled with enthusiasm will help the principal develop his or her full capacity in management. Therefore, this is a factor that has a great influence on the management of physical education activities at primary school in Binh Dai district, Ben Tre province.

It can be said that all the four factors considered in this group of factors relating to administrators have a great influence on the management of physical education practice at primary schools in Binh Dai district, Ben Tre province.

Factors related to teachers of physical education

The second group of the questionnaire is about factors which are related to teachers of physical education and the results are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Factors related to teachers

No	Variables	Mean	SD
1	The level of competence and the experiences of teachers engaging in educating plays a vital role in enhancing the quality and effectiveness of physical education activities at primary schools.	4.06	0.53
2	Teachers' working consciousness governs physical education activities at primary schools. If teachers have a good sense of work and have responsibility for their job, implementing physical education activities will be formed and well developed.	3.92	0.78
3	Having a passion for the job plus loving children of educators themselves.	3.89	0.53
4	The coordination between teachers and forces involving in internal and external physical education activities at primary schools will decide the quality of physical education activities at elementary schools.	3.82	0.69
	Mean	3.92	0.12

The level of influential factors belonging to teachers on the management of physical education activities at primary school in Binh Dai district, which was assessed by administrators and teachers participating in the survey, had the levels of effect (Mean = 3.92; SD = 0.12).

The results of the study affirms that the factors in terms of teachers such as: The level of competence and the experiences of teachers taking part in educating play an important role in raising the quality and effectiveness of physical education activities at elementary schools. Teachers' working sense governs physical education activities at primary schools. If educators have a good sense of work and responsibility for their occupation, implementing physical education activities will be formed and well developed. Having a passion a for the job plus loving children of educators themselves. The coordination between teachers and forces involving in internal and external physical education activities at primary schools will contribute to deciding the quality of physical education activities at elementary schools.

Among 4 considered elements belonging to this group of factors, all elements that are evaluated with the highest level of influence is "The level of competence and the experiences of teachers engaging in educating plays a vital role in enhancing the quality and effectiveness of physical education activities at primary schools" (Mean = 4.06; SD = 0.53) and the lowest influential factor is "The coordination

between teachers and forces involving in internal and external physical education activities at primary schools will decide the quality of physical education activities at elementary schools" (Mean = 3.82; SD = 0.69). The remaining factors are: Having a passion for the job plus loving children of educators themselves; The coordination between teachers and forces involving in internal and external physical education activities at primary schools will decide the quality of physical education activities at elementary schools (Mean = 3.92 and Mean = 3.89). In reality, managing physical education activities at primary schools also shows evidently the effect of factors belonging to teachers is a vital factor influencing this activity. Therefore, the principals want to manage this activity competently, first and foremost, they have to manage well the person directly conveying the knowledge to students, called the educator. The teacher possesses good professional qualifications, experience, a passion for the job and well coordinating with the forces working in physical education. Thus, all of 4 elements belonging need to be noticed by the administrator managing and educating this activity.

Factors related to students' family

The third group of the questionnaire is about factors which are related to students' family and the results are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Factors related to the student’s family

No	Variables	Mean	SD
1	The view of student’s families about physical education at primary school.	3.67	0.83
2	The awareness of the importance of physical education at primary school.	4.49	0.65
3	The cooperation between families and teachers and schools in physical education at primary schools.	3.89	0.80
4	The interest of Student’s families in physical education activities at primary school.	3.83	0.87
	Mean	3.97	0.36

The influence level from factors belonging to the family on the management of physical education activities at primary school in Binh Dai district, assessed by administrators and teachers participating in the survey quite a lot (Mean = 3.97; SD = 0.36).

The results confirm that the factors belonging to the student's family include: The view of student’s families about physical education at primary school; The cooperation between families and teachers and schools in physical education at primary schools greatly affects physical education activities at primary schools.

Among the 4 factors considered in this group of factors, the factor that is assessed to have a very influential level is “The awareness of the importance of physical education at primary school” (Mean = 4.49, SD: 0.65). The remaining factors are: The view of student’s families about physical education at primary school; The interest of Student’s families in physical education activities at primary school

and The cooperation between families and teachers and schools in physical education at primary schools (Mean = 3.67, Mean = 3.83 and Mean = 3.89). The actual management of physical education activities at primary schools also clearly shows the influence of family factors, especially the family's attitude and interest in this activity. Because, if the principal wants to manage this activity well, it is necessary for the cooperation and enthusiastic support of the students' parents. Therefore, all four factors belonging to the student's family need to be paid attention by the subject of educational management of this activity.

Factors related to social environment and instructional facilities

The fourth group of the questionnaire aims to ask about factors which are related to social environment and instructional facilities and the results are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Factors related to the social environment and instructional facilities

No	Variables	Mean	SD
1	Directing point of view of the Ministry of Education and Training, Department of Primary Education.	4.28	0.53
2	Mental and material facilitation.	3.74	0.82
3	Mechanisms, documents, resolutions and policies.	4.15	0.65
4	Coordination between family, school and society.	3.61	0.76
5	Motivation, reward and policies for teachers.	3.70	0.77
6	Local cultural, economic and social development.	3.72	0.81
	Mean	3.87	0.28

The influence level of factors belonging to the social environment and instructional facilities conditions on the management of physical education activities at primary schools, assessed by managing officers and teachers participating in the survey is quite high (Mean= 3.87; SD= 0.28).

Among the 6 factors belonging to the group of environmental factors, social and physical conditions, factors such as: "Directing point of view of the Ministry of Education and Training, Department of Primary Education" greatly affect the physical education activities for students at primary school (Mean = 4.28). The factors were assessed to have a high influence level on the management of physical education activities at primary schools.

Summarizing, all groups of factors were studied to have a degree of influence from very influence to much influence on the management of physical education activities at the primary schools. However, the influence level of these groups of factors from the assessment of managing officers and teachers is different, although this difference is not significant.

Conclusions

The present study shows that the factors related to administrative staff, teaching staff, student’s families, social environment and instructional facilities have had a significant influence on the management of physical

education practice in primary schools in Binh Dai district, Ben Tre province. Specifically, 18 factors affected significantly on the management of teaching and learning physical education in primary schools in Binh Dai district, Ben Tre province.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare to have no conflicts of interest to the study.

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