



Research Article

“I Shy Away”: Student-Teachers View on Non-Selection of Physical Education As an Elective in Colleges of Education

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Abstract: Physical Education since its inception has been playing an essential role in student’s development, particularly in early childhood. This paper, therefore, sought to examine the factors associated with the selection and non-selection of Physical Education as an elective course. With the social cognitive career theory as a lens, the findings were premised on a semi-structured interview schedule with 20 targeted student-teachers from the 8 colleges of education in the Ashanti region, Ghana. The study revealed that difficulty, lack of interest, absence of Physical Education in the curriculum, inadequate information and knowledge, and misconceptions about Physical Education underpinned its non-selection. Further, the study discovered that factors such as awareness creation, pursuance of Physical Education as an elective in Senior High School, employing practical methods, employment of additional Physical Education tutors, and health benefits attract student-teachers to select Physical Education as an elective course. The study recommended enlightenment, early education, hands-on knowledge, improved human resource, and well-being as measures to curb the issue of non-selection of Physical Education.

Keywords: Physical Education, colleges of education, elective course, selection, non-selection, student-teachers

1. Introduction

Education plays a prominent role in this time. The constant increase in knowledge and the changes in technology, socio-economic, and political situations seem to have carried education to a progressively vital position in human life. However, to adapt to these constant changes in individuals’ social life, there is the need for education on learning, skills, values, and rules needed for future generations. In addition, as individuals interact with their environment, they tend to form various behaviours, values, and principles which can be adapted to the environment through education. This is also the case with physical education.

As the Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE) (2018) rightly stated, the main aim of Physical Education is to develop physically proficient people with the knowledge, skills, and confidence which are necessary to appreciate a lifetime of healthy physical activity. However, Physical Education in the school curriculum has a long history dating back to the 1800s (Lumpkin, 2009). Generally, in the present-day education system, students are supported in academic, physical fitness, and social aspects through Physical Education (Aybek, 2007). Physical Education also promotes and advertises nations’ establishments by methods for victories achieved in games (Janz et al.,

2010).

Aside from all the importance derived from Physical Education classes, there are growing trends in declining Physical Education enrolment globally in schools and colleges. For example, in America, students' enrolment in Physical Education classes in high schools has decreased from 70.3% in 2017 to 60.4% in 2018 (Faulkner et al., 2007). In this direction, however, only 50.0% of African nations implement their Physical Education programmes in accordance with the rights as stipulated in UNESCO (1978) which stipulates that learners ought to approach Physical Education since it is an essential human right just like other rights (Hardman, 2008).

In furtherance, there is a solid relationship between increasingly negative attitudes toward Physical Education and the decline in physical activity that occurs as youngsters advance through the beginning times of development (Janz et al., 2010). Learners with negative attitudes toward Physical Education class dodge further support in physical activities in their day-to-day life (Eisenberger et al., 1979). Learners who tend to contribute in Physical Education frequently have fun and continue to participate after school (Silverman & Subramaniam, 1999). Ocak (2016) reported that every now and then, the commitment to settle on a decision between elective Physical Education and other electives courses pulls students away from settling on Physical Education.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, some researchers hold a view that the early years in a child's development are significant for developing fundamental motor skills which add to the ideal advancement of physical limits (Akindutire & Olanipekun, 2014). Meanwhile, the International Charter established by UNESCO (1978) stipulates that learners ought to approach Physical Education since it is a fundamental human right just like other rights. The Charter additionally stipulates that Physical Education can instruct the learners comprehensively, thereby educating them for life. Likewise, the International Charter on Physical Education, physical activity, and sports of UNESCO (2015) states that Physical Education must rouse deep-rooted support. Early positive experiences of play, games, and physical activities should be organised for all so as to lay a foundation of the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and motivation necessary for the upkeep of long-lasting participation in physical activity and games.

Kinnunen and Lewis (2013) established that there has been almost no inside and out the assessment of equipped students and their mentalities towards Physical Education. Teachers will in general perceive students who are talented and attempt to support and invigorate these students to receive their full potential. Most teachers suppose that skillful students appreciate and like Physical Education, from Kinnunen and Lewis, students needed to be positively socialised into Physical Education to have positive attitudes towards it.

In Ghana, for instance, successive governments have not exhibited a total commitment to Physical Education as a subject in schools and colleges (Ammah & Kwaw, 2005). Significant hindrances to giving Physical Education in schools and colleges are classified as institutional or teacher-related (Sofa & Asola, 2016). Institutional hindrances are those components that are outside teachers' ability to control, while teacher-related obstructions result from teachers' behaviours. According to Ministry of Education (2018), Physical Education in Ghanaian schools is timetabled for the sake of learners and there is zero help from school heads.

Attributable to this, the status of Physical Education remains shaky because teachers think of it as being low in their scale of values. Despite an abundance of evidence pointing to the advantages of Physical Education, its activities in the educational establishment can be frequently overshadowed by the premium we put on other academic subjects. This is especially so because, in most schools in Ghana, emphasis is placed on English, mathematics, and science achievement from childhood (Sofa & Asola, 2016). It is, therefore, necessary to find out why college student-teachers in Ghana, especially those in the Ashanti region, select or do not select Physical Education as a major area of specialisation.

2. Objectives of the study

1. Examine the factors underpinning student-teachers' non-selection of Physical Education in colleges of education.
2. Examine the motivating factors that attract student-teachers to select Physical Education as an elective in colleges of education.

3. Research questions

1. What are the factors underpinning student-teachers' non-selection and pursuance of Physical Education in colleges of education?
2. What motivation can be given to student-teachers to attract them to pursue Physical Education as an elective subject in colleges of education?

4. Literature review

This section reviews the literature related to the study objectives. First, the study review begins with students-teachers' non-selection of Physical Education as an elective course and factors that attract student-teachers to pursue Physical Education as an elective course in colleges of education.

4.1 *Students-teachers' non-selection of Physical Education*

The choice to give elective Physical Education a try is mixed up and may be associated with socioeconomics (Couturier et al., 2005), mentalities (Bibik et al., 2007), and inspiration (Shen, 2014). Akindutire and Olanipekun (2014) examined the dispositions of the students towards the contemplating of Physical Education. Students answered the inquiry why they did not take up Physical Education as a course and the answers demonstrated that about (64%), disliked games as a course, (42%) did not appreciate the exercises, and (39%) disliked the instructor.

Furthermore, research indicates that resources required for effective Physical Educational activities in most African public schools are insufficient. The lack of space, like playfield is very common in most schools found in rural areas. Inadequate funding from the government has compounded the lack of Physical Education resources in public schools in Africa (Muthuri et al., 2014; Sofo & Asola, 2015). Stakeholders who would have supplemented the government efforts in providing Physical Education resources have not responded positively to this problem.

Moreover, Njororai (1994) acknowledged that students offering Physical Education and sports programs at the university are viewed by their friends and the society as dull and unintelligent and that this deficit restricts their potential to offer more "academic subjects". He also stated that students had negative attitudes towards partaking in Physical Education and sports (Njororai, 1990).

In Ghana, a study conducted by Nkrumah (2016) sought to examine the factors influencing female teacher-trainees' non-participation in physical activity and sports in Colleges of Education in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The study revealed that religion (59.8%), misconception (98.8%), social role (98.8%), facilities and equipment (60.1%), sports skills foundation (99.1%), motivation (96.6%), and academic loads (98.6%) are significant factors influencing female teacher-trainees' non-participation in physical activities and sports in the Colleges of Education in the Ashanti region, Ghana. She, therefore, recommended the education of students on the importance of physical activity and sports.

4.2 *Factors that attract student-teachers to pursue Physical Education*

Muthuri et al. (2014) claimed that, in Africa, the scarcity of textbooks, libraries and Physical Education amenities will limit the educational system from responding completely to new demands. To improve quality education, better learning materials and resources are needed (Sofa & Asola, 2015). Kinnunen and Lewis (2013) emphasized the significance of having suitable human resources, planning and providing enough instructional materials and physical amenities to sustain educational efforts.

Furthermore, another Kenyan study by Gitonga et al. (2012) investigated the attitudes of teacher trainees towards Physical Education. The findings of the study showed that teacher trainees have positive attitudes towards Physical Education, with non-significant gender differences. They recommended that favourable teaching and learning settings, as well as resources, should be provided for effective teaching of Physical Education in educational institutions. They added that Physical Education should be made an examinable subject in Kenyan secondary schools as it will enable compliance with legal requirements and encourage the status of Physical Education in the Kenyan educational system.

Physical Education, according to Kinoti et al. (n.d), has been compulsory and examinable in Kenya's teacher

Education colleges at the diploma level since 1980. They discovered that Physical Education among others aims to maintain and improve the bodily health and fitness of the learners. They also observed the general developments in the health status of the students. They then suggested the encouragement of Physical Education in all educational institutions due to its enhancement in students' health status.

Finally, experts stress that lifestyle Physical Education habits need to be developed early in life (Sallis & McKenzie, 1991) and that early, positive, physical activity experiences may increase the likelihood of maintaining a physically active lifestyle (Weiss, 2000). Thus, quality Physical Education programs and effective physical educators play a vital role in providing youngsters with early positive experiences of Physical Education. Akindutire and Olanipekun (2014) alluded to the fact that there ought to be a commitment to work dynamically so that the position of Physical Education, inside and outside education system is both completely acknowledged and developed through measures to improve the curriculum, sports amenities, and equipment, the position of Physical Education and the initial in-service training of teachers. There is a need for support to enhance the availability of Physical Education resources for quality teaching and learning in our schools (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2017).

Notwithstanding the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic which affected teaching and learning in many subject areas resulted in adaptations to the way Physical Education was handled (González-Calvo et al., 2020). Teachers and learners reported unexplained challenges arising from accessibility issues, poor socialisation and inability to properly teach learners how to perform specific skills online (Kim et al., 2021; Mercier et al., 2021). There is an indication that PE lessons cannot be effective without meeting learners in one-on-one situations (Varea et al., 2020). This also affected the smooth delivery of the subject recently. This factor is relevant as it can affect the selection and non-selection of the course because teachers and learners have to adjust to new situations which could be demanding.

5. Methodology

The study was conducted in all eight public colleges in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The paper focused on the third-year college of education student-teachers comprised of 2,663 students. Since the region is cosmopolitan in nature, the student-teachers were from all parts of the country. It was, therefore, purposively picked for the study to understand why student-teachers do not select Physical Education as an elective course. A census sampling technique was employed since the study made use of all eight colleges of education in the Ashanti region of Ghana. Furthermore, the study employed the purposive sampling technique in selecting 20 third-year student-teachers, eight Physical Education tutors, and four principals or management members.

The study employed a phenomenological qualitative research design to solicit lived experiences of the participants as to why they did not choose the subject as an elective when they had the opportunity to do so. The study depended on primary data with an interview schedule as the data collection instrument. Data gathered during the interviews were transcribed and analysed qualitatively using thematic analysis.

6. Findings and discussion

This section presents the findings and discussion of data gathered through interviews on the reasons why student-teachers after offering Physical Education as a core in their first year do not select the subject as an elective course in colleges of education in the Ashanti region. By so doing, this section mainly focused on two sub-sections based on the objectives of the study. Therefore, this section first presents the factors underpinning student-teachers' non-selection and pursuance of Physical Education. This section finally examines the motivating factors that attract student-teachers to pursue Physical Education as an elective course in the colleges of education.

6.1 *Non-selection of Physical Education by student-teachers*

Physical Education as a subject area has its pros and cons. According to Tuckman (1999), people get involved in Physical Education and related activities due to the benefits derived from the activity. Contrariwise, scholars

such as Muindi (1998), Wamukoya (1994), and Njororai (1994) have suggested that students have some negative attitudes towards Physical Education and related activities. Njororai (1994) avowed that students who pursue Physical Education at the university are seen as dull and not clever by their friends and the society at large. From the data gathered, participants clearly stated the factors underpinning the non-section of Physical Education by student-teachers. These factors consisted of the difficult nature of Physical Education, lack of interest by student-teachers, absence of Physical Education in the colleges' curriculum, inadequate information and knowledge about Physical Education, and misconceptions about Physical Education.

6.1.1 The difficult nature of the course

From the data gathered, it is clear that some student-teachers do not pursue Physical Education because it is viewed as difficult. A participant stated that:

Because it is not my field. It is somehow difficult for me to learn it. (female student 1)

This claim was further confirmed by some Physical Education tutors in the selected colleges of education. A participant had the following to say:

...they think Physical Education is difficult. Truly, Physical Education is a little technical because it is not just one of the general courses that they can simply read. There are certain areas that are very technical and you know technical subjects are in some way demanding and it takes extra effort. Students these days want the simple and cheap side so that is one of the reasons. (Physical Education tutor 3)

In furtherance, some students are influenced by their predecessors and, in some cases, tutors in other disciplines. They are made to believe the complexities that come along with the course. This clouds their judgement and affects their decision to pursue Physical Education as an elective course. A participant narrated:

Here, one of the problems which I will term as local has to do with the fact that students are sometimes discouraged by their seniors. When the seniors come, students listen to them. They tell the students Physical Education is difficult and that discourages the students from selecting it as an elective. Unfortunately, certain utterances from some tutors are discouraging so I can say it is 50-50 on the part of students (seniors) and some tutors. (Physical Education tutor 3)

6.1.2 Lack of interest by student-teachers

Despite the numerous benefits of Physical Education such as helping students develop active lifestyles (Tappe & Burgeson, 2004), providing students with openings to acquire key life skills (Le Masurier & Corbin, 2006), and many others, some individuals are not interested in the discipline for varied reasons. From the narrations in this subsection, some participants were not interested in Physical Education. Others were not interested due to the non-alliance of the course with their chosen career path. A participant revealed that:

Because I identified in JHS that I have an interest in vocational courses, not Physical Education. (Female Student 2)

She added:

I did not select it because I didn't have any interest in that subject. (Female student 2)

Similarly, some participants added:

Because of the activities involved, naturally, I do not like sporting activities. (Male student 4)

Well, I'm personally not a fitness enthusiast so I have no keen interest in physical activities. Physical Education as much as it really helps the individual, as I said earlier on, it is not within my scope so I really don't have much interest in physical activities. (Male student 3)

The program was very stressful and I did not show much interest in it. As for me, it's time-wasting (laughs). (Female student 9)

Other participants were not interested because the course does not align with their career path. They mentioned that:

I am not interested because I think there are not many job opportunities in the Physical Education aspect. (Male student 6)

I am not interested in that particular course. Because of what I want to be or my potentials in life, if I select it, it will not help me in the future. (Male student 1)

Finally, a Physical Education tutor in one of the selected colleges of education in the Ashanti region had this to say:

... this college is a female college and I have noticed that women especially at our age level are not very much interested in physical and vigorous activities because they are ladies. At that level, they are so mindful of themselves, their body, maybe hurting themselves and other things so the interest is not there and the desire is low. (Physical Education tutor 3)

It can be inferred from the narratives above that some individuals show no interest or dislike Physical Education and its related activities. This is consistent with the arguments of Njororai (1994), and Akindutire and Olanipekun (2014) that Physical Education is disliked by students or students who do not show interest in Physical Education.

6.1.3 Absence of Physical Education in the colleges' curriculum

The findings under this subsection indicated that colleges of education in the Ashanti region do not mount Physical Education as an elective course of study in the colleges. In the same vein, scholars such as Akindutire and Olanipekun (2014) alluded to the fact that there is a need to improve the curriculum in educational institutions. Some participants shared similar views. They narrated that:

Because it was not part of our courses during my year. (female student 3)

When I was selecting those courses, I didn't see it being part of the courses to be selected that is why I didn't choose it as an elective (Male Student 7)

Furthermore, some participants held the view that some students are interested but are not able to pursue the course because the number of students who are willing to study the course as an elective does not meet the required number for the course to be mounted. They revealed that:

Because the number of people needed to be taught in school was not enough for the course to be mounted. (female student 7)

Because the number of people they are expecting to select to be taught was few so I couldn't pursue it. Also, there is no motivation because even our tutors do not motivate us to do it. (Female Student 8)

A tutor in one of the colleges of education believes that this is an institutional related problem as it involves the non-compliance and fewer efforts of some principals towards mounting PE as an elective course in the colleges of education. He narrated that:

Secondly, when students come here you can see zeal is there but the course doesn't reflect in their portal. Also, principals are not making the subject interesting because when you ask them to make inquiries from various

platforms and during professional board meetings and those things, you come and they tell you we are on course. You can deduct from the information they give that they are not making efforts to make sure that the subject is mounted. Because it has not been mounted, students don't see it to select it at all. (PE tutor 4)

This narrative is in line with Osborne et al.'s (2016) assertion that teachers complained about the lack of commitment and support from some colleagues who work without planning.

6.1.4 Inadequate information and knowledge about Physical Education

With information and knowledge being power, the lack of it in a particular discipline could bring out disinterestedness and less confidence. From the data gathered, a participant when asked why he did not pursue PE as an elective course revealed that:

Because of the less knowledge I have about Physical Education, I didn't think it was a good idea to select it. (Male student 8)

In the same way, another participant added:

Because I wasn't having enough information about it. (female student 5)

Interestingly, some participants attributed their non-selection of Physical Education to the experiences they had with the course in secondary school. They revealed that:

The PE I studied at SHS wasn't all that deep, it was just shallow so I didn't get much knowledge on it to make me develop an interest in the course. I don't have basic knowledge of PE, which is why I didn't pursue the course at this level. (Male student 2)

Hmm. I think I didn't get the foundation well so I wasn't having much knowledge in it. So, the interest and love depreciated after I completed SHS. (Male student 5)

It can be concluded from the narratives above that individuals lack of information and knowledge about the subject of Physical Education. This could be attributed to the fact that individuals exhibit little knowledge about the aims and objectives of Physical Education as a subject (Njororai, 1994).

6.1.5 Misconception about Physical Education

Regardless of the benefits of Physical Education to the health and physical outlook of individuals, some people still have some dislike for the discipline. Discussed in this subsection are some recognized misconceived notions about Physical Education from some participants, specifically tutors of Physical Education. These views consisted of tagging PE as football or just sports, regarding Physical Education as a man's sport, and utterances that connote gender stereotyping. Two physical education tutors had this to say:

As I said earlier, people see PE as only football oriented and because it is not examinable at the secondary school level, they do not add more value to it. So, it is not in their course and a lot of people think about football when Physical Education is mentioned. So that may be the main cause for the non-selection of it. (Physical Education tutor 1)

The next reason is that people see PE as sports, not a course or an academic subject one can select and pursue... (Physical Education tutor 3)

From the statements above, it is evident that some individuals lack knowledge of Physical Education as a course. As a result, the first tutor mentioned that people regard Physical Education as only football and nothing more. As a result, the second narrative indicates the unlikelihood of students pursuing Physical Education because of the notion

they have about the course. The tutor added:

This misconception that sports and PE are for men is also a factor. So sometimes they ask the question of why a female is pursuing PE as a course. I think that is also one of the reasons. (PE tutor 3)

Furthermore, Physical Education for some people is a man's course as narrated above. This brings about the issue of gender socialization in Physical Education. Therefore, it is clear that the participation in Physical Education can be linked to how young people view their feminine and masculine roles in society. This resonates with Lent and Brown's (2002) social cognitive career theory which indicates that self-efficacy speaks of a person's personal beliefs about his or her abilities to carry out particular behaviours or actions that are specific to particular activity areas. This seems to be largely the case in our Ghanaian society where some people believe Physical Education is a man's subject area.

Moreover, an issue of gender stereotyping surfaced during data gathering. A Physical Education tutor stated that:

The last thing I will say is that because it is a female college, we have courses like home economics, management and others which attract women more as they are future wives and home managers. (PE tutor 3)

These narratives resonate with Nkrumah's (2016) assertion that misconception plays a greater role or is an important factor that influences female teacher-trainees' non-participation in Physical Education and sport in the Colleges of Education in the Ashanti region, Ghana. In the same vein, Njororai (1994) attributed misconceptions to the non-involvement of students in Physical Education and related activities.

6.2 Motivating factors that attract student-teachers to pursue Physical Education

Motivation can be seen as an inner power that regulates all aspects of human behaviour. Motivation, therefore, gives individuals the luxury to choose from the available options about how best to channel their time and energy (Lenskyi, 1994). In as much as some student-teachers disregard Physical Education as a course, Koca et al. (2005) indicated the interest of some students towards participation in Physical Education. This contributes to the students' development in areas such as their emotional, social, and mental wellbeing. As such, there is the need to motivate individuals to initiate and keep a physically active way of life.

This subsection discusses the motivating factors that attract student-teachers to select Physical Education as an elective course. The data gathered showed that awareness creation and education of student-teachers, pursuance of Physical Education as an elective course in SHS, employing the practical aspects of the course, employment of additional Physical Education tutors, and health benefits, and job prospects were suggested as motivating factors that attract student-teachers to pursue Physical Education as an elective in the colleges of education.

6.2.1 Awareness creation and education of student-teachers

With the various misconceptions people have about physical education, some participants felt enlightenment of individuals on the subject matter will go a long way to motivate them to pursue Physical Education as an elective course. A Physical Education tutor revealed that:

I think there should be awareness creation and also do PE as an examinable course in the secondary school because people see PE as a course for those who have low mental average or ruffians or 'kubolors'. They also see PE only as playing football so we need to do the education to encourage students and teach them the essence of PE. (Physical Education Tutor 1)

Similarly, a participant narrated:

I think the first thing is education. We should let them know the truth so they don't just rely on hearsay. (Physical Education Tutor 3)

From the responses above, it is evident that the course is looked down upon by individuals, therefore, the right education from the right people will help motivate individuals to pursue the course. This resonates with Njororai's (1994) proclamation that students offering Physical Education and sports programs at the university are viewed by their friends and the society as dull and unintelligent and that this deficit restricts their potential to offer more "academic subjects". In furtherance, a participant had this to say:

I think PE tutors at the secondary school level should not only teach the students the biology aspect but should also teach them the other aspects of PE. The way they teach them should also change, that is they should let them understand the basics. Once they get the basics, it becomes easier for them to build on and to opt for it when they come to the college of education. (Physical Education Tutor 2).

This narrative indicates the need to educate individuals on all aspects of Physical Education for them to have a firm grip on the subject matter.

6.2.2 Physical Education as an elective course in SHS

From the responses of participants, it can be noted that physical education is not mounted as an elective in most senior high schools. Therefore, individuals do not have a fair knowledge about the subject area and that could influence them to pursue it at a higher level. As a result, some participants recommended the mounting of Physical Education as an elective course to attract student-teachers to pursue. Some participants gave the following narrations:

The subject should be introduced at the SHS level as an elective. Also, the course must be mounted at the college level as an elective for students to select. (Physical Education Tutor 4)

... we have to introduce the subject as an elective at the SHS level like studying geography or science. It will make people aware that there is a subject called PE and it can also be selected as an elective. (Elective Physical Education student 2)

When the subject is introduced at the SHS as an elective when people begin to understand it from SHS. Even from primary school, when they begin to introduce it, they teach them at the JHS so they gain a little knowledge, then at the SHS level, it becomes an elective. I will say I think the attractiveness will come from that place, that if from the SHS, then continue at the college. (Elective Physical Education student 3)

It can be inferred from the narratives that the introduction of Physical Education as an elective at the senior high school level is a motivating factor for students to pursue the course in the colleges of education. This is in line with Sallis and McKenzie's (1991) argument that experts stress that lifestyle physical-activity habits need to be developed early in life. This could help spark the interest of students in the early stages of their lives.

6.2.3 Encourage the practical aspect of Physical Education

Furthermore, to attract student-teachers to pursue Physical Education as an elective in the colleges of education, some participants suggested the need to make Physical Education more practical to spark their interest. They gave the following narrations:

For PE to be attractive, we have to make it more practical. It shouldn't be a classroom subject like English and others. If the practical aspect is more, it will be more attractive... So, I think that if we do such things, it will make it more attractive... (Elective PE student 1)

We should also make it look much more attractive. You know at the secondary school level when they are going for PE, most students will tell you they don't have PE kits and others. Most of them are allowed because it is not examinable. I think they should insist that all students participate in the practical aspect as well as the theory to at least let them know much about PE. PE is fun and that is how it has to be. (PE Tutor 2).

Additionally, a participant recommended that equipment and facilities needed to make Physical Education more

attractive and practical must be provided. The participant narrated that:

Two, I think we should make the course attractive by providing the needed equipment and facilities like the playing field, volleyball and handball courts, and also have the opportunity to embark on practical works. I think these can ginger students to select Physical Education... (Physical Education Tutor 3).

It can be concluded from the narratives above that the practical aspect of Physical Education must be encouraged, and the facilities and equipment needed for that must also be provided for individuals to be attracted to the discipline. This is consistent with the views of Osborne et al. (2016), Sofo and Asola (2015), Kinnunen and Lewis (2013), and Gitonga et al. (2012) that there is a need to provide adequate Physical Education facilities or infrastructure improvements to support the teaching and learning of the course. This would also motivate students to participate in Physical Education in schools and colleges.

6.2.4 Employment of additional Physical Education tutors

The issue of hiring additional Physical Education tutors also surfaced. This is what an administrator in one of the colleges of education in the Ashanti region had to say:

Hmm. We have a football field and other materials. We have also actively been participating in all sporting activities organized by colleges of education. So, I feel we will have to give it some attention. But that also requires the recruitment of additional tutors to help. Currently, I think we have only one PE tutor. In that case, in the future, we need to think of additional tutors. (Administrator 1)

The narrative above shows that facilities and equipment are available, but Physical Education tutors are not enough. This expresses the need for the employment of additional Physical Education tutors to attract student-teachers to pursue Physical Education as an elective. This resonates with Kinnunen and Lewis' (2013) argument that appropriate human resources should be provided to help in achieving educational satisfaction.

6.2.5 Promotion of the health benefits of Physical Education

Physical Education and its related activities improve one's health (Downward & Rasciute, 2015; Skille & Solbakken, 2011). This, according to some participants, could entice student-teachers to participate in or pursue Physical Education as an elective course of study. Some participants gave the following submissions:

Oh yes! I think that for me I will keep on advising, especially the first years, to take PE as an elective because it is a subject that will develop you personally, make you healthy... So, I think that PE should be a major course that people should select as an elective. (Elective PE student 1)

I have studied PE and I am now in my third year and every student I encounter; I tell them that we have PE as an elective and it is a subject that will help you to be well equipped, physically fit, and to understand a lot of things in life... (Elective PE student 2)

Yes, I am in PE and I have seen the importance of it. I am always active and energetic to do my daily chores. So, I have been telling the first-year who are doing the core that they can select PE as others have and as I am doing which will help them in the future...So I keep on telling people the importance of PE. (Elective PE student 3)

It can be inferred from the narratives that the experiences of individuals play a vital role in the pursuance of Physical Education by first-year students of the colleges of education. This shows that seniors serve as a motivating factor for their juniors to either pursue or not pursue Physical Education as an elective in their second year.

These narratives are in line with Tuckman's (1999) argument that individuals develop strong attitudes toward Physical Education given the benefits inherent in participating in physical activities. Also, in the same vein, Kinoti et al. (n.d) claim that Physical Education among others aims to maintain and improve the bodily health and fitness of the

learners. This, therefore, serves as a source of encouragement or motivation for students to pursue Physical Education due to its benefits or enhancement in students' health status.

7. Conclusions and recommendation

In accordance with the findings gathered, the study concluded that aside from the positive benefits of Physical Education, it is viewed by both students and teachers as a discipline that entails problems that deter students from pursuing it. In addition, participants saw enlightenment, early education, hands-on knowledge, improvement in human resources, and well-being as proposed strategic measures to tackle the issue of non-selection of physical education. In furtherance, the study brought up various recommendations to school authorities, stakeholders, and policymakers to concentrate on success factors to make student-teachers pursue Physical Education and also make the course more efficient. First, the Government, specifically the Ministry of Education (2018) should revise the curriculum for it to come to terms with the changing society for student-teachers to better appreciate and pursue Physical Education as an elective subject. Finally, there is a need for school authorities or principals of the colleges of education to employ additional Physical Education teachers to make teaching and learning of the course more effective. This could attract student-teachers to pursue the course as an elective at the college level.

Conflict of interest

Authors state no conflict of interest.

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