

Post-COVID Heroes: Physical Education Teachers' Role in Sports and Physical Activity in Jamaica

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Abstract

Background: The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly exacerbated Jamaica's high physical inactivity rates, which means the country could potentially see increases in lifestyle diseases and deaths. Given the fact that physical literacy is not prevalent among the Jamaican population, physical education (PE) teachers must play a greater role in the post-COVID era to promote physical activity and sports involvement through school, community, and national initiatives.

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to assess the perceived role of PE teachers in the development of sports and physical activity (PA) lifestyles in the post-COVID era in Jamaica.

Methods: The research took the form of a descriptive quantitative survey that analyzed the experiences and perceptions of 47 PE teachers in Jamaica. The sampling method utilized a combined approach using purposive and snowball sampling techniques.

Results: The results of the study indicated that PE teachers play an important role in teaching and developing the fundamental skills of students in preparation for transition into amateur and national competitions. PE teachers in the post-COVID era need to contribute more to students living a healthy lifestyle and becoming active for life.

Conclusion: The results of this study have great implications for Jamaica's physical inactivity levels and the continued development and maintenance of Jamaica's dominance in sports in the international arena.

Keywords: chronic lifestyle diseases, physical activity lifestyle, sports development.

INTRODUCTION

Physical education should be an essential part of Jamaica's fight against chronic lifestyle diseases. PE teachers play an essential role in educating students at a tender age about physically active lifestyles and proper nutrition (Leeder & Beaumont, 2021). Becoming active for life is an essential goal of PE teachers: if students leave school with a better understanding of lifestyle diseases and PA, they will potentially continue living an active life into the future (Leeder & Beaumont, 2021). According to WHO (2020), children aged 5 to 17 years should engage in at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous intensity, primarily aerobic, PA per week. Children should engage in vigorous-

intensity aerobic workouts as well as muscle and bone strengthening exercises at least three times per week (WHO, 2020).

According to Pedroni et al. (2019), focusing on the school setting has been a significant method used to reduce physical inactivity among children and adolescents, since this is where they spend the bulk of their time and because this approach targets the great majority of children and youth, including high-risk groups. Effective school cultures, according to research, promote favorable academic and behavioral results for schools and their students. As a result, it is possible that school cultures have an influence on students' PA levels

(Pedroni et al., 2019). Participation in school-based physical exercise is beneficial to students' health, psychological well-being, and academic performance (Pedroni et al., 2019).

In terms of physical health, a recent assessment of research exploring the link between physical exercise and health discovered that the more active school-aged children and youth are, the larger the health advantages (Pedroni et al., 2019). Regular involvement in moderate-to-vigorous physical exercise, for example, is linked to improved bone health in later life (Pedroni et al., 2019). Shelley et al. (2018) research found that PA also provides students with psychological advantages, such as enhanced mental health, more favorable attitudes toward school and school personnel, improved social skills, and more cooperation and collaboration with their classmates. Children and adolescents who engage in PA on a regular basis have lower anxiety and depression symptoms, have stronger self-esteem and self-efficacy, and have better intra- and inter-personal abilities (Shelley et al., 2018). Physical exercise also makes kids feel more connected to their school, which is linked to improved mental and physical health as well as enhanced engagement with the school environment (Shelley et al., 2018).

Despite the many benefits of PE, Roux and Dasoo's (2020) study found that PE is frequently linked with the teaching of games and sports, with the primary goal being technique empowerment. Because of the favorable perception society has created around the capacity of these programs to generate change in knowledge, skills, and attitudes, participation in sports, PE, and other physical activities has been considered a method to achieve the personal and social development of its participants (Roux & Dasoo, 2020). However, due to the prevalence of anti-social, aggressive, and unhealthy behavior in and around sports and sports-related activities, simple participation is ineffective. However, the term PE implies that PE classes are intended to be more than simply participating in various PA, but rather to focus on educationally planned and presented learning experiences, allowing learners to understand what is important in terms of their movement culture for adulthood (Roux & Dasoo, 2020).

The main goal of a PE teacher is to produce physically literate persons who are capable of engaging in a variety of physical activities in a variety of settings that are developmentally healthy

and holistic for a person (Kim-Wai et al., 2020). Physical, psychomotor, cognitive, social, and emotional developmental areas are all addressed in this way (Kim-Wai et al., 2020). According to Li (2021), PE teachers are essential personnel needed for the development of sports in any country. Li (2021) explained that PE teachers teach fundamental skills and life lessons that create good amateur and professional athletes. Many athletes when reflecting can attest to the impact of PE teachers on their love of sports and talent development. These fundamental skills and knowledge of the games afford students the ability to participate in inter-school, national, and regional competitions (Li, 2021).

PE must adapt to changing periods, cultures, and situations throughout the learning process. The COVID-19 pandemic, which is presently raging, is causing a slew of issues. One of the issues is that education cannot be done due to social distance, which prevents large groups of people from convening in one area (Adi et al., 2021). In an attempt to stop the virus from spreading, the COVID-19 crisis has imposed further restrictions. This forces students to stay at home, resulting in physical and mental health issues (Adi et al., 2021). Based on these issues, in addition to being unable to control the spread of the COVID-19 virus, it is necessary to develop PE activities led by the teacher and done by students at home utilizing virtual multimedia. The learning process will be aided by virtual PE activities in both theory and practice (Adi et al., 2021).

The development of sports skills through PE has been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. While PE must adapt to the changing times, the unprecedented crisis of the pandemic provided no time for proper planning and implementation of PE (Adi et al., 2021). As a result, the role of PE and PE teachers to develop critical fundamental skills has been hampered by the pandemic and virtual learning. Using online platforms to teach PE meant that teachers focused mostly on PA because of the poor internet connections, students not having equipment, space in their homes, and an inability of the teacher to use different forms of demonstration. How will this affect sports in Jamaica and globally? To date, there is no comprehensive study assessing the impact of the lack of face-to-face engagement in PE and its impact on sports development globally. As it relates to Jamaica, we depend on PE to continue the culture of sports, teaching fundamental skills, and PA lifestyles.

According to Rowe (2021), physical inactivity levels in Jamaica since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic is at very worrying levels. This is set in the background of Jamaica's history of chronic lifestyle diseases and the lack of interest and the devaluing of PE by many (students, schools, teachers, and parents). There are worrying signs that the COVID-19 pandemic would have worsened the lack of interest in PE (devaluing culture). The lack of participation in online PE classes meant that students stand the risk of developing chronic lifestyle diseases that can potentially become detrimental to Jamaica's economy. As a result, the purpose of this study was to assess the perceived role of PE teachers in the development of sports and PA lifestyles in the post-COVID era in Jamaica. This research should act as a catalyst in helping to change the culture of PE in Jamaica and highlight the immense importance of PE teachers in sports and health.

METHODS

The study utilized a descriptive quantitative survey design. A quantitative approach was seen as the best method to reach a large portion of the targeted population. According to Adedoyin (2020), quantitative research is known as the study of phenomena using numerical data and statistical, analytical, or computing tools. Quantitative research is based on the positivist paradigm, which argues for techniques based on statistical breakdown and includes additional tactics such as inferential statistics, hypothesis testing, mathematical exposition, and surveys with a limited number of predetermined responses (Adedoyin, 2020). However, Banner et al. (2018) believed that a descriptive survey design refers to a research technique that focuses on current phenomena in terms of circumstances, behaviors, beliefs, processes, connections, or trends. Descriptive research is concerned with obtaining information about current circumstances or occurrences in order to describe and analyze them. This kind of research entails more than just collecting and tabulating data; it also requires correct analysis, interpretation, comparisons, and trend and relationship detection (Banner et al., 2018).

PE in Jamaica is an embedded part of the curriculum and the culture within the country. At

the time of this research, there were 987 schools in Jamaica ranging from infant, primary, all age, primary and junior high, special education, secondary high, technical high, and agricultural high that required students to participate in PE (Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, 2019). However, not all schools meet the requirements to have a specialist PE teacher, especially in infant schools, some primary schools, and some special education schools; PE is taught by the classroom teacher in these schools. Other primary schools mostly have one PE teacher while some all age and junior high schools have two or more. In the high school system, most schools have at least three PE teachers.

PE teachers in Jamaica are required to complete a four-year degree program in the area, however, unlike other subject areas that require teachers to specialize in either primary or secondary education level, PE teachers are trained only at the secondary level and must adapt to teach at other levels. PE is offered once per week at all levels for an average of 60 minutes, while the curriculum covers the traditional sporting areas and expands into movements and PA (Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, 2020). The invitation to participate in this study was sent to 70 PE teachers using snowballing and convenience sampling methods. Reaching participants for this study was challenging because of the pandemic, and many PE teachers were not in some of the established groups set up by their schools. A total of 47 PE teachers (as shown in Table 1) from ten of the 14 parishes in Jamaica responded and filled out the online questionnaire.

A proposal was written and submitted to the University's Ethics Committee for ethical clearance; once ethical clearance was granted the researcher proceeded to collect data for the study. The researcher sought to reach prospective participants for this study using the three colleges that produce PE teachers in Jamaica, because of the challenges caused by the pandemic. The researcher sought to reach schools that could communicate with their PE teachers but that was also difficult, so, the researcher reached out to PE teachers known to him and asked that a snowballing process begin. Once participants were reached a softcopy letter explaining the purpose of the research, followed by an online link that sought permission from the participants before they were able to proceed to the questions.

Table 1. The demographic breakdown of participants

Ages		Gender		Area			Parish		Teaching Level	
		Males	Females	Urban	Suburban	Rural				
20–25	14%	53%	47%	36%	4%	60%	Manchester	25%	High School	90%
26–30	31%						Kingston St. Andrew	15% 13%	Primary School	9%
31–36	17%						St. Catherine	13%	Special school	1%
37–40	12%						St. Elizabeth	11%		
41–50	21%						Westmoreland	9%		
51–60	2%						Hanover St. Ann	6% 4%		
							Clarendon Portland	2% 2%		

The instrument used to collect the data was a structured questionnaire with preset responses, while the questionnaire also allowed participants the option to insert their own responses. Despite that option, no additional responses were inserted by participants. The questionnaire was divided into two sections with a total of 20 questions, section 1 had five demographic information questions and section 2 had 15 questions related to the research questions. The areas that the questions focused on included the impact of PE on sedentary lifestyles and the development of PA and sports within Jamaica. The researcher

used past studies such as Yan Ho et al. (2021) that looked at a quality PE (QPE) tool for developing questions, suitable replies, validating, and interpreting results to verify the instrument's validity and appropriateness. The QPE assessment tool helped the researcher to understand professionals' perceptions of PE challenges with the use of question language, question structure, and response format. Additionally, the instrument was created (Table 2) using questions taken from Kern & Graber, (2017) and Yan Ho et al. (2021) already validated questionnaires. These questions were then modified to fit the context of this study.

Table 2. Summary of the major data collection questions and structured responses

Modified Questions	Structured Responses
What impact has the pandemic had on the culture and delivery of Physical Education? Insert your own response or select up to 2.	a) Educate students about lifestyle diseases; b) teach students how to become physically active for life; c) expand students' knowledge of physical activities; d) help students to understand the importance of eating healthy; e) teach students to plan balanced diets and motivate students to live a healthy life.
What do you think are the overall strategies needed to improve/change the delivery and culture of physical education in Jamaica? Insert your own response or select up to 2.	a) Promote the importance of physical education to general health and lifestyle; b) allocate more class time for physical education; c) encourage and provide continuous development for physical education teachers; d) use policies to emphasize the role of physical education in national sports development; e) and provide more resources and infrastructure development for physical education.
To what extent do physical education teachers impact the development of sports in Jamaica? Insert your own response or select up to 2.	a) Teaching students the fundamentals of the sport; b) creating a sports culture through organized school sporting activities; c) providing guidance in extra-curricular activities; d) teaching sportsmanship; e) teamwork and fair play and helping students to develop competent skills
In what ways can physical education teachers contribute more to the development of sports in Jamaica? select up to 2 that apply or insert your own response.	a) Expand their own knowledge of sports and become more involved in grassroots and national programs; b) bring across physical education classes in a more creative way; c) provide more guidance and supervision for students in physical education; d) identify potentially talented students and nurture them; e) and help to change the culture that students have regarding physical education
How can physical education teachers promote physical activity and a healthy lifestyle in schools? Insert your own response or select up to 2.	a) Physical education teachers must be more involved with the Ministry of Health and Wellness programs; b) plan health fairs and physical activity workshops at school; c) plan physical activity workout sessions for students; d) setting health-related projects e) starting a physical activity club where students will learn about the importance of physical activity and a healthy lifestyle; f) and advocating the principal for the school to serve healthy lunches

The data from the questionnaire were tabulated using IBM SPSS statistics 22, and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. The statistical program was used to evaluate the data and generate summaries and connections between variables. Crosstab commands were used to summarize the age of the PE teachers. Additionally, a quantitative descriptive approach was used to summarize and describe responses to perception-based questions such as the role of PE teachers to combat PA and lifestyle diseases in schools, the role that PE teachers play in the development of sports in Jamaica, and what more can PE teachers do to change the culture of PE in Jamaica. Crosstab analysis was also done to determine if the variables age, gender, location, and years of service affected the perception of PE teachers in the study. The specific test that was used to provide the analysis includes (1) frequency analysis to determine the school level that participants were teaching, (2) crosstab analysis was done using age, school level, gender, and parish to get accurate representations in percentages, (3) a Pearson's correlation test was done to determine the relationship between the age of the participants and their role in PA and sports development.

Since ethics is such a crucial facet of research, participants' safety and privacy must be handled with care. This study adhered to all ethical criteria established in research as well as those set out by the University's Ethics Committee. Consent to participate and individual and institutional privacy are common issues that arise during research like this. The researcher took all necessary precautions to verify that participants gave their agreement to participate (the survey needed consent before participants could advance to the questions) and that no personally identifiable information was asked or collected from individuals or institutions. All replies were kept anonymous, and the researcher made sure that the information they gathered was encrypted and stored on password-protected devices. Before being erased or destroyed, the study data will be stored for up to five years.

RESULTS

The respondents were asked about their direct impact on the development of sports in Jamaica, participants were given the option of selecting two responses that reflected their perception (as seen in Table 3). The majority of the respondents indicated that their direct impact on the development of sports in Jamaica resulted from them teaching students the fundamentals of the sport in preparation for amateur and professional competitions. Additionally, respondents indicated that their impact on the culture and development of sports in Jamaica surrounds them teaching students about sportsmanship, teamwork, and fair play in sports. However, different age groups viewed the impact of PE teachers on sports in Jamaica differently. Most of the younger PE teachers were more leaning toward teaching the fundamentals of the different sports, while the older PE teachers seem to be more focused on guidance and general sporting activities.

The respondents were asked in what ways can PE teachers contribute more to further develop and maintain Jamaica's dominance in sports globally. The respondents were given the option of selecting or adding two responses that represented their perceptions. The majority of the responses (as shown in Figure 1) indicated that PE teachers need to expand their own knowledge of sports and become more involved in grassroots and national programs. Furthermore, other respondents indicated that they need to help change the culture that students have regarding PE as a marginalized subject area. The age group of the respondents showed different viewpoints on the issue of what is needed from PE teachers. The younger PE teachers were more concerned about planning more creative PE classes and identifying talented students and nurturing them. The older PE teachers, however, were more focused on expanding their knowledge and being more involved in national programs and changing the culture of PE.

Table 3. PE teachers' impact on sports in Jamaica

Responses	Age Group	Percentages
Teaching students the fundamentals	26–30	74%
Teaching students about sportsmanship, teamwork, and fair play	20–25	55%
Helping students to develop competent skills	37–40	48%
Organized school sporting activities	37–40	42%
Providing guidance in extra-curricular activities	31–36	21%

Figure 1. The types of contribution needed from PE teachers

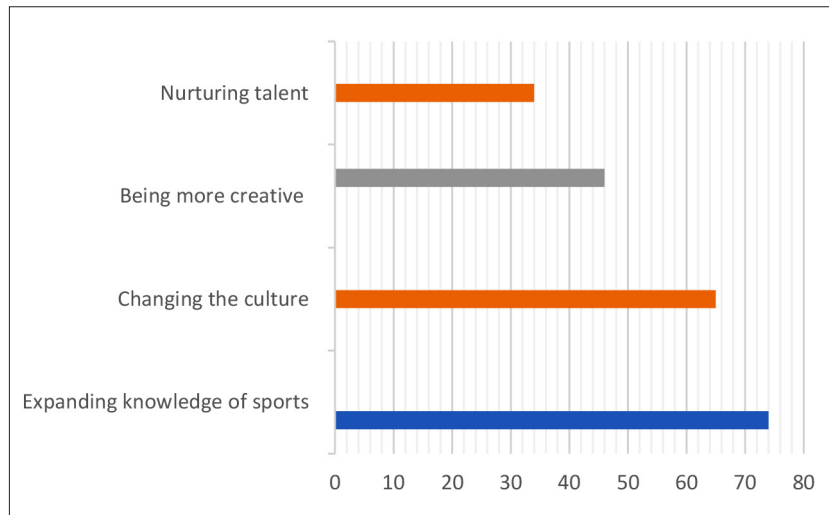
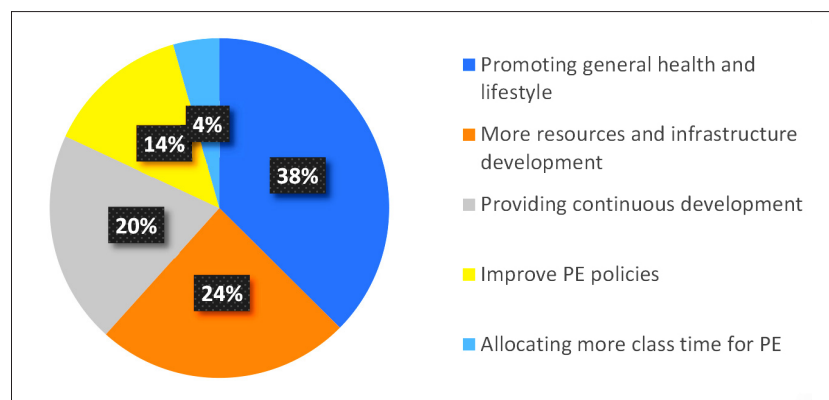


Figure 2. Strategies for changing the delivery and culture of PE

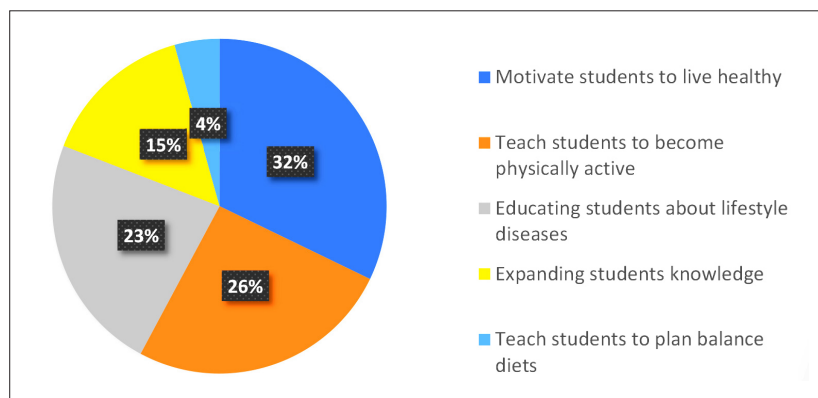


Based on the history and importance of PE to the growth and development of sports in Jamaica, the respondents were asked about the overall strategies (Figure 2) that are needed to change the culture and delivery of PE in Jamaica. Taking into consideration the existing challenges and the new challenges brought on by the pandemic, the participants were allowed to select two strategies that they believed could be considered effective in this regard. The majority of the respondents indicated that promoting the importance of PE to general health and lifestyle is the best overall strategy to improve the culture and delivery of PE. Additionally, participants indicated that providing more resources and infrastructure development for PE can help to change the image, culture, and delivery of this marginalized subject area. In terms of responses from the different age groups, the younger PE teachers believed that the general strategy for changing the delivery and culture of PE is through the promotion of its importance to general health and lifestyle. The older PE teachers believed the change would come through providing

more resources and infrastructure development for PE.

PE teachers have a unique role to play in the development of sports and PA in schools. PE teachers were very instrumental in the establishment of the inter-secondary school sports association (ISSA) in 1910 (Rowe, 2021). Furthermore, PE teachers are known for the development of fundamental skills and act as an extension of extracurricular activities. The researcher was interested in hearing the perception that PE teachers have regarding their role in sports development and the PA lifestyle. The respondents were asked about the role they should play as PE teachers in the sedentary and PA lifestyle of students; the respondents were also given the option of selecting two responses. The majority of the respondents (as shown in Figure 3) indicated that their role as PE teachers should be to motivate students to live a healthy lifestyle, while other respondents indicated that their role is to teach students how to become physically active in life. On the other hand, the PE teachers were also asked about how they can promote PA and a healthy

Figure 3. PE teachers perceive their roles



lifestyle in schools. The respondents were also given the option of including two responses. The majority of the respondents (as shown in Table 4) indicated that starting a PA club where students can learn about healthy is the best way to promote PA and a healthy lifestyle in schools. This suggestion

was mostly supported by the younger PE teachers. Additionally, other respondents indicated that planning health fairs and PA workshops at school were good strategies to promote and enhance the movement. This suggestion was mostly supported by the older PE teachers.

Table 4. The perceived strategies to promote PA and a healthy lifestyle in schools

Responses	Age Group	Percentages
Starting a PA club	20–25	68%
Planning health fairs	37–40	55%
Planning PA workout sessions for students	26–30	42%
PE teachers should be more involved in the Ministry of Health and Wellness programs	31–36	40%
PE teachers should advocate for the serving of healthy lunches	31–36	17%
Setting health-related projects for PE assignments	31–36	14%

DISCUSSION

The results of the study indicated that PE teachers, directly and indirectly, impact the development of sports in Jamaica; they teach students the fundamentals of the sport in preparation for amateur and professional competitions. The results also indicated that PE teachers' impact on the culture and development of sports in Jamaica involves them teaching students about sportsmanship, teamwork, and fair play in sports. The discussion of whether PE teachers impact culture and sports development has been clearly stated by Leeder and Beaumont (2021) in their study, indicating that PE teachers have the conceptualization to use lifestyle sports to change culture and lead sports development within the country. Additionally, the results found that PE teachers help students to develop competent skills so that they can transfer them to the school level and create a sports culture through organized

school sporting activities to highlight the history and importance of sports in Jamaica. The Özmaden et al. (2018) study found that PE and sport have affected the social life and the types of talks that were held on the topic. As a result, PE and sport are regarded to be appropriate methods for enabling physical and spiritual growth, as well as fulfilling roles that would result in a strong community, sports development, and culture.

A later study published by Opstoel et al. (2020) corroborated the results of this study along with Özmaden et al. (2018), with findings that indicated the importance of the current school PE in the discussion of the link between school PE, school sport, and youth sport participation and sports development have never been greater. In public debates, the phrase “school sport” is frequently used interchangeably with “PE”, despite the fact

that sport is a content area of PE. Opstoel et al. (2020) further explained that the learning outcomes via and through sport necessitate the PE teacher's undivided attention. Based on its functionalist positioning as part of the formation of physical competencies, its speculative benefits to personal character formation, and broader sociological assumptions about sport's contribution to an understanding of culture, gendered embodiment, and sexuality, the social and educational aspects of sport within PE cannot be underestimated (Opstoel et al., 2020). We must acknowledge the tension that exists between curriculum theorists on the one hand, who argue that PE, and thus sport in curriculum time, must justify its existence on the basis of its educational value, and those on the other hand, who seek to position PE as a context for accumulating health benefits (Opstoel et al., 2020).

Opstoel et al. (2020) argued that even though there is a growing interest in the function of PE and sports in promoting personal and social development, it is crucial to remember that just participating in PE and sports does not guarantee favorable consequences. PE teachers and sports coaches are responsible for establishing the educational conditions that allow for favorable outcomes. Youth sports programs that encourage psychosocial development utilize athletics as a platform to give deliberate and systematic experiences that promote self-discovery and teach participants life skills (Opstoel et al., 2020). Additionally, the results of this study found that the majority of the respondents (74%) believed that, as PE teachers, they need to expand their own knowledge of sports and become more involved in grassroots and national programs. WHO (2018) corroborated this result by indicating that PE teachers serve as vital role models for young people and are crucial in encouraging children and teenagers to participate in physical exercise and sports. PE teachers must be well trained not only in providing traditional sports opportunities but also in having a good understanding of PA for health in order to ensure that PE is of high quality and provides opportunities that interest all students, particularly those who are most in need of PA (WHO, 2018). Trigueros' (2019) study also found that PE, along with other healthy behaviors, has a key part in the development of long-term athletic habits. Because of the established link between lifestyle and the topic of PE, the PE teacher is tasked with assisting students in developing beneficial habits. As a result, the critical role of PE and its

teachers in the acquisition of a healthy lifestyle among school children has been proven, as well as the relevance of developing good habits at a young age and maintaining them throughout life.

Furthermore, the results of this study indicated that PE teachers need to help change the culture that students have regarding PE as a marginalized subject area. As it relates to the overall strategies needed to improve the delivery and culture of PE in Jamaica, the majority of the respondents (85%) indicated that promoting the importance of PE to general health and lifestyle is the best overall strategy to improve the culture and delivery of PE. However, Polet et al. (2019) believed that the importance of focusing on the motivational "environment" or "climate" created by prominent persons in leadership roles (e.g., coaches, teachers, instructors, bosses) has been proven to influence the development of autonomous motivation. Teachers displaying autonomy-supportive behaviors during PE sessions are the most effective way to foster autonomous motivation in the classroom.

Additionally, the results of this study found that providing more resources and infrastructure development for PE can help to change the image, culture, and delivery of this marginalized subject area. However, CDC (2010) believed that the best strategy for improving PE includes implementing a well-designed curriculum and providing teachers with appropriate training and supervision. The results of this study also corroborated the latter recommendation of the CDC (2010); this study found that encouraging and providing continuous development for PE teachers will help to improve the delivery and culture of PE in Jamaica. On the other hand, Gumbo et al. (2017) argued that what is needed to improve the delivery and culture of PE is better teaching strategies. The Gumbo et al. (2017) study found that the efficiency of these teaching strategies was found to be low, due to a variety of variables such as unfavorable teacher attitudes, a lack of subject-specific assessments, a lack of time, and a lack of proper equipment and facilities.

According to the World Health Organization, physical inactivity is on the rise and is contributing to an increase in the risk of illnesses (Osborne et al., 2016). With Jamaica now experiencing higher levels of physical inactivity since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (Rowe, 2021), PE teachers have a greater role to play in the promotion, education, and execution of PA in schools. The results of this study indicated that most of the

respondents believed that their role as PE teachers should be to motivate students to live a healthy lifestyle. According to Centeio et al. (2021), PE is the most logical place to address public health problems, such as decline in PA as a result of the pandemic, especially given PE's present purpose of assisting students in obtaining the information, skills, and confidence to engage in healthy PA for the rest of their lives. Centeio et al. (2021) further explained that PE teachers faced various obstacles as a result of the pandemic-induced transition to online education. Teachers with little to no experience in remote PE resorted to "trial-and-error" tactics in PE, a traditionally neglected discipline (Centeio et al., 2021).

Additionally, the results of this study found that PE teachers believed that they should be educating students about lifestyle diseases and expanding students' knowledge of physical activities. Priambodo et al. (2020) noted that PE in schools has been prescribed across the world to promote physical exercise and weight control. Even the function of PE has shifted from enhancing physical fitness to encouraging physical activity in order to meet daily physical activity guidelines. This study also found that the majority of the respondents believed that starting a PA club to help students learn about the importance of PA and a healthy lifestyle is the best way to promote PA and a healthy lifestyle in schools. Gobbi et al. (2020) corroborated this result, indicating that PE is regarded as one of the most effective tools for promoting teenagers' PA both in and out of school. PE has the ability to reach all students since it is a required school area where teachers are able to use transferable motor skills and conduct in a variety of situations. Gobbi et al. (2020) believed that when PE is taught by certified teachers, it is expected to establish environments that promote good values, student participation, and growth. PE, more than ever, was a potential means of promoting out-of-school PA during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, due to school cancellations, teachers were presented with an unprecedented challenge of promoting PA while being cut off from their children (Gobbi et al., 2020). Additionally, the results of this study also indicated that planning health fairs and PA workshops at school were good strategies to promote and enhance the movement of PA lifestyles. Furthermore, planning PA workout sessions for students and PE teachers and being more involved with the Ministry of Health and

Wellness programs are great ways to promote PA and a healthy lifestyle in schools. Additionally, the younger PE teachers were more focused on teaching fundamental skills, starting a PA club, promoting the importance of PE to general health, planning creative PE classes, and identifying and nurturing talent. While the older PE teachers were concerned with providing guidance, being involved in national programs, changing the culture of PE, and conducting workshops and health fairs, they also believed that more infrastructure and resources were needed in PE.

CONCLUSION

It is important that PE teachers recognize their role and contribution to national sports development. The results of the study indicated that the PE teacher's role should be motivating students to live a healthy lifestyle and be more involved in sports development. The PE teachers believed that they should be educating students about lifestyle diseases and expanding students' knowledge of physical activities. The results also found that a PA club will help to promote PA and a healthy lifestyle in schools. PE teachers' impact on sports involves them teaching students the fundamentals of the sports in preparation for amateur and professional competitions. PE teachers also help to develop competent skills so that they can transfer them into school-level competitions and help to create a sports culture through organized school sporting activities. For greater impact on Jamaica's sporting programs, PE teachers need to expand their own knowledge of sports and become more involved in grassroots and national programs.

The recommendation coming out of this study is to encourage PE teachers to play a more active role in the development of national sports and to urge the authorities to put more provisions in place to include PE teachers in national sports development. Regardless of the study's findings, there were certain limitations and delimitations to consider. There were four parishes that were not represented, the data collection process was done online rather than in person, and the study was confined to a descriptive quantitative method. There may have been some teachers who struggled with the questionnaire platform, and the bulk of the older PE teachers were not included in the study. For future studies, it would be useful to get a better understanding of the challenges PE teachers faced in the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Received on March 03, 2022

Accepted on June 06, 2022