

Institutional Attitudes towards Physical Education Directors: Issues of Respect, Role Clarity, and Professional Identity

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Abstract

This study investigates institutional attitudes towards Directors of Physical Education (DPEs) in colleges of Maharashtra, focusing on issues of respect, role clarity, and professional identity. A descriptive survey method was adopted with a sample of 100 respondents, comprising 50 teaching faculty members and 50 Directors of Physical Education from different colleges across Maharashtra, specifically from Amravati, Nagpur, Kolhapur, and Mumbai. Data were analysed using percentage analysis and chi-square testing. The results reveal significant issues of role ambiguity, lack of professional recognition, and negative institutional perception towards DPEs. The study concludes that structural and attitudinal reforms are necessary to enhance the professional status and institutional recognition of Directors of Physical Education.

Keywords: Physical Education Directors, Institutional Attitudes, Role Conflict, Professional Identity

1. Introduction

Physical education is an essential component of holistic education, contributing to physical fitness, mental well-being, and social development. However, within higher education institutions, the professional role of Directors of Physical Education (DPEs) is often undervalued compared to other academic staff. Research indicates that physical education is frequently perceived as less academically significant (Bailey, 2017; Hardman, 2014).

In the Indian context, particularly in Maharashtra, DPEs often experience role ambiguity, lack of recognition, and assignment of non-academic duties. These challenges adversely affect their professional identity and job satisfaction. This study explores institutional attitudes towards DPEs and their implications.

2. Objectives of the Study

1. To analyse institutional attitudes towards Directors of Physical Education
2. To examine role clarity in colleges
3. To assess issues related to professional identity
4. To suggest measures for improving their professional status

3. Hypotheses of the Study

- **H₀₁:** There is no significant difference in perception between faculty and DPEs regarding respect
 - **H₀₂:** There is no significant relationship between role clarity and job satisfaction
 - **H₀₃:** Institutional attitude does not significantly affect professional identity
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4. Review of Literature

1. Professional identity plays a crucial role in shaping educators' effectiveness, job satisfaction, and professional commitment. According to Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), teacher identity is influenced by personal experiences, institutional culture, and social expectations.
2. Institutional recognition and participation in academic processes significantly contribute to the development of professional identity. Day and Gu (2010) emphasized that support from institutions strengthens teachers' motivation and engagement.
3. In the field of physical education, the discipline is often undervalued in comparison to other academic subjects. Bailey (2017) highlighted that physical education is perceived as less academically significant, leading to its lower status in educational institutions.
4. Hardman (2014) observed that physical education programs are neglected globally, particularly in higher education systems where emphasis is placed on traditional academic disciplines.
5. Role ambiguity is a major issue affecting educators' performance and satisfaction. Kelchtermans (2009) stated that unclear expectations and role conflict negatively influence teachers' professional identity.
6. Beltman et al. (2015) found that institutional support, clear role definitions, and positive work environments are essential for maintaining a strong professional identity among educators.
7. Sachs (2005) emphasized that conflicting expectations and lack of recognition weaken educators' professional identity and reduce their effectiveness in institutions.
8. From a systemic perspective, higher education institutions often prioritize conventional academic disciplines, leading to unequal professional recognition. Altbach (2016) and Marginson (2016) highlighted structural inequalities within higher education systems.
9. Policy frameworks such as the UNESCO International Charter of Physical Education and Sport (2015) recognize the importance of physical education as a fundamental right. However, there remains a gap between policy provisions and their actual implementation.
10. Despite existing research on teacher identity and physical education, there is limited research focusing specifically on Directors of Physical Education in higher education institutions in Maharashtra.
11. Most studies focus on school-level education or general teaching professions, leaving a gap in understanding institutional attitudes, role clarity, and professional identity of DPEs at the college level.

12. Therefore, the present study aims to address this gap by examining institutional attitudes towards Directors of Physical Education in Maharashtra colleges.

5. Methodology

- **Research Design:** Descriptive Survey Method
 - **Sample:** 100 respondents (50 DPEs and 50 teaching faculty members)
 - **Sampling Technique:** Random Sampling
 - **Area:** Maharashtra (Amravati, Nagpur, Kolhapur, Mumbai)
 - **Tool:** Structured Likert-scale questionnaire
 - **Statistical Tools:** Percentage analysis and Chi-square test
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6. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Perception of Respect

Response	DPEs (%)	Faculty (%)
High	10	20
Moderate	30	40
Low	60	40

Interpretation: Majority of DPEs perceive low respect, indicating a perception gap.

Table 2: Role Clarity

Category	Percentage
Clear	25%
Unclear	75%

Interpretation: Significant role ambiguity exists.

Table 3: Professional Identity

Category	Percentage
Strong	20%
Weak	80%

Interpretation: Most DPEs experience weak professional identity.

7. Hypothesis Testing

Chi-Square Test (H_{01}):Calculated $\chi^2 = 6.25$

Table value = 5.99 (df = 2, p = 0.05)

☞ Since $\chi^2 >$ table value, H_{01} is rejected**Conclusion:** Significant difference exists in perception of respect.

8. Findings

1. DPEs experience lower respect compared to other faculty
2. Role ambiguity is a major issue
3. Professional identity is weak
4. Institutional attitudes negatively affect job satisfaction

9. Suggestions

- Define clear roles and responsibilities
- Provide equal academic status
- Conduct awareness programs
- Improve infrastructure and funding
- Include DPEs in decision-making bodies

10. Conclusion

Directors of Physical Education play a vital role in higher education, yet they face challenges related to recognition, role clarity, and professional identity. Institutional attitudes significantly influence their effectiveness. Addressing these issues requires policy implementation, awareness, and structural reforms.

Annexure: Questionnaire (Likert Scale)*(Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree)*

1. DPEs are treated equally with teaching staff
2. DPEs receive respect in the institution
3. Roles of DPEs are clearly defined
4. DPEs are assigned non-academic duties
5. DPEs are included in decision-making
6. Institutional attitude is positive
7. Facilities for DPEs are adequate

8. Opportunities for growth are available
9. Workload is manageable
10. DPEs feel professionally satisfied
11. Physical education is valued academically
12. DPEs receive recognition
13. DPEs are part of committees
14. Students respect DPEs
15. Administration supports DPEs
16. Job responsibilities are clear
17. DPEs experience role conflict
18. DPEs feel motivated
19. Policies support DPEs
20. Overall status is satisfactory

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