



## **PUBLIC RELATION IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Physical education and sports is a very important part of organised educational efforts, since it is an instrument of health, fitness, performance and excellence. Despite the importance of this subject, its true image has not been well publicized. People in general are unaware of the importance of this subject, since we know all about its inherent philosophy, ideals, values, and objectives. Physical educators on the other hand are not aware about what people think and feel about physical education and sports. Through public relations physical education can improve their effectiveness by winning broader and more favourable public support for their programmes. Teachers of physical education and sports have greater public relation opportunities and responsibilities as compared to others. For example sports and athletic events are of particular interest to the public and attract a lot of fan support and media coverage.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

1. According to Benjamin Fine, “Public relation is more than a set of rules. It carries broad concept. It is the entire body of relationships that go to make up impression of an individual, an organisation or an idea.”
2. According to Votmer and Esslinger, “public relations is a process by which an institution, organisation or professional projects its image in the public through channels other than those constituting media and receive feedback from the external environment about the effectiveness of its policies and programmes. With publicity, as the major instrument, public relations are concerned with all the major impressions that people receive rather than those obtained only through various publicity media”.
3. According to Cutlip, Center, and Broom (2000). “ the management function that identifies, establishes, and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the various publics on whom its success or failure depends.
4. According to Stoldt, Pratt and Jackson (2003). “organizational function that fosters the development of positive relationship between the organization and its important public.
5. According to Gruing(1992). “ a comprehensive study of public relations practice in varied setting. They describe public relation as the management of communication between an organization and its public”.
6. According to PRSC (Public Relation Society Of America).”public relation helps an organization and its public adapt mutually to each other. Public relations broadly apply to organizations as a collective group, not just a business; and publics encompass the variety of different stakeholders.
7. According to Marla Aaron. “public relation is communicating your organization’s messages at the right time and in the right place to the right audience. With the proliferation of tools and technologies, we can measure the value of those efforts and how they align with a business overall mission”.

8. According to Mark Burgess. "Public relations focus on building good relation with the company's various public by obtaining favourable publicity, building a good corporate image, and handling crisis management issues. Today, a good public relations firm must be expert in use of social media".

## **MEANING:**

The modern concept of public relation has emerged from the term publicity. Educational institutions have been concerned with publicity for many years but research has proved that much more publicity is needed to secure public support and understanding. Public relations are a much more broader topic than publicity. Although publicity is its major tool. Public relations is concerned with all the impression that people receive rather than those obtained only through various publicity media. In addition to the information that is transmitted via a radio, television, and newspapers, public relations for physical education involves all the relationships that the various staff members have with students, parents, other teachers, administrators and the general public. It also involves the impression obtained from the secretary intramural, extramural and other tournaments, equipment room manager, store keeper and other personal associated with physical education department. It also includes the visual and audio impressions received from the athletic field, gymnasium, swimming pool and locker and shower rooms.

Public relations(PR) is the practice of managing the spread of information between an individual or an organization(such as a business, government agency, or an on profit organization) and the public. Public relations may include an organization or individual gaining exposure to their audiences using topics of public interest and news items that do not require direct payment. This differentiates it from advertising as a form of marketing communications. Public relations are the idea of creating coverage for clients for free, rather than marketing or advertising. An example of good public relations would be generating an article featuring a client, rather than paying for the client to be advertised next to the article. The aim of public relations is to inform the public, prospective customers, investors, partners, employees, and other stakeholders and ultimately persuade them to maintain a certain view about the organization, its leadership, products, or political decisions. Public relations professionals typically work for Public relations and marketing firms, businesses and companies, government, and public officials as nongovernmental organizations, and non profit organizations. Success in the field of public relations requires a deep understanding of the interests and concerns of each of the client's many publics. The public relations professional must know how to effectively address those concerns using the most powerful tool of the public relations trade, which is publicity. Public relations and journalism have similarities in the work they do, yet these two fields don't necessarily have the greatest relationship, being described as "adversaries" at times.

Public relations can be thought of as both an attitude and a process. As an attitude, it involves realistic optimism and positive thinking. As a process, It involves open and effective communication, with emphasis on the good and the positive. Public relation includes both performance and communications used to form beneficial relationships with the public. It is wrong to use the word public relation to define some of its functional role such as publicity, press agency and institutional advertising. These roles however, are important, but do not comprise the whole of public relations. In reality this functional roles are mere tools of public relations not public relation itself.

## **NEED FOR A PUBLIC RELATION PROGRAM IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

According to Steward Harral," Public relations seek to bring about a harmony of understanding between any group and the public it serves and upon whose good will it depends". People, in general, are ignorant about the role of physical education in education. They think that academics are more important than sports. They feel that physical activity is a sheer wastage of time. Parents want their children to opt for science, commerce, or computer at school or college level but not for physical education. Their rigid mind sets do not allow them to look at physical education beyond the horizons of physicality. Lack of public relation is responsible for this state of affairs.

The need of public relations becomes clear from the following points:

1. In all democratic setups, the public has the right to ask for information about anything that happens in physical education and sports in the institution.
2. Public relation is essential for reaching out to public. Without an effective programme of public relations, it is impossible to make the students, parents, teachers and outsiders, aware and interested in physical education programmes.
3. Public relation in physical education is needed to make people aware of the physiological, psychological and economic benefit of sports and physical education. It should also highlight the incentives and achievement avenues available for the participants.
4. The physical education and sports personnel must bring to the notice of general public, the objective of physical, mental, intellectual and social development of physical education programmes.
5. As education is on the way of expansion, physical education faces a challenging situation. When education costs are increasing so enormously, all items in the educational budget get scrutinized with great care. Any programme or activity of physical education that cannot be justified in terms of its contribution to the welfare in particular and society in general, will have difficulty in surviving. When we understand what physical education can contribute to students in terms of health, vitality, physical fitness, sportsmanship, happiness, etc. Adequate support will be forthcoming. Parents will pay for, what they are convinced is desirable and profitable. But they must be convinced, that can be achieved through public relation only.

## **PRINCIPLES TO BE FOLLOWED FOR A GOOD PUBLIC RELATION PROGRAM;**

There are certain principles or guidelines, that constitute a good basis for any public relations programme in physical education and sports that is going to be effective . These principles are discussed as follows:

1. No programming of physical education and sports can avoid public relations. Public relation is an instrument of image projection, progress and prosperity of an institution. Only good programmes cannot have good public image, if the public relation with outside world are poor. On the other hand, an institution with limited facilities and programmes can have very good public image because of good public relations.

2. The public relation programme should be clearly planned including the objectives, procedures, responsibilities and expected results. The better the programme is known and understood, the less effort would be needed to make it a grand success.
3. Flexibility and adaptability are essential for a good public relations programme. It is very essential to adjust to changing circumstances and also to take advantage of unexpected opportunities.
4. The institution should have a superior programme of public relations. An institution cannot expect public support for the programmes with poor public relation programmes.
5. If possible full time staff should be assigned exclusively for public relations. The whole time staff can be trained well in handling sensitive matters.
6. Public relations, like other programmes of the institution, require both near and long term comprehensive planning.
7. An effective public relation programme should have the support and cooperation of administrative staff and teachers within the institution. The internal support will strengthen the effort and plan for obtaining external cooperation.
8. Physical educators should have right perceptions and perspective about their acts and activities and should also be able to explain these to the others also. Those who are directly responsible for public relations should possess thorough knowledge of the philosophy, policies, principles and programmes of physical education, and the service, the department can render and the facilities that may be offered to the public.
9. The public relations programme must be based upon truth. All facts, data and interpretations that are reported to the public must be presented impersonally, unselfishly and honestly. By the very nature of public relations any misrepresentation will invariably create adverse public opinion.
10. Adequate funding is very essential for public relations as for other aspects of physical education and sports. Adequate funds must be ensured to make public relations more viable and vibrant. If funding is inadequate, the success of physical education and sports programme can be jeopardized.
11. Public relations should be a two way process between the community and institutions. It should project the image of the institution to the outside world and to monitor what outsiders think and feel about the institution and its activities. Because of this two way communication, everyone associated with physical education and sports become sensitive to the positive, genuine and legitimate criticism of the public. Introspection, self appraisal and analysis of the institution can lead to substantial improvement of the department and the institution.

12. A good plane of public relations should make use of all kinds of media, resources and machinery to keep the public informed about each and every important point of physical education and sports. This is very essential to win public support for the institutions programme

### **CONCLUSION:**

Good and effective public relations is emphasised in physical education and sports and other sectors of work in society basing on the fact that no person or group of persons can live isolation. The element of interdependence is inevitable. To achieve success in their work, physical education and sports administrators and managers need to support of other people, most of whom they encounter in the course of carrying out their duties. They are therefore compelled to establish good and meaningful relations with people who have interest in physical education and sports, and whom they encounter in their fields of work and whose support is necessary in their endeavours of developing physical education and sports.