Pupils’ Psychological and Sociological Constraints in the Implementation of Physical Education Teaching

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Abstract
This study is related with the constraints in the implementation of teaching and learning of Physical Education in primary school. Two constraint factors were selected as the main focus, which were sociological and psychological. By employing survey method, this study involved 310 Physical Education teachers in primary schools. The instrument type used was questionnaire, in which it contained questions related with psychological and sociological constraint factors. The obtained data were descriptively analyzed by identifying mean values to determine the level of pupils’ sociological and psychological constraint factors in the implementation of effective PE teachings in primary school, based on the perceptions of teachers as the respondents for this study. The findings from this study revealed that both psychology and sociology factors have high constraint levels in the implementation of teaching and learning of Physical Education in primary school. However, although they possess high constraint levels, they did not have any significant difference between one another.

Keywords: physical education, psychological constraint, sociological constraint, teachers, primary school pupils

INTRODUCTION
Constraints faced in the implementation of Physical Education (PE) are normal when it is not placed as a compulsory subject (Ali Maksum, 2008). The teaching and learning of PE cannot be effectively implemented due to several factors such as pupils’ psychology and sociology, parents, school environment and the teachers (Mohar, 2011). Based on past studies, this paper will provide continuity to venture through this issue with regard to the differences, relationships and identification of constraint factors that are mostly contributing towards teachers’ failures in implementing PE effectively in primary schools.

The downturn of PE teaching in schools has become normality due to factors such as pupils who are unmotivated, lose their focus, feeling anxious and inconfident with their self-abilities (Sherman, Tran & Alves, 2008). Based on teachers’ observations during teaching processes, Syed Kamaruzaman (2004) found that psychological constraint has led female pupils to disengage from physical activities due to inconfidence with their abilities especially from the physical aspects and thus became uneasy with PE activities. According to Mohar’s (2011) observation, insufficient interest from pupils towards PE has become a major problem causing teachers to not able to effectively conduct the lessons. In a case study towards teachers’ perceptions towards pupils’ in PE subject, Cox (1998) found that 72.2% of female pupils suffered stress based on individual reports, felt uneasy during body assessments and had frequent negative thoughts towards their body appearances. Therefore, lessons were not able to be implemented effectively especially for female pupils (Crawford & Eklund, 1994).

Apart from that, PE teachings in schools are frequently limited due to sociology constraints faced by pupils (Napolitano, 2000). Based on a study, PE teachers opined that sociology constraints among pupils include non-compliance between team members, lack of support among friends, uneasiness feeling when touching with sweating friends and isolation from teams (Thorpe et al., 2006). Nadhratul (2000) also stated that teachers’ problems in PE teaching processes are pupils’ who dislike sports due to others who did not bring PE attires, no support from teachers of other subjects, improper attire and assumption that PE is of no benefit. This view is supported by Haslindah et al. (2010) based on PE teachers’ feedbacks which showed that 77.4% of laziness were influenced by classmates, and was believed to be one of the reasons why pupils do not wear PE attire. Sociology constraint factors in PE teaching have created problems for teachers to conduct activities effectively (Seal & Yurkovich, 2009).

Another reason that constrained the teaching of PE was due to the constraints from the parents (Mohd
A total of 69.2% of parents presumed that PE is a waste of time because the pupils were required to participate in other extra-curricular activities outside learning hours (Azali, 2001). They assumed that the examination subjects are more important than PE (Zaccagnini, 2005). Based on a study by Mohd Jaflus (2005), only 5.6% of pupils who were active in sports managed to obtain 8A in PMR as compared to 56.9% who received only 1A. Although parents are aware that these subjects are important to improve physical health and mental attitude, however, the attitude of belittling these subjects has influenced the minds of their children (Usha, 2008). In addition, according to Nadhratul Sofian (2003), a total of 310 primary school teachers who teach PE for Year 6 pupils from 5 districts in Perak were randomly selected for the study. The districts are: Manjung, Larut Matang and Selama, Batang Padang, Perak Tengah and Kuala Kangsar.

Furthermore, the teachings of PE teachers were said to be shoddy due to the factors of school environment constraints (Ali Maksum, 2008). If the class size is large, the problem of lack of equipment and facilities may arise (Zuber, 1999). Based on the findings by Sakhiyyah (2004), 34.2% of constraints faced by urban schools is getting adequately large playing field. Krome and Smith (2006) stipulated that schools in rural areas are constrained in terms of equipment facility. Meanwhile, according to Nor (1990), the teachings of PE were delayed due to the amount of provision for purchase of equipment often used for the development of the school and the pupils had to use equipment that were in a rather sickly, worn up and unsafe to use. Based on Mohar’s (2011) observation, environmental constraints need to be overcome by taking into account the equipment and facilities available at each school before drafting the PE curriculum. Ang (1998) states the aspects of the environmental safety in PE, including providing clear directions, choosing appropriate physical activity suitable with body size, maturity and ability that does not exceed the capacity or ability of the pupils’ bodies. This statement is in line with studies conducted by Fisher, Mullins, and Frye (2009) which states 90% of injury cases suffered by pupils are often associated with the school environment. According to Zuber (1999), 86.3% of PE teachings in primary schools are often limited by the lack of facilities in schools.

Moreover, according to Mohd Taib and Norlena (2003), acceptance and recognition of this subject is still in dispute and it is still regarded as a subject that is not important because the subject is not a subject of the examination. Sufficient time is required for all pupils to do training in PE (Rink, 2002). Time constraint is one of the factors that contribute to the application of sports apparel. A study by Haslindah et al. (2010) showed 75% of PE teacher disagreed that pupils change from their sports clothing to their school uniform after PE session since it will waste their learning time.

**OBJECTIVE**

Based on the discussed constraint factors, the implementation of PE teaching is still having problems and cannot be effectively implemented. Hence, the objective of this study is to identify the level of pupils’ psychological constraints, pupils’ sociological constraints, parents, school environment, administration, PE teachers, identifying differences, relationships and correlations between factors of such constraints in the implementation of effective PE teaching in primary school based on the Model of Leisure Constraints inspired by Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey (1991).

**FRAMEWORK**

This study utilized the survey research methods using questionnaire. The questionnaire instrument was used for it is able to choose more samples as compared to other methods. Rationally, the use of questionnaire provided more benefits because it provided the responses that the researcher needs. According to Mohd Majid (2009), quantitative research design is a method for obtaining the information needed to achieve the objectives of a study. A total of 310 primary school teachers who teach PE for Year 6 pupils from 5 districts in Perak were randomly selected for the study. The districts are: Manjung, Larut Matang and Selama, Batang Padang, Perak Tengah and Kuala Kangsar.

**FINDINGS**

**Intrapersonal Constraint**

Components of intrapersonal constraints are divided into two sub-components: pupils’ psychological constraints and pupils’ sociological constraint. Table 1 and Table 2 show the descriptive statistics that were analyzed to determine the level of pupils’ sociological and psychological constraint factors in the implementation of effective PE teachings in primary school.

**Pupils’ Psychological Constraint**

Pupils’ psychological constraint is one of the components of intrapersonal constraints. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistical analysis of the level of pupil psychological constraints in the implementation of effective PE teachings in elementary school.

Based on Table 1, all statements showed high mean levels. The highest mean recorded was ‘uncomfortable when sweating’ at 4.32. The range of mean for the all statements is between 3.83 and 4.32. The overall mean is 4.17 and with standard deviation of 1.079 which is at a high level.
Overall Mean 4.04 1.108 High

10 Family discourages Physical Education activities
8 Team members not divided according to individual skill levels
5 Uncomfortable when touching sweating
3 Classmates not interested in doing good physical fitness
2 Team members who do not possess good physical fitness
1 Classmates not wearing Physical Education attire

SA-Strongly Agreed, A-Agreed, QA-Quite Agreed, D-Disagreed, SD-Strongly Disagreed

According to Table 2, all of the statements showed high mean values. The highest mean recorded was ‘team members not divided according to individual skill levels’ at 4.29. The range of mean for the all statements is between 3.84 and 4.29. The overall mean is 4.04 and with standard deviation of 1.108 which is at a high level.

Table 2 Pupils’ Level of Sociological Constraint

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>SD N</th>
<th>D N</th>
<th>QA N</th>
<th>A N</th>
<th>SA N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
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<td>29</td>
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<td>66</td>
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<td>4.07</td>
<td>1.151</td>
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</table>

SA-Strongly Agreed, A-Agreed, QA-Quite Agreed, D-Disagreed, SD-Strongly Disagreed

Difference between Pupils’ Psychological and Sociological Constraints

Table 3 showed no significant difference between pupils’ psychological constraints (M = 4.17, SD = 1.033) and pupils’ sociological constraint (M = 4.04, SD = 1.002), t = -.331, p>.05 for the independent samples t-test analysis. The mean for pupils’ psychological constraint is 4.17 and pupils’ sociological constraint is 4.04. This shows that pupils’ psychological constraint is higher than the pupils’ sociological constraints.
DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Pupils’ Psychological Constraint

Puberty Change of the Body

73.5% of respondents agreed that changes during puberty in the body are a constraint in the implementation of effective PE teaching in primary schools. This indicated that changes in the body such as breast augmentation, height, buttock enlargement, acne, menstrual blood and unpleasant body odor often make pupils feel less comfortable on the field. According to Abd Rahim (2001), female pupils often feel uncomfortable during menstruation period because they are worried that the menstrual blood would stain their pants or shirt and could be likely seen by other pupils. In addition, puberty changes among boys include height, voice changes, acne and the feeling of feeling ashamed towards the female pupils during PE activities.

Inconfidence in Certain Skills

Pupils who are highly fit will easily adapt to the environment, facilities and equipment of a type of recreational activity but pupils who are a bit shy will encounter difficulty to get the confidence to participate in PE activities. 64.2% of the respondents agreed with this statement. Zainun and Aini (1993) found that most pupils who lack confidence in themselves will have difficulty in involving with PE activities. In addition, pupils who have improperly developed muscles will feel inferior and isolated. Mowling, Brock, Eiler, and Rudisill (2004) suggested that appropriate PE activities must be prepared based on pupils’ abilities at optimum level to increase their fitness to actual levels.

PE Teachers teach not according to Pupils’ Gender

The gender of the PE teachers is also important in the implementation of the teaching and learning of PE. 71.0% of the respondents agreed with this statement, as the success of a subject depends on the teacher as well. For male pupils, female teachers often pose a problem for them for not providing challenging and interesting activities. According to Biddle (1995), male pupils who are generally tough, especially Year 6 pupils who generally possess large body built will dislike less challenging activities taught by female teacher. For female pupils, they are not necessarily comfortable doing activities by male teachers. They often thought that their body movements are often observed by the teacher. The view is agreed by Browne (1992), which states their physical body has changed and they have a sense of shame to the other gender.

Embarrassed to Implement Inter-Gender Activities

Year 6 pupils, both male and female will normally reach the puberty age and have different feelings between one another. 80.7% of the respondents agreed to this. The teaching and learning of PE must necessarily be separated into two different groups although the activities conducted are the same. This view is supported by Mannel et al. (1991) that if the administrator placed a teacher teaching female and male pupils at once, the teacher must be smart in implementing the PE activities. Similar activities should be implemented so that teachers do not need to trouble themselves in organizing different activities. However, the activities selected should be appropriate to both sexes, should be neither too difficult nor too easy: Mowling et al. (2004) supports this view by stating PE teachers need to isolate both sexes in two different groups so that there are no problems that might arise in the future. This phenomenon occurs in many national and independent schools as well as in national-type schools. Ariffin (1996) also states that female pupils dislike PE activities with male pupils and will deliberately refuse to wear PE attire to school.

Lack of Interest towards PE

PE subject is less appealing because of the changes in the Malaysian education era which now focused on examination oriented subjects. 72.6% of the respondents agreed to this. The reason pupils were not interested participating in PE is because the activities were not physically challenging to them. This view is supported by Sherman et al. (2008) that PE teachers should provide explanations as accurate as possible so that pupils understand the other activities that they need to learn. In addition, there are female pupils who are not interested in PE activities at school because they felt that the teacher was boring and believed that there is no importance of PE towards the UPSR examination. This view is supported by Mohar (2011) who states that only a handful of pupils will engage in PE activities, and only if it is a training to represent their school to a higher competition in order to obtain certificates as appendix for the application to boarding schools. This is due to the fact that most pupils do not understand the National Education Philosophy at the back of their exercise book.

Undermining PE Attitude

78.8% of the respondents agreed to this statement. Zuber (1999) and Azali (2001) argues that PE provides education through physical activity and the goal is to increase all physical development including mental and social development. PE has its own syllabus but unfortunately most of the PE teachers did not appreciate and use properly planned syllabus.
The view is agreed by Mohd Zuki (1994), that all teachers need to know the importance of PE syllabus but unfortunately it was only used to write lesson plans but not for its main function which is to be applied in the teaching and learning process.

**Uncomfortable when Sweating**

81.6% of respondents agreed to this statement because pupils will come to realize that sweat from the body will cause odor in the classroom. According to Adnan (1989), Year 6 pupils refused to do PE activities because they will feel uncomfortable after PE activities. This view is supported by Hamidah (1999) that teachers of other subjects also feel uncomfortable with the strong smell of sweat from pupils in the classroom.

**Physical Education Activities are Exhausting to Body**

77.7% of respondents agreed because it is the factor why pupils cannot concentrate on the next subject in the classroom. Pupils will easily become sleepy and then fall asleep in class. Haslindah et al. (2010) stated that PE activities are rather tiring and slow down the course of the next subjects. Lethargic body will be refreshed after an individual relax for an hour. This means that the energy lost must be restored immediately to acquire focus in classroom. The view is agreed by Abd Rahim (2001) who said PE teachers should explain the situation so that pupils would be wiser to use the break in class and do not waste any more energy after participating in PE activities.

**Pressure from Teachers of Other Subjects**

73.6% of respondents agreed as pressure from teachers of other subjects usually happen when the teacher is unable to complete the syllabus in textbooks prior to the exam. Therefore, some teachers forced pupils not to follow the PE teaching. This view is supported by Zainun and Aini (1993) who stated that the administration would favor teachers of core subjects because they are more concerned with achievements in the Primary School Assessment Test (UPSR) as compared to the PE subject. PE cannot help to improve the performance and school recognition. This can cause misunderstandings between teachers. Mohd Lotpi (1997) stated that the matter should be resolved by the administration so that teachers can carry out their duties without disrupting or degrading the PE subject.

**Pupils’ Minds more Focused towards UPSR Examination Subjects**

Undoubtedly UPSR will haunt the pupils’ minds. 74.8% of respondents agreed with the statement. Mohar (2011) stated that schools are more concerned with the achievement of exams. Pupils who think about UPSR too much will not be able to concentrate on PE activities. Mowling et al. (2004) hopes that school administrators and teachers of other subjects will not influence the minds of Year 6 pupils to discontinue learning PE in school.

**PUPILS’ SOCIOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS**

**Classmates not wearing Physical Education attire**

73.9% of respondents agreed on the statement. There are a number of factors that are related with this problem, namely coalition led by influential friends, forgot the class schedule, clothes still wet, no appropriate clothing PE and not feeling well. Sherman et al. (2008) states that there is collusion between classmates who deliberately did not bring PE clothes and this should be addressed by the school administration. Usually, such things happen in the class of academic excellence. In addition, most pupils give excuse that they forgot about the class schedule or their clothes are still wet, but teachers must take necessary actions so that it will not be repeated again.

**Team members who do not possess good physical fitness**

77.1% of the respondents agreed that team members who do not possess good physical fitness will lead to constraint in PE. This will lower the passion and enthusiasm of those who want to perform at best. Among the factors are: team member who are: obese, injured, unhealthy, soft, mushy, and so forth. Hamidah (1999) stated that PE teachers can solve the problem by isolating a group of friends according to their respective levels. Teachers play a vital role to advise the pupils. Haslindah et al. (2010) further state that openness to accept members of the group in fitness activities portrays good attitude.

**Classmates not interested in doing Physical Education activities**

Classmates who are less interested in PE activities are pupils who have fat bodies, unfit, dislike PE activities, dislike the PE teacher, classmates who do not support a relatively weak peer in fitness activities, less interested in wearing PE attire, dislike classmates who play too rough and so on. 69.1% of respondents agreed to the statement. Pupils who have excess weight are definitely going to feel inferior and refused to engage in activities with classmates. Adnan (1989) said teachers should provide advice so that pupils will provide support and help overweight friends to engage in fitness activities. Pupils also do not like PE activities due to the lack of PE equipment, dirty PE equipment and damaged equipment.

**Negative influence of friends who failed in Examinations**

62.5% of respondents agreed to the statement. Friends who fail in examinations will blame the PE subject, saying that it was the cause of their failure. The causes of negative influence from friends who failed examination are due to personal problems, time management, family rules and too much playing
outside of school hours. Haslindah et al. (2010) states that school administrators, teachers of other subjects, parents and pupils should be aware that many PE activities help pupils become active to answer each question in the exam.

Uncomfortable when touching sweating friends
72.3% of respondents agreed that pupils who are uncomfortable when touching friends who are sweating is one of the sociological constraints that often occur. Such attitude is negative and should not happen. Male pupils do not have a problem to come in contact with a friend who sweats because when they are having fun doing an activity in PE, they do not mind such contact. Mohar (2011) stated that in contrast to male, female pupils dislike touching sweating friends even among same the gender.

Choosing only best friend in a team
Typically, pupils only choose their best friends in a group because it is a norm for pupils to compete with other groups. 68.4% of respondents agreed to the statement, as this happens most of the time either outside school or in classroom. Mohd Zuki (1994) stated that selecting members in a group is not just isolating themselves in a group but also considering other groups as rivals. Adnan (1989) stated that PE teachers should resolve this by incorporating their teaching with societal attitude and open-mindedness towards any individual in PE activities.

Uncomfortable when touching friends of different gender
Religiously, female pupils cannot come into contact with male pupils, especially in the context of Malaysian schools where the majority of the population are Muslims. 74.2% of the respondents agreed with this statement. For non Muslim pupils, getting into contact with the opposite sex may not be a problem for some individuals. This view is supported by Hamidah (1999) who stressed that Year 6 pupils who are schooling in rural areas possess different views with those in urban areas. For pupils in urban areas, the issue of uncomfortability when coming into contact with the opposite sex is not a big issue. However, for pupils in rural areas, of course it is a very big issue and forbidden in Islam. Thus, the PE teacher needs to isolate groups of girls and boys. The school and the administration must focus on this problem to encourage female pupils to participate in PE. This view is supported by Mohd Zuki (1994), who argues that schools should provide two PE teachers in a class.

Team members not divided according to individual skill levels
This statement was agreed by 78.4% of the respondents. Teammates that are not separated according to individual skill levels can actually be overcome by PE teachers by thinking wisely. Weak pupils should not be separated from the active ones. Teachers need to balance between these two groups so that activities can be conducted in a fair and equitable manner. This view is supported by Mohar (2011), that no single pupil should be unsatisfied when placed in a group that is considered too strong or too weak. Sherman et al. (2008) further states that pupils who possess good manners certainly would not choose a specific friend to win any activity during the process of teaching and learning.

Pressure of homework from teachers of other subjects
The pressure with too much homework causes pupils to refuse to participate with learning of PE in the field. 61.9% of respondents agreed to this statement. To elaborate, this matter highly sensitive and could cause conflicts between PE teachers and teachers of core subjects. Teachers teaching core subjects will normally force Year 6 pupils to continue learning in the classroom without telling the PE teacher who was waiting in the field. This view is supported by Sherman et al. (2008), in which reason often given is definitely because the Year 6 pupils will have to sit for examinations and thus must do a lot of revisions and drilling exercises. Such pressure will certainly also experienced by the PE teachers as well. Therefore, school authorities must intervene to solve this problem.

Family discourages Physical Education activities
There are families that do not encourage their children to join PE mainly because of past experiences, such as incidents where they have family members who injure themselves while doing PE; families who cannot afford to buy t-shirt for their children for PE subject; parents who have to spend more because their children may consume more food after PE, difficulty to wash the dirty clothes after PE in the field and so on. 16.8% of the respondents agreed to this statement. Hamidah (1999) stated that injuries among pupils are often especially when they play too rough and there are likely occurrences of quarrels and fights. In addition, poor families or those who cannot afford to buy PE clothing shall inform the matter to the school. This view is supported by Haslindah et al. (2010) who states that parents need to be more open to accept this situation for the future of their children.

Difference between Pupils’ Psychological and Sociological Constraint Factors
Pupils’ psychological constraint and sociological constraint factors clearly showed a few similarities between one another. This means that both constraint components contributed towards the problem in the implementation of PE teaching in primary school. The results showed that there was no significant difference between pupils’ psychological constraint ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 1.033$) and pupils’ sociological
constraint (M = 4.04, SD = 1.002), t = -.331, p > .05. The mean value derived from pupils’ psychological constraint was at 4.17 while pupils’ sociological constraint was at 4.04. This showed that pupils’ psychological constraint significantly obtained higher score than sociological constraint, which implied that pupils’ inner factors is the main factor to be focused by PE teachers so that pupils are not constrained from participating in the teaching and learning of PE.

CONCLUSION
In response to the objective of this study, based on the findings obtained, it is safe to say that the implementation of PE teaching must be conducted effectively in schools. To ensure its effectiveness, all the constraints must be overcome. Those constraints include both psychological and sociological aspects. Significantly, this paper has discussed the probable psychological and sociological constraint factors that can lead to pupils’ lack of interest to participate in PE class in school. Thus, the outcome of this study can be used as reference for related authorities to take necessary steps to ensure the effectiveness of PE implementation in schools. To add, the outcome can also serve as the basis for further studies within the area of constraint factors in the implementation of PE, particularly in both psychological and sociological aspects.

REFERENCES


