

# Why Physical Education Is Not Taught in Primary Schools: Views of Teachers in Twifo Atti-Morkwa District of Central Region, Ghana

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## Abstract

The physical, social and emotional benefits of Physical Education (PE) have been well established. Nevertheless, the subject is mostly either not taught at all or not taught well by teachers. This study, therefore, aimed at investigating why PE as a subject was not taught as expected in basic schools in the Twifo Atti-Morkwa District (TAM) of the Central Region in Ghana. The study focused on investigating whether the perception of teachers towards PE, training of teachers, nature of school curriculum and availability of facilities and equipment were factors affecting the teaching of PE in basic schools within the TAM district. The study was a descriptive cross-sectional survey, which utilised primary data collected from a total of 536 basic school teachers in the TAM district. Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) were used to analyse the data collected. The results revealed the following; the majority (86.4%) of the teachers did not actually teach PE in the primary schools, the majority (64%) of teachers had positive perceptions towards PE, majority of the teachers viewed training of teachers (78.4%), nature of school curriculum (81.5%) and provisions of facilities and equipment (93.1%) as factors affecting the teaching of PE in TAM District. On the availability of facilities and equipment for the teaching of PE, results revealed that football fields (96.6%) and footballs (85.6%) were the most available facilities and equipment for teaching PE. The study recommends that the Ghana Education Service through its PE Directorate should embark on the supervision of PE teaching, provision of in-service training of teachers on teaching PE, decongestion of the school curriculum and the provision of adequate facilities and equipment to enhance the teaching of PE in the TAM district.

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## Keywords

Generalist Teacher, Physically Active Lifestyle, Physical Activities, Physical Education, Specialist Teacher, Twifo Atti-Morkwa

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## 1. Introduction

PE is an important educational process which aims at improving and enhancing human performance and development by participating in physical activities [PA]. According to Chakraborty, Nandi, & Adhikari (2012), it is a vital element in a comprehensive well-balanced curriculum because it helps learners develop competencies. It is therefore observed that, for overall development, children should participate in physical activities such as sports and exercises. This is because it is the main contributory factor in the improvement of an individual in all aspects of life (that is, physical, emotional, mental and social). It entails systematic instruction in sports, training, practice, gymnastics, exercises, and hygiene within the school and college settings (Kirui, 2007). PE has been widely acknowledged as a key vehicle for promoting PA among children (Biddle & Mutrie, 2008). The physical, social and emotional benefits of PA during childhood are well documented in literature. In support of this claim, Chakraborty and colleagues argue that it provides the opportunity for children to lead a physically active lifestyle.

The contribution of PE to the personal, social and physical development of the child is well known (McGuinness & Shelly, 2003). PE provides children with the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to perform a variety of PA, maintain physical fitness and value as well as enjoy PA as an ongoing part of a healthy lifestyle. PE contributes towards the growth of a child into a healthy, intelligent, confident and level-headed adult. Students need to take part in PA more frequently than is possible in their schools' curricular programmes (Mungai, Sang, & Wamutitu, 2014). There are many benefits PE provides today's students and society. Within a school setting, a PE programme can serve society in many ways if implemented and utilised appropriately. There are many areas PE can serve and positively affect students and society. One is overall physical fitness. For example, PE helps students and society improve skill-related components such as speed, agility, reaction time, balance, coordination, and basic movement patterns. Physical education helps students and society improve upon their strength, endurance, flexibility, and cardiovascular/respiratory activities.

It is in light of this that Mozaffarian et al. (2012) recommended that if children and adolescents want to increase their life expectancies, they need to eat healthier foods and become physically active. Bailey (2006) asserts that Physical Education and Sports (PES) have numerous advantages linked with active participation. Talbot (2009) noted that PE helps children to develop self-respect, helps in integrating social, cognitive and physical growth, develops knowledge of

the function of aerobic and anaerobic physical programmes in health, positively improves self-esteem, and enhances social, affective and cognitive development. PA maintains healthy joints and muscles so that one can undertake their daily activities and be physically fit. According to the [National Association for Sport and Physical Education & American Heart Association \(2012\)](#), PE improves one's overall well-being and is one of the best preventers of significant health problems linked to many chronic diseases (e.g., obesity, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol). No other school subject has the potential to fulfill these health needs. If schools are to make a positive impact on children's health now and in the future, PE must form an integral part of the school curriculum and must be taught by qualified teachers, and focus on healthy behaviours.

Studies have found that the lack of PE knowledge among primary school teachers contributed to uncertainty about what they were doing ([DeCorby et al., 2005](#); [Morgan & Bourke, 2008](#)), whereas teachers who demonstrate a good knowledge of PE, good skills, and a readiness to participate are more likely to encourage a positive attitude to PE and PA in students ([Ryan, Fleming, & Maina 2003](#)). Reviews of research about teacher professional development aimed at improving student achievement indicate that focusing on teachers' knowledge of the subject matter, and how students understand and learn it, is what matters most ([Cohen & Hill, 2000](#); [Holland, 2005](#); [Spiller & Fraser, 1999](#); [Walkwitz & Lee, 1992](#)). As [Ennis \(1994\)](#) points out, teachers, like their students, need to become lifelong learners who pursue continuing growth in knowledge, understanding and skills.

The essence of PE in a school curriculum is to help learners develop competencies and beliefs. Daily quality PE in the nation's schools is an important part of a students' comprehensive, well-rounded education programme and a means of positively affecting life-long health and well-being ([Kirui, 2007](#)). [Dora \(2014\)](#) observed that students who participate in PE have high energy levels and are more alert than those who lead sedentary lifestyles. Due to these reasons, the productivity of such students in various spheres of life, including their studies, improves considerably. This implies that PE contributes towards the growth of a child into a healthy, intelligent, confident and levelheaded adult. Students therefore need to take part in PA more frequently than is possible in their schools' curricular programme ([Mungai et al., 2014](#)). The teacher is considered to be the major and first instrument in education. In effect, schools rely on teachers in preparing generations of students with the requisite competencies to perform duties assigned to them. Thus, the teacher plays a significant role in the education process ([Kirui, 2007](#)). This is significant because it takes a competent teacher to promote the holistic development of the learner.

The desire appears to stem from professional commitment to provide the best education possible to student in one hand, and the need to meet regulatory processes of management issues and learning environment on the other hand. It is not only schools that have a key role to play. It is also apparent that physical

educators are becoming more accountable than ever before. The role of educators continues to evolve and they pursue opportunities to facilitate activities that engage students and provide education on lifestyle choices and healthy behaviours. Schools are learning environments with the capacity to equip students with these attributes. However, it is the quality of the programmes in schools that will ensure that young people are given the opportunities to become physically-educated individuals (Lee et al., 2007). Morgan & Hansen (2008) stated that in many regions of the world, PE is considered as a non-productive activity, less important to a successful future than academic subjects. In other words, there is a prevailing perception that one cannot build a career on it inspite of the overwhelming evidence that sports, which forms part of PE, is a money-making industry in the western world and in some African countries such as Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana and Ethiopia (Mudekunye & Sithole, 2012).

Teachers are of the view that they are poorly prepared for the teaching of PE and that they lack confidence. This claim supports Drewett's (Drewett, 2005) assertion that teachers tend to teach a limited scope of the programme, based on the available facilities and resources as well as the competencies that the teacher brings into the teaching and learning. Nevertheless, there are challenges for Colleges of Education in Ghana to ensure that teachers are adequately prepared to teach PE and that continuing professional development in PE is also available to practicing teachers. Trained PE teachers can achieve, for example, greater physical fitness improvement in children than PE teachers who lack appropriate training (Starc & Strel, 2012). Amusa, Toriola, & Goon (2013) assert that traditionally, most African societies associate PE with play and leisure. This is significant because such societies perceive PE as only involving PAs thereby not making any meaningful contribution towards the overall development of the learner.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

A survey conducted by college lecturers on the status of PE in Zimbabwean primary schools revealed that the subject is timetabled for the sake of student teachers and there is little or no support from school administrators (Musangeya et al., 2000). Owing to this, the status of PE remains shaky and low because teachers consider it low in their scale of values. The time for teaching PE was considered time for both teachers and pupils to relax and was nothing more than recess and play. Any activity perceived in this manner may never be taken seriously, and this explains why PE ranks low in society's scale of values (Amusa, Toriola, & Groon, 2013). Another study conducted by Oliveira (2014) on teachers' experiences with disengagement in PE classes at secondary school in Perth Metropolitan Area in Australia showed that teachers were not having the ability to engage students in PE due to the fact that they had limited options. In addition, Curry (2012) indicated that primary school teachers frequently skip the compulsory PE hours from their week because they are emotionally pressured by the scope of the curriculum and their lack of experience and capability to teach

certain aspects of the PE curriculum.

In Jordan, a study by Oudat (2016) indicated that the highest challenge facing the PE teachers was the increased numbers of students in the classroom. As a result, teachers are not able to teach the students PE in a good manner. According to Amusa, Toriala, & Groon (2013), subjects such as Mathematics and English are deemed productive because they equip students with skills to solve problems they could not solve at the beginning of the course. In other words, there is a sense of outcome, which pervades these subjects, which is lacking in PE. The researchers, during their years of teaching as classroom teachers, including working in primary schools in the Twifo AttiMorkwa District, observed that though PE was on the timetable, teachers were not teaching it as the other subjects like English Language, Mathematics and Integrated Science. During PE lessons, the pupils were made to go out and as the boys were playing soccer, the girls will also be playing “ampe” (a local Ghanaian sport played only by girls), while other pupils will be sleeping in the classrooms. In fact, PE periods were not used in teaching the subject as was the case for other subjects such as Mathematics, English, Science, etc.

From the anecdotal evidence, teachers who were qualified to teach PE did not seem to like teaching it, owing to its perceived low value relative to other subjects such as Mathematics and English. The teaching of PE was left in the hands of student teachers on teaching practice, who felt obliged to teach it because they were undergoing training. Immediately they complete their training and are qualified, then they follow the example of their older colleagues in marginalising the subject as well. It is against this background that the researchers wanted to find out from the teachers in the classroom, why PE as a school time-tabled subject was not taught especially in a district like the Twifo Atti-Morkwa (TAM) district of Central Region, which is predominately rural in nature. Despite the fact that the teaching of PE has been relegated to the background in most developing countries, research has dedicated little attention to investigating the reasons why such is happening (Hardman, 2008).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was therefore to investigate the views of basic school teachers on why PE is not taught as a school subject in primary schools at the Twifo Atti-Morkwa (TAM) District in the Central Region of Ghana. Specifically, the study sought to find out the percentage of basic school teachers who actually taught PE as a school subject and also whether factors such as attitude of teachers, training of teachers, nature of school curriculum and the provision of facilities and equipment affected the teaching of PE as a school subject in the TAM District.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide this study:

- 1) What percentage of basic school teachers teach PE as a school subject in TAM District of the Central Region?

2) What are the perceptions of primary school teachers in TAM district of the Central Region towards PE as a school time-tabled subject?

3) What are the views of primary school teachers on how training of teachers affects the teaching of PE as a subject in TAM District of the Central Region?

4) What are the views of primary school teachers on how the nature of the school curriculum affects the teaching of PE as a subject in TAM District of the Central Region?

5) What are the views of primary school teachers on how the provision of adequate facilities and equipment affect the teaching of PE as a subject in TAM District of the Central Region?

6) What facilities and equipment are available for the teaching of PE in the TAM District?

## 2. Methodology

A cross-sectional descriptive survey design was used. The descriptive design was well thought-out to be appropriate for the study since an attempt was made by the researcher to describe the existing situation on the subject matter by asking respondents to complete a questionnaire so as to draw meaningful conclusions (Sarantakos, 2005). The study was conducted in the Twifo/Atti-Morkwa District, which is one of the twenty administrative districts in the Central Region of Ghana. There are ninety-one (91) primary schools in the district with five hundred and forty-six (546) teachers (Twifo Atti-Morkwa District Assembly, 2017). The population for the study comprised all teachers in public primary schools in the Twifo Atti-Morkwa District, which was 546 teachers in the 91 basic schools in the TAM district.

The researchers employed the census approach in selecting the research participants. Thus, all 546 teachers who form part of the study population were included in the study because they are all trained to be able to teach physical education as a school subject in their various classes in the primary school. A researcher designed questionnaire was used as the data collection instrument for the study. The questionnaire was designed from existing literature on teacher perception of PE being taught in schools (Nhamo, 2012; Sirimba, 2015). In all, 546 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and 536 were retrieved, giving a 98.2% return rate. The questionnaire for the study was made up of five sections. Section 'A' contained a direct question on whether primary school teachers in TAM actually taught PE. Section 'B' focused on whether the perception of teachers towards subject PE affected their teaching of it. Section 'C' sought information on whether the training and abilities of the teachers affected the teaching of PE in basic schools. Section 'D' addressed whether the nature of school curriculum is a factor which affects the teaching of the subject, while Section 'E' focused on whether facilities and equipment were available for the teaching and learning of PE in TAM and how the availability or otherwise of

these facilities and equipment affected the teaching of the subject.

The instrument was content validated by two experts from the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation of the College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, who have in-depth knowledge in PE. The instrument was pre-tested in some rural primary schools in the Sekondi Metropolis in the Western Region of Ghana. Data obtained from the pre-test was subjected to Cronbach alpha test to establish the internal reliability of the instrument. A reliability co-efficient of 0.76 was obtained which was considered good enough for the instrument to be used for the study. The rural primary schools in the Sekondi Metropolis were selected for the pre-testing because they share some common characteristics with the rural primary schools used for the main study in the TAM district of Central Region. As the study involved human participants, all the necessary protocols were followed. One month was used for the data collection after securing approval from the University of Cape Coast Institutional Review Board and also from The Ghana Education Service. The data collected was analysed using mainly descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages). For research question 1, one item measured whether teachers in TAM district teach PE as expected. Response to the question was either "YES" or "NO". For research question 2, nine items measured the perception of teachers towards PE as a school time-tabled subject. Responses to the items were "AGREE" or "DISAGREE". All responses that "AGREED" with the statements asked, were scored as negative perception towards PE, while responses that "DISAGREED" were scored as positive perception towards PE. To determine whether majority of the responses to all the 9 items "AGREED" or "DISAGREED" an overall score was calculated by totaling all "AGREED" and "DISAGREED" responses and dividing both by 9. For research question 3, eight items measured teachers' views on how their training and ability to teach affected their teaching of PE. Responses to the items were "AGREE" or "DISAGREE". Responses that "AGREED" with the statements asked were scored as indicating that, lack of training and ability of teachers to teach affected the teaching of PE, while responses that "DISAGREED" were scored as indicating that, lack of training and ability of teachers was not a factor affecting the teaching of PE. An overall score was calculated by totaling all "AGREED" and "DISAGREED" responses and dividing both by 8. For research question 4, three items measured the views of teachers on whether the nature of the school curriculum affected the teaching of PE. Responses to the items were also "AGREE" or "DISAGREE" and responses that "AGREED" with the statements asked were scored as indicating that the nature of the school curriculum affected the teaching of PE, while responses that "DISAGREED" were scored as indicating that the nature of the school curriculum was not a factor affecting the teaching of PE. The overall score was calculated by totaling all "AGREED" and "DISAGREED" responses and dividing both by 3. For research question 5, a single item measured the views of teachers on whether the provision of facilities and equipment affected the teaching of PE.



Response to the question was either “YES” or “NO”. “YES” responses indicated that the teachers did not view provision of adequate facilities and equipment as a factor affecting their teaching, while “NO” responses indicated the opposite, i.e. provision of adequate facilities and equipment affected teaching of PE in TAM district. For research question 6, respondents were provided with a list of 6 facilities and 11 equipment to indicate whether these facilities and equipment were available for the teaching of PE and whether they were in good condition and sufficient for the teaching of the subject. Responses indicated the availability or non-availability of the facilities and equipment and also, the condition of the facilities and sufficiency of the equipment.

### 3. Results

**Research Question 1:** What percentage of basic school teachers teach PE as a school subject in TAM district of the Central Region?

The first research question sort to find out the percentage of primary school teachers who actually teach PE as a subject in the TAM District. Results in **Table 1** show that only 73 teachers (13.6%) out of 536 in the TAM District agreed that they actually teach PE as a subject in the school. Four hundred and sixty-three (86.4%) of the teachers stated that they do not teach PE as a subject in the TAM District.

**Research Question 2:** What are the perceptions of primary school teachers in TAM district of the Central Region towards PE as a school time-tabled subject?

**Table 2** shows the responses from teachers in TAM district on their perception towards PE as a subject. As can be seen from **Table 2**, the majority of respondents disagreed with each of the 9 items that sort to measure whether the teachers had any negative perception towards PE. The overall score of responses indicated that 343 (64%) respondents had positive perceptions towards PE since they disagreed with the statements, while 193 (36%) of respondents had a negative perception towards PE as a subject in the primary school.

**Research Question 3:** What are the views of primary school teachers on how training of teachers affects the teaching of PE as a subject in TAM District of the Central Region?

**Table 3** shows the responses from teachers in TAM district on how training of teachers affects teaching of PE as a school subject in primary schools. As can be

**Table 1.** Percentage of primary school teachers teaching PE as a subject in TAM district.

Variable	Teaching PE as a Subject in TAM District
Responses	
Yes (%)	73 (13.6%)
No (%)	463 (86.4%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>536 (100%)</b>

Source: Fieldwork, 2019.



**Table 2.** Respondents views on teachers' perception towards physical education as a subject.

S/N	Item	Agree	Disagree
1.	If for any reason a few subjects have to be dropped from the school programme, physical education should be one of the subjects dropped.	138 (26%)	398 (74%)
2.	Physical education is one of the less important subjects in helping to establish and maintain desirable social standards.	236 (44%)	300 (56%)
3.	Physical education classes do not provide situations for the formation of attitudes which will make one a better citizen.	193 (36%)	343 (64%)
4.	There is not enough value coming from physical education to justify the time consumed	246 (46%)	290 (54%)
5.	Physical education makes no valuable contribution toward building up an adequate reserve of strength and endurance for everyday living.	204 (38%)	332 (62%)
6.	Physical education tears down sociability by encouraging people to attempt to surpass each other in many of the activities.	202 (38%)	334 (62%)
7.	Physical education adds nothing to the improvement of social behaviour.	165 (31%)	371 (69%)
8.	Physical education activities do not help to relieve and relax physical tensions	185 (35%)	351 (65%)
9.	Physical education does not provide situations for developing desirable character qualities.	164 (31%)	372 (69%)
<b>Overall Score</b>		<b>193 (36%)</b>	<b>343 (64%)</b>

**Table 3.** Respondents' views on how training of teachers affects the teaching of PE as a subject in TAM district of the central region?

S/N	Item	Agree	Disagree
1.	I lack the training and knowledge regarding the teaching of PE	420 (78.4%)	116 (21.6%)
2.	There is limited avenue for teachers from TAM to professionally develop themselves to teach PE	448 (83.6%)	88 (16.4%)
3.	There is no supervision and feedback from supervisors in the teaching of PE	463 (86.4%)	73 (13.6%)
4.	There are no resources (books) for the planning of structured lessons for PE	473 (88.2%)	63 (11.8%)
5.	I am never ready to do practical work involving physical activity	326 (60.8%)	210 (39.2%)
6.	I do not have the skill to teach PE	444 (82.8%)	92 (17.2%)
7.	I do not have the confidence to teach PE	341 (63.6%)	195 (36.4)
8.	I do not have the skill to teach some topics/aspects of PE	447 (83.4%)	89 (16.6%)
<b>Overall Score</b>		<b>420 (78.4%)</b>	<b>116 (21.6%)</b>

seen from **Table 3**, the majority of respondents agreed with each of the 8 items that sort to measure whether training of teachers affected the teaching of PE as a subject. The overall score of responses indicated that 420 (78.4%) respondents believed that their training and preparation as teachers affected their teaching of PE, while 116 (21.6%) of respondents believed that their training and preparation as teachers did not affect their teaching of PE as a subject in the primary school.

**Research Question 4:** What are the views of primary school teachers on how the nature of the school curriculum affects the teaching of PE as a subject in

## TAM District of the Central Region?

**Table 4** shows the responses from teachers in TAM district on how the nature of the school curriculum affects the teaching of PE as a school subject in primary schools. As can be seen from **Table 4**, the majority of respondents agreed with each of the 3 items that sort to measure whether the nature of the school curriculum affected the teaching of PE as a subject. The overall score of responses indicated that 437 (81.5%) respondents agreed that the nature of the school curriculum affected their teaching of PE, while 99 (18.5%) disagreed.

**Research Question 5:** What are the views of primary school teachers on how the provision of adequate facilities and equipment affects the teaching of PE as a subject in TAM District of the Central Region?

Results in **Table 5** show responses from teachers in TAM district on how the provision of adequate facilities and equipment affects the teaching of PE as a school subject in primary schools. As can be seen from **Table 5**, the majority of respondents disagreed with the single item that sort to measure whether there were adequate facilities and equipment for the teaching of PE as a subject in the TAM district. The responses indicated that 499 (93.1%) respondents disagreed, while 37 (6.9%) agreed. The results show that majority of the teachers think the inadequacy of facilities and equipment in the TAM district affects how they teach the PE subject.

**Research Question 6:** What facilities and equipment are available for the teaching of PE in the TAM District?

Results in **Table 6** show that majority of the teachers (96.6%) indicated that their schools had football fields. Slightly less than half (47%) of the respondents

**Table 4.** Respondents' views on how the nature of the school curriculum affects the teaching of PE as a subject in TAM district of the central region?

S/N	Item	Agree	Disagree
1.	The curriculum is overcrowded and I cannot give the mandated time to physical education each week	442 (82.5%)	94 (17.5%)
2.	The PE curriculum is too demanding	478 (89.2%)	58 (10.8%)
3.	A curriculum which does not cater for physical education adequately does not offer a complete education	392 (73.1%)	144 (26.9%)
<b>Overall Score</b>		<b>437 (81.5%)</b>	<b>99 (18.5%)</b>

**Table 5.** Respondents' views on how the provision of adequate facilities and equipment affects the teaching of PE as a subject in TAM district of the central region?

Variable	Adequacy of Facilities and Equipment to Support the Teaching of PE
Responses	
Yes (%)	37 (6.9%)
No (%)	499 (93.1%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>536 (100%)</b>

**Table 6.** Availability of facilities and equipment in TAM district.

Facilities and equipment	Availability	
	Yes	No
<b>Facilities</b>		
Football Field	96.6	3.4
Volleyball Court	47.0	53.0
Netball Court	44.6	55.4
Handball Court	5.6	94.4
Athletic Oval	6.2	93.8
<b>Equipment</b>		
Footballs	85.6	14.4
Handballs	5.2	94.8
Basketballs	1.9	98.1
Netballs	37.9	62.1
Netball Upright	47.8	52.2
Volleyballs	38.1	61.9
Volleyball Net	28.2	71.8
Table Tennis Set	6.2	93.8
Shot put missile	3.7	96.3
Javelin	2.2	97.8

Source: Fieldwork, 2019.

said their schools had volleyball courts. A similar proportion (44.6%) also indicated that there were netball courts in their schools. Still on the facilities, only five point six percent (5.6%) and six point two percent (6.2%) of the respondents mentioned that they had handball courts and athletic ovals respectively in their schools.

Concerning equipment, 85.6% of the teachers responded in the affirmative that their schools had footballs. About 47% of the respondents said their schools had netball uprights while about 38% each said their schools had netballs and volleyballs. Only a few of the respondents indicated that their schools had handballs, table tennis sets, shot put missiles, javelins and basketballs. For instance, with the latter three, less than five percent (<5%) of the teachers said their schools had those equipment.

#### 4. Discussion

Research question one sought to find out the percentage of teachers who actually teach PE in the TAM district of the Central Region. The finding revealed that the majority of the teachers do not teach PE in the primary schools as expected. This

finding seems to sit well with the position held by Hillman, Erickson, & Kramer (2008) that the amount of PE being taught is dwindling in many schools as extra time is afforded to other academic subjects. Teaching of physical education at the primary school in TAM district as it stands shows that almost all teachers deny pupils the opportunity to express themselves freely in purposeful activities during physical education lessons. As Drewett (2005) asserts, teachers tend to teach a limited scope of the PE programme, based on the available facilities and resources as well as the competencies that the teacher brings into the teaching and learning. Could this be the case with most of the primary school teachers in TAM district, since the majority of them fail to teach PE as expected? The finding of this study also appears to agree with the position of Curry (2012) who indicated that primary school teachers frequently skip the compulsory PE hours from their week because they are emotionally pressured by the scope of the curriculum and their lack of experience and capability to teach certain aspects of the PE curriculum. Oudat (2016) indicated that the highest challenge facing the PE teachers was the increased numbers of the students in the classroom which results in the teachers' inability to teach students PE in a good manner. Primary school teachers in TAM may be facing similar challenges, hence their inability to teach PE as expected.

The second research question sought to investigate the perception of primary school teachers towards the subject PE. The finding indicated that the majority of the teachers rather had positive perceptions towards the subject PE, as they appreciated its contribution to the development of pupils. The researchers were interested in finding out the perception teachers had towards PE as a subject in the primary school because evidence shows that once a teacher perceives a particular subject to be valuable, then attitude towards that subject also becomes positive and there is the likelihood that such a teacher will teach such a subject well. Some studies have found that teachers hold quite negative feelings towards PE (De Boer, Pijl, & Minnaert, 2011), which is contrary to the finding of the current study. Findings by Morgan & Hansen (2008) that teachers believe in the benefits of PE appear to agree with the positive perception teachers had towards PE, as revealed by this study. Jenkinson & Benson (2010) also found that teachers believed in the value of PE. However, the authors (Jenkinson, & Benson) explained that these positive perceptions did not guarantee the delivery of quality PE or that students will develop desired knowledge and skills through PE lessons. The finding of Muszkieta et al. (2019) that only a minimal proportion of PE teachers had a negative perception towards the teaching of PE agrees with the findings of this current study.

Research question three measured teachers' views on whether their training was a factor affecting the teaching of PE as a subject in the primary schools in TAM district. The finding revealed that the majority of the teachers in TAM district viewed training as a factor affecting their teaching of PE as a subject as most of them lamented that they lacked the training to teach PE as a subject well, in

the primary schools. A study by [Morgan & Bourke \(2008\)](#) found that classroom teachers believe they require more extensive teacher training in PE delivered through longer courses with greater exposure to PE teaching, to be able to adequately teach PE. This is similar to the findings of the current study as the teachers see themselves as generalist teachers who lack the specialized training to adequately teach PE in the primary schools. The issue of generalist classroom teachers lacking specialized training to adequately teach PE has been buttressed by [Beddoes et al. \(2014\)](#) who lamented that in some countries primary school generalist teachers are often inadequately or inappropriately prepared to teach PE. Whereas findings of this study revealed that training was a factor affecting the teaching of PE, other studies such as [Matanin & Collier \(2003\)](#), and [Chakraborty, Nandy, & Adhikari \(2012\)](#) concluded that training of teachers was not a factor affecting the teaching of PE. Infact Chakraborty and colleagues reported that it was the availability and adequacy of PE facilities and equipment, rather than the training of teachers, that affects the teaching of PE in basic schools significantly. Studies by [Sather \(2011\)](#), [Petrie & Hunter \(2011\)](#), and [Castelli & Ward \(2012\)](#) all seem to agree with the findings of the current study as they all found out that training and ability of teachers was a significant factor that affects the teaching of any school subject including PE. Training is very important because it boosts individuals' perception of their own self-efficacy.

Research question four tried to investigate whether the nature of the school curriculum was a factor affecting the teaching of PE as a subject in the primary school and the finding revealed that the majority of the teachers viewed the nature of the curriculum as a factor affecting their teaching of PE. This finding agrees with studies by [Biddle & Mutrie \(2008\)](#) and [Kullinna et al. \(2010\)](#) who all found out that a congested curriculum, which places too much emphasis on English, Mathematics and Science, is a factor that affects the teaching of other subjects like PE. The responses from the teachers on the nature of the curriculum included the fact that it was overcrowded, it was too demanding and that it did not cater for PE as a subject as it does for other subjects like Mathematics, English and Science. Obviously viewing a curriculum meant to ensure that all subjects including PE are taught well in such a perspective will certainly affect how teachers teach those other subjects like PE. It is therefore not surprising that the majority of teachers in the TAM district fail to teach PE as a subject in the primary school as revealed by research question 1 in this study.

Arguably, effective learning and teaching in PE are in part reliant upon the provision of facilities and equipment. Research question five, therefore, sort to find out from the teachers whether the provision of adequate facilities and equipment was a factor affecting their teaching of PE in primary schools. The finding revealed that the majority of the teachers viewed the provision of adequate facilities and equipment as a factor affecting their teaching of PE subject in primary schools. This finding is not surprising because PE is commonly faced with the challenge of inadequate facilities, equipment and supplies and poor

maintenance of teaching sites. Trying to teach PE without the availability of the basic facilities could be frustrating. Gabriel (2013) reports that although most schools in Africa have open pieces of grounds that serve as multi-purpose sport fields, the condition of these fields is usually in poor states. Many of such fields are sloppy, uneven, overgrown or unturned, which render them less suitable in inclement weather. Benson (2013) further comments that large scale development of existing PE facilities is needed in most African countries. The absence of adequate PE facilities is denying pupils the opportunity to have PE lessons. Supporting the findings of this current study, a by Mbumba (2011) in Namibia revealed that the majority of children, especially those in rural areas, had either not gotten the opportunity to attend PE classes or were in schools where PE was neglected or totally omitted because of the lack of facilities or qualified teachers. Similarly, in Ghana, Quay (2014) indicated that the challenges in teaching PE are large classroom sizes and inadequate facilities and equipment for practical lessons.

As a follow up to research question five, the researchers were interested in finding out what facilities and equipment were available in the TAM district for the teaching of PE in primary school. This was answered by research question six. Finding revealed that the district had only adequate football (soccer) fields and footballs as facilities and equipment. Teachers at the primary school level are expected to introduce their pupils to a variety of games such as football, volleyball, handball, netball, etc. and also track and field events. A district like TAM should have adequate facilities and equipment for all these games and events and not just football facilities and equipment. It is obvious that teachers will struggle to adequately teach PE which is mainly practical centered at the primary school level in the district, due to the inadequacy of these facilities and equipment. The finding of this study is supported by Drewett's (Drewett, 2005) assertion that teachers tend to teach a limited scope of the programme, based on the available facilities and resources needed to teach. Hardman's (Hardman, 2014) observation that the quality of facilities for physical education in most countries was below average and was limited in quantity, particularly in developing countries fits perfectly with what was found by this study in the TAM district of the Central Region of Ghana.

## 5. Conclusion

Based on the findings, it is concluded that:

- 1) Teachers do not teach PE in the primary schools as expected in the TAM district of the Central Region of Ghana.
- 2) Teachers in the TAM district surprisingly have positive perceptions about the subject PE.
- 3) Poor training of teachers, the overcrowded and demanding nature of the school curriculum and inadequate provision of facilities and equipment are seen as factors affecting the teaching of PE in the primary schools in the TAM district.

## 6. Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

- 1) The TAM District Directorate of the Ghana Education Service should embark upon the supervision of the teaching of PE in primary schools to deal with the situation where teachers who are expected to teach the subject PE as part of their work are failing to do.
- 2) The TAM District Directorate of the Ghana Education Service should also organise in-service training for all primary school teachers to help train them to effectively teach the subject PE.
- 3) The Curriculum Development and Research Division of the Ghana Education Service should consider de-congesting the primary school curriculum to allow the teachers to be able to teach all subjects equally well.
- 4) Lastly, the TAM District Directorate of the Ghana Education Service and the TAM District Assembly should work to provide adequate facilities and equipment for PE in the various schools to enable teachers to teach PE well.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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