

# Impact of Physical Education Teachers' Training Programme on Development of Purpose in Life

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**Abstract-** Purpose in life (PIL) is conceived in terms of the specific connotation of a personal life. In the present study, we put an attempt to discern the developmental pattern in gaining experience of meaning in life of the prospective teachers in physical education. To measure PIL of prospective teachers in physical education, Part-A of the "Purpose in Life Test" (Crumbaugh & Maholick, 1968) was administered on students of B.P.Ed. course in three different phases during the academic session 2006 – 07. The mean of the PIL scores increased significantly from the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of testing (M=101.74) to the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of testing (M=104.06) and again further increased in the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of testing (M=109.63). We may conclude that the physical education teachers' training programme (B.P.Ed. course) have positive impact on developing life satisfaction. Rigorous and prolonged physical education may bring forth life satisfaction.

**Index Terms-** Purpose in life, Logotherapy, Existential vacuum, Likert type scale.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The meaning in life must be conceived in terms of the specific meaning of a personal life in a given situation. Life is a chain of questions. In his life, an individual has to set out for finding the answers to these questions by being responsible and also by making proper decisions. Each question has only one right answer. In course of searching the true meaning of his existence, this, however, does not imply that an individual is always capable of finding the right answer or correct solution to each problem, faced by him in his voyage in life. The Greek word "Logos" represents the will of God, the controlling principles of the universe, or meaning. Dr. Frankl, the introducer of "Logotherapy", translates logos as meaning (Fabry, 1994). Therefore, logotherapy means healing and maintaining health through meaning. According to Frankl (1967, 1984, 1986) there are two levels of meaning: the present meaning, or meaning of the moment, and the ultimate meaning or super meaning. Ultimate meaning exists in the supra-human dimension, which is "hidden" from us. So, according to Dr. Frankl it is more productive to address specific meaning of the moment, of the situation, rather than talking about meaning of life in general. According to Frankl's dimensional ontology (Frankl, 1986), human beings exist in three dimensions – somatic, mental and spiritual. Spirituality is the uniquely human dimension. As

because a person is a unity in complexity, these different dimensions must be understood in their totality, however. One of the prepositions of logotherapy says that the human spirit is our healthy core. However, the human spirit may be blocked by biological or psychological sickness, but it will remain intact. The human spirit does not get sick, even when the psychobiological organism is injured. A part of the human spirit is the unconscious (Frankl, 1969, 1986). When it is blocked or repressed, one experiences existential vacuum or neurosis. According to Fabry (1994), the noetic dimension or the human spirit contains love, the will to meaning, purpose, creativity, conscience, the capacity for choice, responsibility, sense of humour etc. According to Frankl (1978), an individual can enjoy finite freedom. Our existence is influenced by instincts, inherited disposition and environment. Therefore, he is not free from conditions. But the conditions do not completely constrain him; he is free to take stand about them. Freedom of will is possible because of the human capacity for self-distancing or self-detachment. Hence, he is capable of choosing his attitude toward himself (Frankl, 1969). Again, responsibility follows freedom. As per Fabry (1994), responsibility without freedom is tyranny, and freedom without responsibility leads to anarchy, which in turn may bring forth boredom, anxiety, and neurosis. The will to meaning is the basic striving of man to find meaning and purpose (Frankl, 1969). Because of the human capacity to transcend one's immediate circumstances, the will to meaning is possible. Self-transcendence often makes use of the power of imagination and optimism. Self-transcendence is essential for finding happiness, which is not the end, but the by-product of trying to forget oneself. Every meaning is unique to each person, and each one has to discover the meaning of each particular situation. We can discover this meaning in life in three different ways: by creating a work or doing a deed; by experiencing something or encountering someone; and by the attitude we take towards unavoidable suffering (Frankl, 1984). However, suffering without meaning leads to despair. Search for meaning is more likely to be occasioned by three negative facets of human existence: pain, guilt and death (Frankl, 1967, 1984). Pain refers to human suffering; guilt refers to the awareness of our fallibility and death refers to our awareness of the transmission of life. These negative experiences make us more aware of our needs for meaning and spiritual aspiration. Neuroses are more likely to originate from our attempt to obscure the reality of pain, guilt and death as existential facts (Frankl, 1967, 1984).

## II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Physical education takes a crucial role in general education. However, a few numbers of studies are there to probe into the impact of physical education on various psychosocial and moral developments. Again, there is much theoretical speculation and empirical research about the effect of physical education on somatic and mental developmental; but the impact physical education on spiritual development has yet to be probed into. So, the present study is launched to ascertain the impact of physical education on the experience of purpose in life as it is in "logotherapy" of Viktor Frankl.

## III. METHOD

The present study was longitudinal in nature. It was carried out through experimental research design. The details regarding sample, tools, procedure of data collection and statistical technique are reported as under :-

**Sample** – Colleges and University Departments, imparting B.P.Ed. course in West Bengal were our source of sample. Total sample size of the present study was 200 (Male=160 and Female=40). Stratified Random Sampling Technique was adopted in drawing sample. Only Bengali speaking subjects were taken. The mean and S.D. of the ages of the B.P.Ed. students were 24.07 and 2.095.

**Tools** – To measure the meaning in life, experienced by the prospective teachers, the Purpose in Life Test (PIL) of Crumbaugh and Maholick (1968) was selected. The reason for selection of this test was that it is specifically designed to measure Viktor Frankl's concept of existential vacuum and noogenic neurosis and this test has also been widely used to measure the concept of meaning in life in India and abroad (Doerris, 1970; Mohanty, 1990; Lalitha et al, 2005). The PIL scale consists of three parts: Part-A has 20 scaled Likert type sentences stems each with 7 response alternatives ranging from 1 (low purpose) to 7 (high purpose). Descriptive terms are used as anchors for the extreme points 1 and 7, and position No. 4 is considered as neutral. There are 11 non-reversed and 9 reversed keyed items. Part-B has 13 sentence completion items and, Part-C requires writing of a paragraph on personal aims, ambitions and goals. Part-A is the only one, which is treated quantitatively and has been used in most of the research endeavours in this field to date. Part-B and Part-C are not scored and little consideration is put to those in both the manual of the test and published research. In the present study also only the part-A of the test was used.

**Procedure of Data Collection** – "Purpose in Life Scale" was administered on the subjects in three different phases during the academic session 2006 – 07 and the responses were scored as per scoring procedure, prescribed in the manual. The tool was administered in the following three phases – a) In the first phase, the test was administered at the beginning of the B.P.Ed. course (in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of July, 2006); b) In the second phase the same test was administered in the middle of the course (3<sup>rd</sup> week of November, 2006); and c) In the final phase, the same test was administered at the completion of the course (1<sup>st</sup> week of April, 2007, before study leave).

**Statistical Analysis** – Paired Samples "t" - test was done with the help of SPSS 13.0 software.

## IV. RESULT

Result of the present investigation is furnished in the following tables. Table –1 exhibits that the mean of the PIL scores in the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of testing was 101.74, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of testing was 104.06 and in the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of testing was 109.63. From Table – 2 it is observed that the coefficients correlations between the PIL scores in the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of testing was 0.693, between the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of testing was 0.965 and between the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of testing was 0.684. All correlations were highly (statistically) significant. From Table – 3 it is observed that the mean of the PIL scores of the B.P.Ed. students increased significantly as the course was advanced towards the completion.

## V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The scores obtained by a group or an individual in a psychological measurement become meaningful only with reference to norms of the tool, if available. The PIL score obtained in the present study therefore can also be better interpreted in comparison with the results obtained in other studies with the PIL test.

From the review of result presented in table – 4, however, the prospective teachers of the present study are almost equal in their level of meaning in life with teachers of Kolkata (Misra, 1986 reported in Lalitha et al, (2005)), Teacher educators of Orissa (Mohanty, 1990) and Teacher Trainees (Prospective Teachers) of Andhra Pradesh (Lalitha et al, 2005).

The mean PIL score is rather low in all cases. Existential vacuum or loss of meaning in life is usually reflected through the low PIL score. The relationship between meaninglessness or scores on the lower end of the continuum of the purpose in life test and unsuccessful living has been validated in studies that have shown strong relationship between low purpose/meaning in life scores and deviant behaviour such as psychiatric disorder, delinquency, drug addiction and alcoholism. Psychiatric patients tend to score significantly lower on the meaning in life than non-patient population (Crumbaugh and Maholick, 1964, 1969; Yarnell, 1971).

Frankl's existential vacuum is associated with the loss traditional values and familial relationships in modern western society. Indians because of their strong traditional values and familial support until late-adulthood are expected to experience less degree of existential anxiety and scores higher in PIL when compared to their western counterparts. In this connection, Mohanty (1990) feels that the low PIL scores of the Indian individuals are surprising and should be a cause of serious concern.

As they are hostel dwellers, physical education students (i.e. the prospective physical education teachers of our country) lead a strict routine in life in course of taking their training. Above all, they have to perform different physical activities along with physical education training. Therefore, they enjoy freedom with much responsibility. These circumstances may provide many

clues in quest of purpose in life and consequently, may bring forth life satisfaction. Life satisfaction is closely related to the quality of life (Muthny et. al., 1990; Fountoulakis et al, 1997). Health and physical fitness are found to be two of the factors having a greater impact on life satisfaction (Beck, 1982; Garnet, 1982). The older person who have active lifestyles and participate in kinetic and non-demanding physical activities have shown higher level of mood state and life satisfaction, improvement in their mental and physical condition, and in general they seem to enjoy longer periods of independence and happier lives (Streib, G. & Schneider, 1971; Mahon & Searle,

1994). Recreational activities positively influence the psychological well-being and increase life satisfaction as well (Morris, 1996).

Physical education may put fuel to not only somatic development but mental as well as spiritual development too. To be ascertained enough about the impact of physical education on psychological wellbeing much rigorous probing should be launched with exhaustive number of variables

**Table – 1: Result of Paired Samples Statistics of PIL Scores of Different Phases of Study**

Variable		Mean	N	$\sigma$
Pair 1	PIL <sub>1</sub>	101.74	200	12.767
	PIL <sub>2</sub>	104.06	200	13.082
Pair 2	PIL <sub>2</sub>	104.06	200	13.082
	PIL <sub>3</sub>	109.63	200	12.325
Pair 3	PIL <sub>1</sub>	101.74	200	12.767
	PIL <sub>3</sub>	109.63	200	12.325

**Table – 2: Result of Paired Samples Correlations among PIL Scores of Different Phases of Study**

Variable		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	PIL <sub>1</sub> & PIL <sub>2</sub>	200	0.693	0.000
Pair 2	PIL <sub>2</sub> & PIL <sub>3</sub>	200	0.965	0.000
Pair 3	PIL <sub>1</sub> & PIL <sub>3</sub>	200	0.684	0.000

**Table – 3: Result of Paired Samples Test among PIL Scores of Different Phases of Study**

Variable		Paired Differences			t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean			
Pair 1	PIL <sub>1</sub> - PIL <sub>2</sub>	-2.320	10.125	0.716	-3.240	199	0.001
Pair 2	PIL <sub>2</sub> - PIL <sub>3</sub>	-5.565	3.463	0.245	-22.723	199	0.000
Pair 3	PIL <sub>1</sub> - PIL <sub>3</sub>	-7.885	9.988	0.706	-11.165	199	0.000

**Table – 4: The mean of PIL scores in different studies**

Studies	Nature of Sample	Mean PIL Score	
Studies Abroad	Crumbaugh and Maholick (1964)	119.00	
	Crumbaugh and Maholick (1969)	112.42	
	Doerris (1970)	Low participating Students	100.45
		High participating Students	106.10
	Crandal and Rasmussen (1975)	Not known	108.89
	Ruffin (1982) reported in Lalitha et al, (2005)	Not known	113.05
		Mehta (1982) reported in Lalitha et al, (2005)	113.64
Misra (1986) reported in Lalitha et al, (2005)		100.86	

Indian Studies	Mohanty(1990)	Teacher educators of Orissa	97.39
	Lalitha et al, (2005)	Teacher Trainees of A. P.	99.41
	Adhikari and Chattopadhyay (2005)	Prospective physical-education-teachers of W.B.	103.73
		Prospective general-education-teachers of W.B.	92.67
Present Study	In the 1 <sup>st</sup> phase of testing	101.74	
	In the 2 <sup>nd</sup> phase of testing	104.06	
	In the 3 <sup>rd</sup> phase of testing	109.63	

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