

The Study of Physical Activity, Lesson Context and Teachers' Behaviour During Preschool Classroom Sessions in Balangoda Education Zonal, Sri Lanka

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Physical Activity (PA) is important for children's growth, and development and for their current and future health. This study aimed to assess the PA levels of pre-school children during structured PE lessons and evaluate the impact of selected characteristics. (e.g., Physical Activity, Lesson Context (LC), Teacher Behavior (TB)) Trained observers used the SOFIT (System for Observing Fitness Instruction Time) manual to assess one structured PE lesson taught by 4 different teachers. Thirty (n=30) pre-school children in 4 selected preschools were observed on 4 days. Under the PA five components (lying down, sitting, standing, walking, vigorous) are included. Under the LC, six components (general content, knowledge content, fitness, skill practice, game play, and others) are included, and TB's three components (interaction in PE classroom, Outclass PE, and none-of-class PE). All activities should be above 80%, according to the SOFIT guideline. However, no activity is 80% or higher. The findings of the t-test showed that the maximal PA level stayed at 33.55% of the standing activity. The highest LC level, 79.24%, is owned by management. The highest percentage of TB is 72.63% and is associated with extracurricular PE. PE in preschools can be verified using the SOFIT handbook if the end result of the data collected is 80% or higher. It was confirmed that no pre-school has reached the 80% level. Thus, it was confirmed that PE is not systematic in pre-schools in the Sri Lankan system. Pre-schools should have a more positive PE requirement schedule. The foundation of children's futures may be strengthened.

Keywords: Lesson Context, Physical Activity, Pre-School, SOFIT manual