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# Italian Renaissance Educators and Their Views on Physical Education

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The scope of this paper is to present the views of physical education held by Vergerio, Vegio, Vittorino da Feltre and other renowned Italian Renaissance educators.

It is generally agreed that the Italian Renaissance ushered in the modern era. The major contribution of this period was the rediscovery of man as an entity possessing a will of his own and a reason capable of directing his own actions. This was a refutation of the Middle Ages' contention that man's role in this world was to prepare for the eternal life. The people of the Renaissance concerned themselves instead with the here and now, with the development of all the means at their disposal for the enjoyment of life in its many aspects.

Education, which had been traditionally charged with providing the skills necessary for the improvement of life in a given society, had to change to become relevant to the new needs of the Renaissance. The citizens of this period wanted an education which would relate to the physical, intellectual, and spiritual aspect of man. The education of the physical dimension took its place, as equal among equals, as a necessary experience for the growing child.

As a result of the investigation, the following conclusions were reached:

The contributions of physical education embraced the total individual and were not limited to the physical aspect.

There was a concurrence of opinions among theorists and teachers on the proper function of the physical education.

Harmony was the guiding principle of physical education, especially in the cultivation of the physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions of man.

The concept of physical education reintroduced by the Italian Renaissance had deep roots in the Greco-Roman past.