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An Empirical Study about the Importance of Teachers' Educational Beliefs and Acculturation Attitudes for the Implementation of Intercultural Education in Physical Education

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Abstract

Previous research suggests that teachers' behaviour is influenced by educational beliefs and attitudes. This article focuses on two explorative studies among 99 and 18 physical education teachers, and aims to find out if educational beliefs and acculturation attitudes influence teachers' willingness and behaviour to promote students' intercultural competence through physical education lessons. The research design is based on a mixed-method approach. By interlocking quantitative and qualitative data, a mismatch between the expressed willingness and the real behaviour is uncovered. Educational beliefs influence the willingness but not the behaviour, whereas acculturation attitudes do not have any significant influence on the expressed willingness or on the behaviour. The impact depends on the accessibility of the namely constructs that is attained by reflection. Therefore, teacher education must be more than the conveyance of knowledge and techniques but provides teachers with strategies to reflect on their belief systems and their implication on teaching.

Key words: intercultural education, physical education, teacher education.

Introduction

In 1996, the Standing Conference of Ministers in Education in Germany called for a fundamental change of perspectives in its recommendation on the topic of "intercultural education in school" because the educational system will have to deal increasingly with the perception and acceptance of cultural diversity. Based on the German micro-census of 2009, 36,6% of 10- to 15-year-old adolescents have migration background; this means that at least one of their parents is not born in Germany or the adolescents have their own migration experiences. Therefore, intercultural education should be anchored as cross-curricular educational mission of school. Intercultural competence is considered as a key qualification for all children and adolescents growing up in a plural society, and aims at constructive cooperation with one another. The realization of this claim presupposes intercultural competence of teachers.

However, using the term *intercultural competence* is not as clear as it seems to be. In literature we find two concepts of intercultural competence. The one concept understands intercultural competence as a socio-technical skill [e.g. 9]. In this understanding, specific cultural trainings want to equip their participants with knowledge about a specific cultural group and with "technical skills" for the constructive handling with a specific cultural group. This concept of intercultural competence attracts criticism in recent years: there is the risk that education will become "culturalized by highlighting inter-group differences to the detriment of intra-group and inter-individual differences" [1, p. 476]. The individual is reduced to his/ her cultural membership. In this way, an artifact is produced, which justifies culturalist analyses. The risk of stereotypes, racism, and discrimination increases. The complexity of interethnic relations is neglected, and the dynamic development processes within cultures is not taken into account. The interference with factors, such as

gender, class, and sexuality, is ignored. If culture is not an objective fact but a social construction, intercultural competence is more than specific cultural knowledge and technical skills. This leads to the second concept of intercultural competence that requires the capacity to think in terms of conjectures and hypotheses. Conflicts between a teacher and a student with migration background can be but not necessarily linked to cultural or religious reasons. Other reasons should be taken into account. Intercultural competence in this understanding means the capacity of "heeding and acknowledging (multi) affiliations and life contexts, of reflecting migration contexts and dismantling discriminating structures, without reproducing imputations or determinations" [6, p. 229]. Intercultural competence in this understanding is chiefly composed of two facets: first, the ability to cope constructively with differences, cultural diversity, and the resulting uncertainties for pedagogic interaction, as well as the specialist-didactic methodological competence to initiate intercultural learning within classes with the concrete aim of promoting intercultural competence of children and youth [8, p. 305].

Performance Indicators of Intercultural Competence

By analogy to the theoretical distinction between linguistic competence and linguistic performance, between having the knowledge and handling according to this, it is necessary to distinguish between intercultural competence and intercultural performance. A teacher can have the required knowledge and skills, but due to individual factors, structural parameters, and personal attitudes, the teacher is not willed or even not able to apply them to the given situation. These transforming structures can be called performance indicators.

According to research results, educational beliefs and attitudes seem to have an important impact on teachers' behaviour. A considerable amount of research on teachers' decision making and information processing has led to the acceptance of the idea that teachers' ways of thinking and understanding are vital components of their practice.

Throughout his study, J. Nespors [11] provides a theoretically grounded model of belief systems that can serve as a theoretical framework for systematic and comparative investigations. J. Nespors found out that beliefs influence how or whether one acquired knowledge and how one might be inclined to use it. There are at least three distinctions: first is the possession of knowledge, second is the access to that knowledge, and third is the willingness to access that knowledge. P. Ernest [5] pointed out that two teachers may have similar knowledge but teach in different ways because of their different educational beliefs. This result leads to a differentiation between belief and knowledge: belief is based on evaluation and judgment, whereas knowledge is based on objective fact [12]. Teachers' beliefs act as filters and affect the way in which they perceive their current teaching situation and the way in which they can accommodate new teaching goals.

When clusters of beliefs are organized around an object or situation and predisposed to action, this holistic organization becomes an attitude [13]. Acculturation attitudes are a belief-cluster around the topic "Interculturality". They reflect the idea about how the different cultural groups in a plural society should interact; they reflect the goal of an acculturation process. In an empirical study, J.W. Berry et al. [2] identified five dimensions of acculturation attitudes: assimilation, separation, segregation, integration, and marginality. Assimilation expects migrants relinquishing cultural identity and moving into larger society, whereas integration implies the maintenance of cultural integrity as well as the movement to become an integral part of a larger societal framework. The result is a multicultural society where the diversity of each cultural group is valued. Segregation and separation can be summarized as rejection. The cultural integrity is preserved, and there is no aspiration for interactions with the other cultural groups in the society. If the majority pursues the goal of cultural isolation and keeps the minority groups at distance, it is the case of segregation, which can be a consequence of unfulfilled assimilation expectancies, whereas separation is the (self-chosen) withdrawal of the minority groups that can be a result of experienced assimilation

stress. The last option is marginality, in which groups are out of cultural and psychological contact as well with their traditional culture as with the larger society. R. van Dick et al. [4] developed a questionnaire for teachers according to Berry’s concept and, in an empirical study, distinguished three types following either assimilation or integration or segregation. The scales of assimilation and the scale of segregation are highly positively correlated, whereas the scale of integration correlates highly negatively with the scale of assimilation and with the scale of segregation. U. Wagner et al. [18] showed empirically that acculturation attitudes influence teachers’ behaviour in intercultural problem situations. The more teachers prefer integration as an acculturation goal, the less they will react with a punishment (extra exercise or expulsion from school) in intercultural problem situations like “Muslim girl wears a headscarf” or “Brawl between foreign national and German students”.

Purpose of the Presented Studies

Based on these theoretical works and empirical studies, the purpose of the presented studies is to measure the impact of educational beliefs and acculturation attitudes on the willingness of physical education teachers to implement a new educational mission, the promotion of intercultural competence of children and youth through their physical education lesson, and the impact on the “real” implementation. The presented studies focus on trained teachers and use a mixed-method approach. By comparing the willingness and the real implementation, a differentiated perspective on the impact of educational beliefs and acculturation attitudes on willingness and behaviour is gained. Using the quantitative and qualitative approach at the same time compensate the weakness of the respective method.

Method

The research design consists of two separate explorative studies among physical education teachers. The first study (Study 1) is a quantitative questionnaire study among ninety-nine physical education teachers who

participated in different continuing education courses for sport practice, not for intercultural learning through sport. The purpose of this study was to measure the impact of educational beliefs and acculturation attitudes on the willingness of physical education teachers to implement the promotion of intercultural competence of children and youth in their physical education lesson. The second study (Study 2) is a qualitative-quantitative study among eighteen physical education teachers who had participated in a continuing education course about intercultural learning through sport, moderated by the author. Four weeks after the continuing education course, the author conducted an interview with every participant to know if the teachers have already implemented the contents of the education course in their physical education lessons and, if so, what were their experiences and, if not, why have they not already implemented the contents. To prevent socially desired responses, the teachers had to describe very exactly what they have done and what they have not done, what were the aims of the lessons, where have been problems, and what should be improved in next lessons. The same questionnaire as used in Study 1 was filled out by the participants before and after the continuing education course. Thereby, the longitudinal development of the participants concerning specific facets of intercultural competence and educational beliefs as well as acculturation attitudes was possible. The focus of this article is not the longitudinal study [see 8] but the impact of educational beliefs and acculturation attitudes on the “real” implementation of the promotion of intercultural competence of children and youth. Therefore, a comparison between Study 1 and Study 2 is possible as well as through the qualitative part of Study 2 a more differentiated perspective on the preconditions of the implementation of new pedagogical missions is gained.

Measures—Studies 1 and 2

The used questionnaire for Studies 1 and 2 is divided into three parts. The first part covers personal details of the physical education teachers (sex, age, nationality, migration background, stay abroad, length of service,

school subjects, school form, academic education in physical education, own physical activities, and participation on continuing courses about intercultural learning). The second part, "Attitudes on Interculturality", includes the items of the educational beliefs about intercultural learning at school and in P.E. lessons, as well as acculturation attitudes. The items of the educational beliefs and of acculturation attitudes are listed alternately. The teachers could rate the different items on a four-stage scale (totally agree (3), rather agree (2), rather disagree (1), and totally disagree (0)). The items of the acculturation attitudes are completely taken out of the empirically validated acculturation scale of R. van Dick et al. [4]. In general, there are 13 items of acculturation attitudes that represent the scales of pluralistic integration, assimilation, and segregation. The items of the educational beliefs are taken out of the survey of L. Sercu [14]. The items, originally developed for foreign language teachers, were adapted to the context of physical education and translated from English into German. There are a total of 11 items of educational beliefs. The third part of the questionnaire, "Sport and Interculturality", contains stereotypes of sport and integration and knowledge about the link between sport and cultural influences. The purpose of these items is to holistically cover the comprehension of the complex interconnection of sport, integration, and cultural influences, and not to test singular components of knowledge. To avoid conceptual misunderstandings, in the preliminary sentences to the questionnaire intercultural learning was defined as the planned delivery of educational situations in which pupils are encouraged to become aware of their own perceptions and actions and those of someone of a foreign background. This questionnaire was distributed to the participants of Study 1 and Study 2. The physical education teachers of Study 2 participated additionally on an interview in which they talked about their experiences with the implementation of intercultural learning in their P.E. lessons. These interviews were conducted 4 to 6 weeks after the formation course about intercultural learning in physical education and lasted for 10 to 40 minutes. Therefore, an interlocking of qualitative and quantitative data is

possible. Consequently, the research design can be considered as a mixed-method design [16].

Data Analysis Study 1

As there will be no convincing result on single item level, a factor analysis of the items of the educational beliefs and of the items of the acculturation attitudes were applied. A principal component analysis with Varimax rotation was chosen. The empirically identified factors were summed up to independent scales to test the hypothesis referring to the impact of educational beliefs and acculturation attitudes on the willingness to promote intercultural competence of children and youth through P.E. lessons.

For testing the hypothesis of the educational beliefs and their link with the willingness to promote intercultural competence of youth through P.E. lessons, two-sided correlations (Pearson's correlation coefficient) are applied. The link of acculturation attitudes with willingness is tested in linear regression equations. The independent scales of the acculturation attitudes are the predictor variables, and the item "Through my physical education lessons, I would like to promote intercultural competence of children and youth" is the response variable. As attitudes can be considered as more stable than beliefs, it is legitimate to test the correlations in the form of a regression equation. Beliefs can be changed more easily by a positive experience with intercultural learning processes so that reciprocal influences are supposed.

Data Analysis Study 2

The scales, identified in Study 1, were used for the testing of the differences between physical education teachers who implemented intercultural learning in their P.E. lessons and those who did not. "Implemented" means that the P.E. teachers performed the contents that have been shown in the teacher formation course about intercultural learning through sport or that they have developed own contents for intercultural learning. A qualitative content analysis in accordance to Ph. Mayring [11] was conducted for the qualitative data of the interviews.

Results–Study 1

Factor Analysis

Three factors could be identified for the educational beliefs, presented in table 1. The total variance is 58.1%. All factors have an eigenvalue greater than 1. The first factor expresses the conviction that intercultural education at school has an effect on the behaviour of young people and that it is best

achieved through cross-curricular methods. The second factor reflects a skeptical approach on intercultural education: intercultural education is only necessary if children with migration background attend the school or the class. The third factor unifies the items that deny the physical education’s contribution to intercultural education and stress that physical education is primarily a sport-motor application.

Table 1. Factors of the educational beliefs

factor 1		factor 2		factor 3	
item	loading	item	Loading	item	loading
Intercultural education can ideally be delivered via cross-curricular methods.	.563	Intercultural education should only be delivered if the school or class is attended by children or young people of immigrant background.	.813	It is impossible to combine physical education with intercultural education.	.659
The more knowledge children and young people have about other cultures, the more tolerant they become.	.660	Intercultural education only intensifies the existing stereotypes among children and young people.	.594	Due to the small number of physical education lessons, the time should be mainly spent on the promotion of motor skills.	.822
It is not possible for children and young people to acquire intercultural competence in school	-.715	Intercultural education is not important for schools and classes in which there are hardly any children or young people of an immigrant background or none at all.	-.812		
All subjects in school should contribute equally to the promotion of cross-cultural awareness among children and young people.	.772				

The items of the acculturation attitudes formed also three factors (table 2) with an eigenvalue of greater than 1. These factors explain 50.4% of the total variance.

Although two variables were extracted, due to statistical reasons, the given factor structure reflects in term of contents the factors identified by R. van Dick et al. [4]. The first factor represents segregation; the second factor, assimilation (of the minorities on the majority); and the third factor, a pluralistic understanding of integration.

Correlations of Educational Beliefs with Willingness

The first factor that represents the belief that intercultural education at school is effective and that it is the best achieved through cross-curricular methods is positively high significantly correlated with the willingness to promote intercultural competence of students through P.E. lessons ($r = .52, p < .01$). The second factor, which expresses a skeptical approach to intercultural education and the conviction that intercultural education is only necessary if children with migration background attend the

school, correlates negatively high significantly with the willingness ($r = -.34$, $p < .01$). The third factor – P.E. lessons have primarily a sport-motor application and cannot contribute to intercultural education – does not show any significant correlation ($r = -.19$, $p = .06$).

Regression Equations: The impact of acculturation attitudes on willingness

None of the three factors, segregation ($r = -.14$, $p = .19$), pluralistic integration ($r = .12$, $p = .10$), and assimilation ($r = .01$; $p = .10$) have a significant impact on the willingness to promote intercultural competence of students through

P.E. lessons. The regression coefficient of the equation assimilation points even into the theoretically not expected direction.

Results – Study 2

The P.E. teachers who implemented the demonstrated contents of the continuing education course in their P.E. lessons under the perspective of intercultural learning ($n = 8$) and those who did not (yet) ($n = 7$) do not differ significantly in the scales of the educational beliefs or in the scales of the acculturation attitudes (Table 3).

Table 2. Factors of the acculturation attitudes

factor 1		factor 2		factor 3	
item	loading	item	loading	item	loading
Children of different ethnic backgrounds should attend separate schools.	.718	Immigrants should adapt to the German culture.	.782	All ethnic groups in Germany should maintain their own culture.	.659
If members of different ethnic groups want to retain their culture, then they should remain among themselves.	.592	Teachers should make sure that students of different ethnic backgrounds exclusively speak German during school breaks.	.733	Coexistence of distinct ethnic groups in Germany would be easier if the members of the varying groups had the opportunity to retain their own way of life.	.766
The fact that there are many different ethnic groups in Germany makes it difficult to solve problems.	.589	People immigrating to Germany should raise their children so that they predominantly use the German language.	.752	A society with a large number of ethnic groups is more likely to cope with emerging problems.	.431
Members of different ethnic groups should live separately in all areas of life to avoid conflicts between the groups.	.632				

Table 3. Means in the scales of the educational beliefs and acculturation attitudes between P.E. teachers who implemented intercultural learning in their P.E. lessons and those who did not

Scale	Contents implemented (mean)	Contents not implemented (mean)
EB 1: Intercultural education at school is effective and best achieved through cross-curricular methods.	10.29	9.86
EB 2: Skepticism about the effectiveness of intercultural education; it is only necessary if children with migration background attend the school.	0.86	1.43
EB 3: P.E. lessons have primarily a sport- motor application; these cannot contribute to intercultural education.	1.57	1.29
Segregation	2.57	3.14
Assimilation	6.00	5.00
Pluralistic integration	5.00	4.67

The performance indicators in Study 1 that proved to be significant, at least theoretically compliant predictors for the willingness to promote intercultural competence of children and youth through P.E. lessons, do not explain in Study 2 why P.E. teachers implemented the demonstrated contents in their P.E. lessons or did otherwise. These results emphasize that the explanation of willingness and the real performance have to be treated separately. There must be other reasons or obstacles that hinder P.E. teachers to implement the contents in their P.E. lessons. These obstacles can be developed in the qualitative analysis of the data: structural and school organizational reasons as well as personal problems like burnout symptoms are in the teachers’ point of view responsible for the nonimplementation of the demonstrated contents.

Integrative Discussion

There are significant correlations between the educational beliefs and the willingness of the P.E. teachers to promote students’ intercultural competence through P.E. lessons. This means that the more the P.E. teachers are convinced that intercultural education at school is effective, the more they express the willingness to promote intercultural competence of students—and the other way around. The less they have a skeptical approach to intercultural education, the more they express their willingness—and vice versa. The third factor—P.E. has primarily a sport-motor application—misses with $p = .06$ just the significance level of $p < .05$. One of the interpretations could be that different empirical studies prove that children have less sport-motor competences [e.g., 15] and that child obesity is growing [e.g., 10] along with the risk of cardiovascular diseases or diabetes. It seems as if the P.E. teachers are (politically) forced to legitimate P.E. lessons by underlining primarily the sport-motor application that can only be accomplished by the P.E. lessons. The regression equations of the acculturation attitudes do not show any significant implications on the willingness of the P.E. teachers but on the first and second factor points in the theoretically

expected direction. The regression coefficient of the equation assimilation points into an unexpected direction. This discrepancy can be explained by a weakness of the used questionnaire. Three items load on the factor assimilation. Two items stress that migrants should master the German language. Studies among teachers show that the ability to speak German corresponds to school success and to a satisfied future. For this reason, the teachers follow the monolingual habit identified by I. Gogolin [7]: only German is allowed at school (during lessons and breaks). For further research, the items of assimilation should finally cover more dimensions than only the linguistic assimilation.

The results of Study 2 expose that even if teachers evaluate a continuing education course as successful, it cannot automatically be expected that they implement the contents in their lessons. However, the reasons are not an insufficient development of needed competence or an insufficient development of performance indicators like educational beliefs or acculturation attitudes as the results of the longitudinal study show [8]. The quantitative analysis shows that there is no significant difference between P.E. teachers having implemented the contents and those not having implemented the contents concerning the scales of educational beliefs and acculturation attitudes. Both groups are characterized by a same beneficial level of the performance indicators. Both groups express in equal measure the willingness to promote intercultural competence of children and youth in their P.E. lessons. This means that there can be a self-reported willingness to implement intercultural learning in P.E. lessons; the performance indicators can have a beneficial level, but from the teachers’ point of view, school organizational as well as personal problems prevent the implication. We have to keep in mind that these are self-reported reasons that can have the character of excuses or justifications.

This means educational beliefs are important for the willingness to behave in a certain way, but they have to be seen in the complex context of the individual perception and

of the organizational and social environment. It is necessary to sensitize teachers for the perception of these structures and to identify if these are real problems or only “pleaded” reasons. Several case studies in mathematics [3, 17] support this argumentation to integrate educational beliefs in the context of the social and institutional organization. These case studies have shown that there can be a great disparity between a teacher’s espoused model of teaching and the actual practice in classroom. Following the argumentation of P. Ernest [5], this mismatch can be explained with several reasons. With a questionnaire study, it is not possible to measure the depth of the espoused beliefs or the extent to which the beliefs are integrated with other knowledge and beliefs. It is only possible to measure the status quo of the beliefs but not their network. As beliefs and attitudes are unconscious structures for the teachers, only accessible through reflecting processes, it is possible that the existing attitudes and beliefs are not (yet) sufficiently accessible for the reflection of behaviour. This reason in combination with the embedding of action in a social and institutional context explains why teachers can have a beneficial shaping of performance indicators, but because of perceived organizational and social expectancies and perceived structural and organizational conditions, they do not behave in the theoretically expected way.

Conclusion

The original question of the presented studies was if educational beliefs and acculturation attitudes can explain teachers’ willingness to implement a new pedagogical mission in their lessons as well as the “real” behaviour. The results underline that the presented performance indicators, at least educational beliefs, have a significant impact on the expressed willingness to promote intercultural competence of children and youth through P.E. lessons. Acculturation attitudes, as stable belief cluster around the topic “Immigration and Interculturality”, seem not to have any impact on the willingness to implement a pedagogical mission which pursues the preparation of children and youth for a

multicultural society. This result can be referred to the weakness of the measure instrument, surely for the construction of the scale assimilation. For future research, this scale should be redeveloped. Both performance indicators seem not to have any impact on the “real” behaviour of the P.E. teachers. There is no difference in the scales of educational beliefs and of acculturation attitudes between P.E. teachers having implemented intercultural learning in their P.E. lessons and those who have not (yet). Both groups express that they are willing to do it, but those who did not introduce structural, organizational, and personal reasons that prevent the realization in their point of view. The results support the existing theoretical assumptions and empirical results. There can be a mismatch between expressed willingness and the real behaviour. Nevertheless, these explorative studies elaborate the research field with the result that teachers’ educational beliefs and attitudes must be seen in the organizational context and social environment. The results have implications on the conception of teacher education programs and continuing teacher education. First at all, teacher education must be more than the conveyance of knowledge and techniques. The goal of teacher education cannot be to indoctrinate or train teachers to behave in prescribed ways but to sensitize them for their own beliefs and attitudes. Teachers must learn to identify how their own beliefs may impede their ability to teach equitably. The design of courses needs to consider the development of teachers’ knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes, both at a theoretical and practical level and at an individual level and an organizational level. As it seems so that the impact of educational beliefs and attitudes on real behaviour depends on the accessibility of the constructs and that this accessibility is connected to reflection about them and about the performed behaviour, one of the goal of teacher education must be to educate teachers to reflect about their teaching, to give them strategies to reflect about their belief system and their implication on their teaching. Teachers must learn to use their knowledge base to provide the grounds for choices and actions, with the

principles and evidence that underlie the choices teachers make.

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The Physical Education Profession in Canada

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Abstract

This paper reports on the state of the physical education profession in Canada. Professional physical educators have long been integral staff members in both the public and private education systems as well as in the teacher education programs within the universities. Despite the absence of a national policy to which provinces and territories are accountable, physical educators in Canada are increasingly better prepared due, in part, to strict requirements for enrolment into pre-service teacher education programs and the presence of comprehensive training programs for in-service teachers. The physical education profession in Canada has undergone a remarkable transformation since the mid-1800s; yet, several issues and challenges in the physical education profession remain and could benefit from innovations and future research.

Keywords: Physical education, pre-service, in-service, teacher education, professional qualification, Canada.

Introduction

Certification programs for physical education teachers are designed to empower and equip prospective physical educators with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to effectively meet their professional responsibilities. These educators, their certification and professional development programs, and the regional and national policy-making organizations reflect values or standards for quality teaching that can vary widely across districts, provinces, territories, and nations. The intent of this paper is to report the spectrum and scope of topics relevant to the profession of teaching physical education (PE) in Canada while exemplifying several issues using the province of Ontario.

An Overview of the Physical Education Profession in Canada

Founded in 1867 as primarily a nation of immigrants, Canada now consists of ten provinces and three territories. Ontario is the largest province, is situated in central Canada, and inhabits one-third of the population of Canada. Due to the historical relationships, Western Europe (especially the United Kingdom and

France) and the United States had a profound effect on both Canadian education and PE. As early as 1852, physical training was offered in Canadian teacher education schools, yet, the first school in Canada to solely train physical education (PE) teachers was established in Hamilton, Ontario in 1889 [10].

PE (as with education) in Canada is under provincial/territorial rather than national authority so it differs between each province/territory. In other words, the PE curriculum of each province and territory tends to be similar philosophically yet relatively different conceptually and structurally. J. Wright [38] reports that the PE curricula of the three territories generally follow that of two provinces – the Northwest Territory and Nunavut adhere to the Alberta PE curriculum while the Yukon Territory follows that of British Columbia). Meanwhile, except for the provinces of Manitoba, Ontario, and Prince Edward Island, each province and territory has separate curricula for health education and PE [21]. This means that in most of these provinces health and physical education (HPE) are taught in a single curriculum or course. In response to the current health crisis associated with physical inactivity, three provinces (Alberta, British Columbia, and Ontario)

have recently (2005–2008) initiated mandatory 20–30 minutes daily physical activity during instructional or non-instructional time primarily in elementary schools. C. Lu and A. De Lisio [18] report PE scholars' concerns about replacing PE with DPA or transforming physical education classes into physical activity classes and recommend that daily physical activity should be part of a quality daily PE (QDPE) program taught by specialists in all grades, as promoted by the national organization of physical and health professionals of Canada (PHE Canada) since 1988 [31].

An exploration of the Canadian student experience in school PE reveals that about 20% of Canadian children receive daily PE in school, 41% receive one to two classes/days per week, while 10% receive no PE at all. These numbers decrease as students move through the high school grades [32]. Most provinces require or recommend 150 minutes of PE per week at the elementary level, but many schools average fewer than 60 minutes of PE per week [2]. Many elementary schools may have two PE classes per week while at the secondary levels, many provinces require 110 hours or more of PE—approximately an average of 75 minutes per day of PE for a semester in the case of Ontario [38]. From an enrolment standpoint, a much larger proportion of students are taking PE at the elementary level than at the secondary level. This is partially because PE is usually a required subject at the elementary level whereas there are limited or no PE hours/credits mandated in most secondary schools in Canada. In Ontario, many students do not take any HPE courses any more after taking one required HPE credit/course (no fewer than 110 instructional hours) for graduation at the secondary school level (Grade 9–12) [30]. Recently, Manitoba has become the first province in Canada to have mandatory PE in all grades in publicly funded schools [14].

There seems to be two types of teachers providing PE instruction in Canada. *Generalists* are normally classroom teachers with limited to no training in PE whereas *specialists* have more rigorous training in PE either by completing a major (first teachable subject) or minor (second teachable subject) in it as part of their university undergraduate degree. Usually generalists teach

many subjects (e.g., arts, language, math, science, social studies) in elementary schools (primary schools) while the subjects in secondary schools (high schools) tend to be taught by specialists [1]. Manitoba, Quebec, and Prince Edward Island are the sole provinces where PE specialists are hired in a majority of the elementary schools [12]. Further, approximately 65% of the publicly funded schools report that their students regularly receive PE instruction from a specialist [1].

Inadequate and inappropriate preparation has been identified as a major barrier for teaching staff, particularly for those non-PE specialists, to develop and implement quality PE programs in schools [19]. Research studies indicate that students taught by staff trained in PE (PE specialists) spend more time being active, have greater improvements in fitness, and have smaller declines in academic performance [1]. It is important to note that PE specialist teachers in many schools within Canada not only teach PE but also teach other subjects. This may be an issue worth exploring as their expertise may not be fully utilized, especially in elementary schools where there is a shortage of PE specialists. Confounding the issue of a lack of trained PE teachers in public education is the current unfavourable employment landscape for prospective teachers. To illustrate, over the last five years it has been increasingly difficult to obtain full-time or part-time teaching employment due to a number of factors such as declining school enrolments and a diminished number of teacher retirements [34]. Consequently, many newly-licensed teachers have to seek out teaching opportunities in rural, remote, or foreign settings.

Teacher Education in Canada

Theoretically, teacher education consists of at least two aspects: pre-service and in-service. *Pre-service* teacher education refers to the initial education/training provided to teacher candidates (or student teachers, prospective teachers) in the process of obtaining a teaching certificate before teaching independently as an actual teacher in schools. *In-service* teacher education refers to the continuing education offered to actual teachers who pursue further

professional training or education (e.g., professional development workshops, additional qualification, graduate studies).

To enter the teaching profession in Canada, teacher-candidates usually must have no criminal record, must successfully complete Grade 12 and a four-year post-secondary degree, and are to earn a teaching certificate within a specific division/level over one year that is issued by provincial/territorial regulatory agencies [8]. For example, there are three designated teacher education divisions in the province of Ontario: primary/ junior (P/J) division (Grade K–6), junior/inter-mediate (J/I) division (Grade 4–10), and intermediate/senior (I/S) division (Grade 7–12). The teaching certificate is division-specific, which means that a teacher with a P/J teaching certificate may not be qualified to teach other divisions. The pre-service teacher education programs in Canada are usually offered in about 56 publically-funded institutions [11]. These licensing institutions are normally approved and regulated by accreditation bodies in the respective provinces/territories [9]. For example, teacher certification in Ontario is regulated by the Ontario College of Teachers [27]; yet, the certificate can be transferred to other provinces pending the corresponding regulating agency' examinations. Criteria for admitting applicants include having an acceptable academic grades, certain useful working (especially teaching) experiences, evidence of well-written essays or profile statements, and quality references and interviews [6, 11, 28].

There are typically two types of models for the pre-service teacher education programs in Canada: a *consecutive* or after degree teaching degree program which certifies teacher-candidates after they complete a pre-service teacher education program following their completion of a four-year post-secondary degree and a *concurrent* (or *combined*, *joint*) teaching degree for those who jointly earn their four-year university and one-year teaching degree from the same institution [11]. It has been reported that the admission requirements for teacher-certification programs are generally higher in Canada than its counterparts such as the United States and many European countries [15]. A larger proportion of students take consecutive than

concurrent programs in Canada [11]. The pre-service teacher education for consecutive programs in most provinces/territories in Canada runs for three or four semesters except Ontario which is for two semesters [11]. The students in pre-service teacher education programs take a variety of courses and also practice their teaching (e.g., field experience, practica, internship) in schools for the median length of 13–20 weeks. They are mentored primarily by experienced school teachers and/or supervised by university supervisors [11]. In the case of Brock University located in Ontario, teacher candidates are required to have teaching practica for a total of 11 weeks in two (P/J or J/I divisions) or three (I/S division) blocks/periods, in which they may teach HPE at P/J/I divisions, and teach HPE for at least one block in I/S division. Upon the successful completion of these programs, the teacher candidates will earn a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree and may be recommended to the corresponding regulatory agencies for teaching certificates.

Pre-service PE Teacher Education Programs

In a pre-service PE teacher education (PETE) program, generalists usually have limited hours to learn how to teach PE. For example, Brock University pre-service teacher education programs offer a 20-hour course of HPE to P/J or J/I teacher candidates (who mostly are generalists); in contrast, there is a 40-hour course of HPE offered to the I/S division teacher candidates (who mostly are HPE majors). Yet, some of the P/J and J/I division and most I/S division teacher candidates have studied in PE or kinesiology programs as their major (e.g., first teachable subject), minor (e.g., second teachable subject), or specialization. The PE courses are usually taught by university full-time (e.g., professors) and/or part-time instructors (e.g., sessional instructors, exemplary teachers who are retired or seconded from schools).

The content or the scope in the pre-service PETE includes: 1) provincial PE or HPE curriculum; 2) PE planning (e.g., yearly/semester plan, unit plan, lesson plan); 3) PE instruction (e.g., task presentation, feedback, teaching styles, teaching strategies); 4) management in PE (e.g., students, equipment, time, safety);

5) assessment and evaluation in PE; and 6) the specific content of school PE. The specific content includes: 1) fitness, especially health-related fitness (e.g., muscular strength and endurance, cardiovascular endurance, flexibility, body composition); 2) three fundamental skills (e.g., locomotion or traveling, stability, manipulation); 3) four movement concepts (e.g., body awareness, space awareness, effort, relationship); and 4) a variety of physical activities in five major categories (e.g., dance, individual physical activities, games, gymnastics, and alternative environment physical activities such as outdoor and aquatics) [5, 19]. All categories of physical activities are equally important and encouraged, but games are probably ranked the most prominent category. Usually games are taught in five categories: simple games, target games, net/wall games, territory/invasion games, and batting/fielding games. There has been a movement towards using the teaching games for understanding (TGfU) approach in teaching games. In contrast to the traditional approach, the TGfU model stresses the use of tactics (instead of skills) and provides a context for learning skills and strategies in a meaningful way [19].

A number of issues and challenges have been identified in pre-service PETE. For example, there are limited training hours (especially for generalists), limited facilities for PETE courses, and repetitive content in concurrent/combined/joint programs. In addition, the teaching practicum or field experience should start early and be offered more often in concurrent/combined/joint programs [24]. There is also a tension between theory and practice: full-time instructors tend to value theory and have a profound understanding of and articulate the need for both theory and practice, whereas part-time instructors and university students value practice. University students tend to worry about their survival in schools and many part-time instructors have limited theoretical background, and believe hands-on experiences are the primary or only way to learn to be a teacher. Many pre-service PETE students fail to view PE or their pupils holistically by emphasizing the physical dimension while largely ignoring the emotional, social, or cognitive

dimensions. Another concern is the curricular content in the concurrent programs for students majoring in kinesiology as they tend to emphasize courses in the natural sciences at the expense of critical content in the social sciences and humanities [24].

In-service PE Teacher Education Programs

There have been increased calls from around the world for greater commitments to providing professional enhancement opportunities for the in-service teachers throughout their careers, particularly in PE [4]. There are a number of avenues to implement such education: 1) professional development opportunities offered by the school and school districts; 2) continuing teacher education offered in accredited institutions; and 3) graduate studies in universities.

Professional development (professional development) is the provision of career professional growth activities designed to enhance the knowledge, skills, and understandings of teachers in order to enhance their thinking and teaching practice [13]. Professional development can be a single or multi-faceted program (e.g., short courses and workshops offered during or after school, weekend, or during the summer break). It may be conducted by self or experts via face-to-face, video, TV, or online to individual or groups within the school or school district/board, or in partnership with other schools, districts/boards, ministries, professional and subject organizations, and institutions [3, 26, 33]. Although professional development has traditionally been accomplished through employer-initiated workshops or association-sponsored conferences, an increasing variety of organizational structures are emerging in professional development such as learning through practice, on-line networks, professional learning communities, mentoring or peer coaching, literature reflection, and research activities [25, 26]. The content of professional development is usually very practical and hands-on addressing updated issues (e.g., equity, inclusiveness, literacy) or learning new knowledge or skills (e.g., new or revised curriculum, TGfU, healthy and safe schools).

Schools and school districts offer regular professional development workshops throughout the school year. Physical and Health Education Canada provides regular conferences (e.g., workshops, presentations) and its multiple leadership roles (e.g., resources, programs, initiatives) in partnership with the provinces. Each province/territory usually has its professional organization offering regular professional development resources (e.g., in paper, electronic, or online forms), workshops (e.g., face-to-face, online), and conferences, usually collaborating with other related provincial agencies (e.g., ministries of education and health promotion, health education agencies).

Continuing teacher education is usually offered through university formal teacher education programs accredited by the provincial organization in charge of the teacher's certificate of qualification and registration. After being certified, teachers may acquire additional qualifications (e.g., teaching different grade levels or subjects, being qualified for being school principals). Additional qualifications courses and programs provide opportunities to develop greater knowledge and expertise in particular areas of study. The courses are usually offered by senior PE teachers and/or university professors during school breaks (e.g., summer seasons) or through-out the school year. Once a teacher successfully completes the additional qualifications course, the results are submitted to the organization of the teacher's certificate of qualification and registration [7, 29].

Graduate studies are a more systematic and higher level of in-service PETE consisting of master and doctoral studies having a strong theoretical orientation. The applicants should have a bachelor's degree when applying for a master's graduate program and should have a master's degree for a doctoral program with satisfactory grades while meeting other relevant criteria. Most graduate students who are also teachers complete their graduate degrees on a part-time basis as they enrol in courses that are scheduled after working hours. Some teachers choose instead to request a one-year educational leave to complete their graduate degree as full-time students. A graduate student may choose one of the routes to complete the program, course-

based, research projects, and theses. Some universities offer graduate programs that can be mainly completed online in order to accommodate the diverse needs of teachers.

It seems that there is some urgent need to enhance in-service PETE. For example, many PE teachers tend to heavily rely on their tacit knowledge and hands-on experiences to guide their practice. Many of them do not see the relevance of learning theory and undervalue the importance of the development of their theoretical foundation [24]. Also, numerous in-service PE generalists have insufficient knowledge and skills of PE and learn mainly from actually teaching PE in schools [19]. In addition, the lack of knowledge among physical educators is jeopardizing the implementation of quality PE in public schools in Canada [12, 19]. Despite the fact that PE in Canada has moved toward assisting students to develop the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes leading to healthy active lifestyle, many practicing PE teachers still emphasize traditional competitive team sports with a limited variety of physical activities to offer [18, 22].

Relevant Issues

The PE teacher profession in Canada has other issues to resolve. For example, there seems to be a lack of diverse cultural representation amongst teacher-candidates, teachers, and PETE instructors in Canada. This can be easily observed across Canadian institutions; yet Canada remains one of the most diverse nations in the world. Another issue is that PE is not necessarily valued (e.g., time allocation, course setup) in schools and teacher education programs [12, 24]. Many schools choose to reduce PE requirements and time allocated in an effort to increase students' academic performance despite the majority of empirical evidence suggesting that academic performance is improved by engagement in regular physical activity [1]. As one of the responses, physical literacy [23], critical thinking [16], and spirituality [17] have been recently promoted by PE scholars in Canada.

Like many other countries, Canadian PE teachers are usually coaches for interscholastic athletics (e.g., varsity sports), a duty where

remuneration is not typically provided for the service to the school. Many of them experience tremendous pressure and excess workload throughout the school year [20]. On the other hand, some teacher-coaches tend to select elite athletic students for varsity sport teams while allowing these students to dominate PE classes as evident in teacher planning (e.g., selecting seasonal competitive team sports in teachers' lesson plans), implementation (e.g., frequently inviting elite students to demonstrate in teaching), and assessments of students (e.g., focusing on skills). This is precisely why the traditional approach of PE can cause many children to feel disinterested and to withdraw from PE and physical activity. PE in Canada has already been advocated to shift away from a traditional competitive team sports to focus instead on the development of more individual, lifelong, healthy active lifestyles [18, 22, 37].

Continuing teacher education is mandatory in many parts of Canada. For example, teachers in Ontario public schools are required to submit an annual learning plan (except first year new teachers, because of induction or mentoring programs in place) at the beginning of each school year; yet there remains issues with accountability practices and there is a need of more effective follow-up process to evaluate a teacher's progress with goals laid out in such plan. Moreover, many teachers cannot have adequate opportunities to access professional development opportunities due to the constraints of finance, time, and human resources in schools or school boards/districts. Many school boards/districts do not have any PE consultants/supervisors who are supposed to be the leaders and key individuals to provide ongoing PE professional development and support, which undoubtedly undermines the quality of the PE profession.

For PETE in higher education, there is a shortage of full-time professors/instructors,

especially with doctoral degrees specialized in PETE. There is also a need for PETE to respond to the changes (e.g., global perspective, diversity, variety, obesity issues, nutrition, and wellness) in Canadian society. PETE research is not a priority for many funding agencies [24]. In addition, there are two types of ideologies or orientations in PETE programs in the west, performance discourses (emphasis of subjects such as biomechanics, exercise physiology, sports psychology, tests and measurement, sports medicine, fitness training), and participation discourses (emphasis of inclusion, equity, involvement, enjoyment, social justice, cooperation, and movement) [35, 36]. Performance discourses predominately prevail in Canadian PETE programs, but a balance between these two discourses is definitely preferred [24].

Conclusion

Over the past two centuries, the PE profession in Canada has evolved into an integral component of the public education system and of vibrant teacher education programs in the universities. Despite the lack of prescribed national standards, all provinces and territories have established initial and continuing teacher education programs to ensure and enhance the professional qualifications of PE teachers across Canada. In general, the emergence of competent and capable PE professionals in Canada can be attributed to the ever-present comprehensive requirements within teacher education programs at both the pre-service and in-service levels. Despite this trend, persistent issues and challenges remain such as the lack of consistently valued professional development opportunities for in-service teachers and the need for more rigorous and universal entry and exit qualifications for pre-service physical educators in Canada.

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Physical Education and School Sport in Liechtenstein

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Abstract

Sport carries great significance in Liechtenstein and is considered to be an important social and leisure time activity. From the 35'000 residents over a third is engaged in sports clubs. In the context of the lifestyle of the upcoming generation, physical education (PE) at school is of a particular biographical significance in addition to the sports clubs. In the environment of mandatory PE classes the children and youths accumulate not only multi-faceted physical, exercise and social experience; they are at the same time obliged to participate in a minimum amount of weekly physical activities. These aspects are taking on increasing significance in the light of the current development trends in the physical and health status of adolescents (e.g. increasingly poor posture, motoric deficiencies, overweight). School sports projects are consequently promoted generously by the country. With this background, the present contribution presents an insight into the current status of PE and school sports in Liechtenstein and some current projects are presented.

Key words: physical education, Liechtenstein.

Introduction

Physical education (PE) in Liechtenstein has been a tradition continuing for over 100 years. In spite of the legal basis legislated in the year 1897 [8] little heed was ascribed to the subject in the early years; the implementation was dependent on the weather conditions and the already limited number of hours (two times 30 minutes or one hour weekly) was not allowed to cut into other elementary subjects. In addition, the gymnastics period was only introduced in the fourth school year and then only for boys. The primary objective of the lesson was physical toughening using military marching and formations as well as strengthening exercises using iron bars, tug-of-war ropes, and hand balls.

Since that time, the education landscape in Liechtenstein¹ has changed radically as a result of a complete restructuring of the education system as well as the development of an

infrastructure, and thus the requirements framework for physical education (PE) has improved. The introduction of the Swiss teaching manuals in 1942², the erection of purpose-built sports facilities since the 1950's as well as the appointment of professional teachers for the subject are a few of the corner stones for the modernization of school sporting activities.

Legal basis of PE teaching

Today the content and extent of mandatory PE is regulated by various legal ordinances [9–13]. The teaching schedule is defined for all school grades and subjects within an overall teaching plan [14]. According to this legal requirement all grades in the mandatory schooling must have three hours of PE weekly. Exceptions are found in the 6th and 9th grades where the number of hours for PE is defined as four and two periods, respectively. Within the framework of the PE at the primary level (grades 1 to 5) a double swimming period is alternated in a two-week

¹ In Liechtenstein the length of mandatory schooling is nine years, i.e. five years primary school and four years secondary school. Primary school starts at the age of seven, secondary school at the age of 12 years in general.

² In the currently-used Swiss teaching manuals dating from 1996, PE is understood as being an integral part of a fully developed personality [1].

cycle. From the 10th to the 12th grade (secondary level II) the students attend two PE periods weekly. With reference to the number of students per PE class, the legal index is prescribed as a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 20 students. The mandatory number of lessons per week given by the PE teacher at the primary level is 29 periods, 28 at the secondary level I, and 25 at the secondary level II [10]. On attaining the age of 55 years, teachers have a right to age relief. The extent of this relief depends on the current as well as the average level of activity during the last 10 years of service. Retirement age is reached with 64 years.

Swimming education at primary level covers between 16 and 39 periods per year. The classes are taught by the class teacher generally. If the class size is greater than 12 students, a swimming instructor can be appointed additionally. The teacher must be lifesaving certified, or have completed the training required to teach a swimming lessons in a primary school.

Professional requirements for a PE teacher

According to the legal requirements, the appointment of a teacher in Liechtenstein requires a completed minimum three year training course, with diploma, from a training college which conforms to the requirements of the Swiss Conference of Directors of Education (EDK) or fulfills those laid down in Austria [10, 11]. At the primary level, PE lessons are led mainly by the grade teachers, whereas professional PE teachers are appointed at the secondary level. At the present time there are 37 PE teachers serving in Liechtenstein schools; these are in the age range 24–55 years, on average 41.9 years. Of these, 51% completed their training in Switzerland, 27% in Austria, 16% in Germany and 5% in Eastern Europe. The majority (32%) hold a federal Swiss PE teacher diploma I (secondary level I), 19% a university teaching diploma, 16% a German diploma as sports/gymnastics teacher, 14% hold the federal Swiss PE teacher diploma II (secondary level II) or an Austrian teaching diploma for secondary schools, respectively – figure 1.

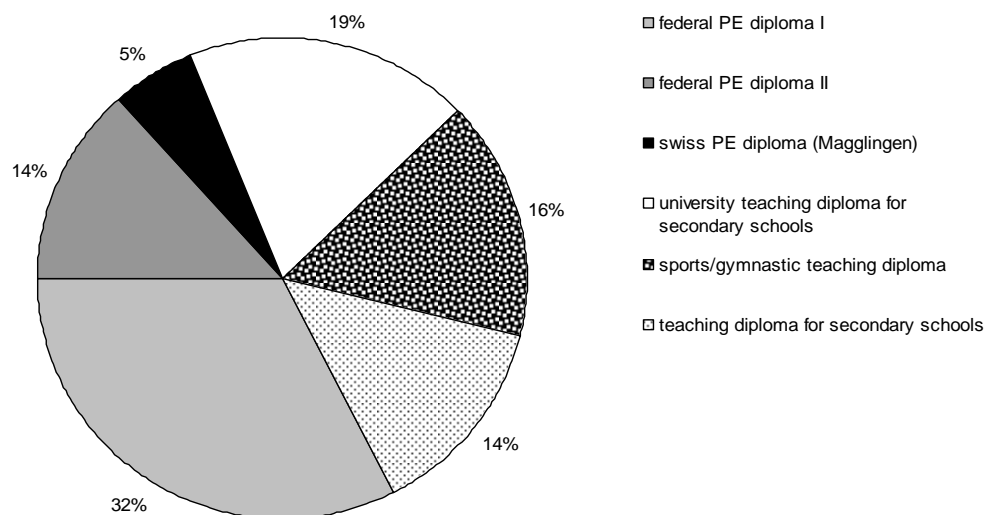


Figure 1. Professional qualifications of PE teachers in Liechtenstein (N = 37)

Popularity from students' viewpoint

As part of two cross-sectional studies at secondary school levels I and II in the years 1999 and 2005, adolescents in the age ranges from 11 to 20 years were surveyed about their exercise habits and their evaluation of free-time and school sports activities [4]. As shown in table 1, PE periods were rated as their favorite subject by just under a third (31.9%) of those surveyed. Further, an extension would be welcomed

by 32% (1999) and 44.3% (2005), respectively. Overall, in both studies a significantly higher value was placed on the subject by male adolescents than by the girls (chi-square test, $p < .001$). Conspicuous is the general loss of importance with increasing age, particularly amongst the girls in the year 1999 ($p < .001$) as well as the boys in 2005 ($p < .05$).

Table 1. Sports as favorite subject (Sec. I + II), differentiated according to sex and age groups (%)

Study	All	Boys				Girls			
		11-13	14-15	16-20	total	11-13	14-15	16-20	total
1999 (N = 661)	31.0	46.5	35.2	38.0	37.7	48.4	20.6	21.4	25.5
2005 (N = 682)	32.7	52.3	33.3	25.4	37.9	30.7	30.9	16.5	27.5
All (N = 1343)	31.9	50.7	34.2	33.1	37.8	36.9	24.9	19.2	26.5

As the results of a further country-wide survey show [5], school PE is rated more highly at the end of primary school (table 2). Sports/swimming is the favorite subject for half of all the girls, here there are distinct differences shown between the sexes ($p < .001$): whereas sports is the

dominant favorite subject amongst boys with 62%, preferences are more widely distributed amongst the girls. Technical and visually-oriented subjects are relatively highly weighted. Sports/swimming is evaluated as the favorite subject in all the national groups.

Table 2. Sports as favorite subject (5th grade, N = 313), differentiated by gender and nationality (%)

Subject	Total	Gender		Nationality		
		girls	boys	FL	CH, A, D	Other
Sports / Swimming	51.4	40.6	62.0	50.9	60.0	46.2
Technical / visual orientation	18.8	29.7	8.2	20.5	12.5	15.4
Math	15.7	11.0	20.3	16.7	7.5	17.9
German	6.7	9.7	3.8	5.1	7.5	15.4
Other	7.3	9.0	5.7	6.8	12.5	5.1
%	100	100	100	100	100	100

Chi-square-test

$p < .001$

n.s.

Motor fitness of primary students

Although motor results and standard data are available in our neighboring countries for all school grades, a systematic check of motor fitness in Liechtenstein was only carried out until recently at the end of primary school (5th grade) [5]. A total of 313 children were tested in this national study in the sense of a study on completing

school. The motor abilities were operationalized with the Munich Fitness Test (MFT), a standardized test procedure which offers sex- and age-specific norm values. The tests were performed in two regular gym lessons and included six items, covering the following central aspects of motor fitness: coordination (ball bouncing and goal throwing), strength (jump&reach, bent-arm hang), flexibility

(stand&reach) and anaerobic capacity (step test).

In general, the primary students (figure 2) demonstrated a satisfactory, if poorer, proficiency than their age group in the averages from Germany. The majority (58.1%) completed the test with satisfactory to good results, 41.9% with a satisfactory result, but no-one with a rating of poor or very good. Some 5.8% were evaluated as needing supportive action (T value ≤ 40 points in overall average). This result is primarily the result of motor deficiencies in exercises requiring a high degree of coordinative competence as well as flexibility. In ball bouncing and goal throwing every

fourth or fifth students demonstrated an inadequate proficiency. A thought-provoking finding is that 43.1% were not capable of doing a forward roll correctly, and 29.1% could not use a jump rope. Flexibility and extensibility of the retral musculature were also below average: 47.6% of all pu-pils could not reach down to the level of the soles of their feet. In contrast, above average in the comparison, were the results in the strength assessment (bent-arm hang and jump& reach), whereas the endurance test (step test) results corresponded to average.

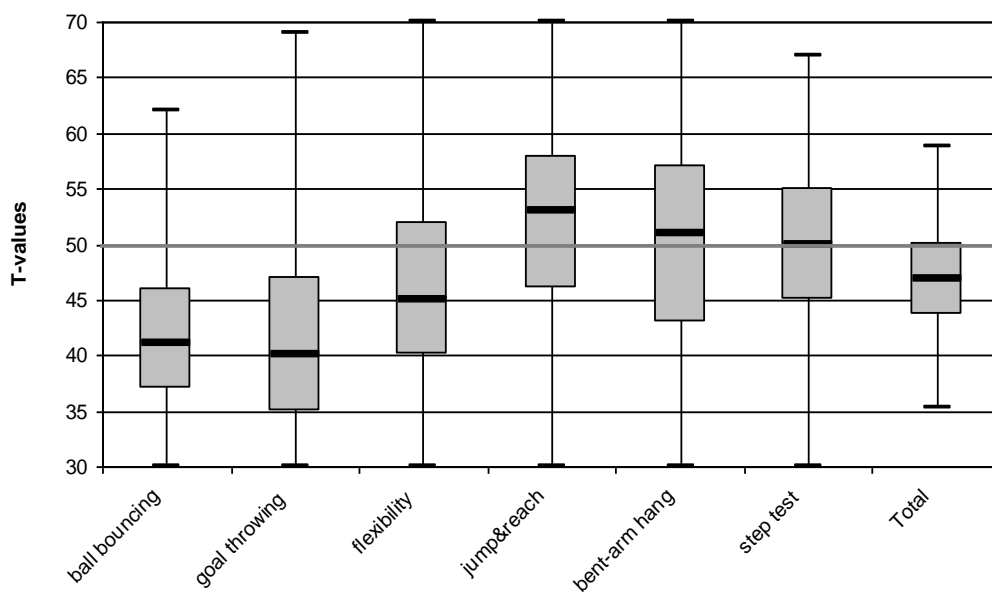


Figure 2. Boxplot of motor fitness (5th grade, N = 313) in comparison with German average (grey line)

Posture gymnastics

Early recognition and prevention of possible muscular misbalance and orthopedic problems (spinal column, leg or foot abnormalities) is made possible through the Health Department which organizes a serial examination of the 1st and 3rd classes of the primary school. Based on the by-law governing school health care from the year 1981 [7], this check of the musco-skeletal system and postural coordination is carried out by

trained physiotherapists at the actual school location. If evidence of postural weakness and motor deficiency is found the children needing treatment are invited through their parents to voluntary posture gymnastics. According to the results from the investigations made over the last ten years (table 3), in Liechtenstein on average 21.4% of primary school children show postural weakness, and participation in posture gymnastics was recommended.

Table 3. Prevalence of detected muscular misbalances (%) in Liechtensteinian primary school children, 2001–2010

Year	Observed children (N)			Endangered posture ^a (%)		
	Total	1 st grade	3 rd grade	Total	1 st grade	3 rd grade
2001/02	667	327	340	24.4	27.2	21.8
2003/04	811	414	397	18.9	17.1	20.7
2005/06	842	392	450	21.1	19.6	22.4
2007/08	782	383	399	21.0	18.5	21.8
2009/10	730	341	389	22.1	22.0	22.1
All	3'832	1'857	1'975	21.4	20.9	21.8

^a special posture gymnastics recommended

Posture gymnastics is carried out in a playful manner under the leadership of a trained gymnastics teacher where the musculature is strengthened, the spinal column made more mobile, and the coordinative capability and physical well-being are enhanced. In addition, the children are taught exercises which they can practice at home. Posture gymnastics takes place in small mixed-age groups. At the end of primary school all children who took part in the gymnastics course are give a final examination. On the strength of this final diagnosis, any further course of action is coordinated with the parents.

Current PE projects

The general overview of the current vocational field of PE teachers in Liechtenstein is concluded by reviewing some selected PE projects where PE teachers make a significant contribution.

Voluntary school sports and competitions

Voluntary school sports were introduced at the secondary level in year 1982 and then provisionally at the primary level in the school year 2006/2007 as a part of a pilot project. The objective of this voluntary option was to offer the students an opportunity for additional exercise in daily school life on the one hand, and access to extra-curricular sporting opportunities on the other. These introductory options were carried out by trained sports teachers or by teachers with training in a specific type of sporting activity (e.g. as a volley ball trainer). From 1991/1992 to the present time, an average of 11 courses per year with 137 participants has

been implemented. In total in the last 19 years 243 courses with 2'919 participants have taken place.

Voluntary sports are supplemented by national, regional and international school sports competitions. Working with the PE teachers, Liechtenstein sports clubs organize annual school sports championships in athletics, swimming, mat-hand ball, soccer, uni-hockey, basketball, dancing/acrobatics and beach volleyball. In addition, Liechtenstein teams take regularly part in various sports in the Swiss school sports day as well as in the international school sports competitions of the ISF (Internationals School Sporting Federation).

Sports school in Liechtenstein

In the school year 2004/2005 a "Sports School Liechtenstein" project was started at the se-condary school in Schaan. This has the aim of of-fering special conditions to youths who are striving for a career in competitive or elite sports so that they can graduate with education and training appropriate to their career objective. By adjusting the curriculum and class schedules and offering academic opportunities such as remedial teaching, the school permits Liechtenstein cadre athletes the opportunity to have regular orderly training twice daily under the control of a club trainer in spite of their academic burden. Further, the com-petition schedule of the student is taken into consideration during the planning of the study schedule. In August 2007, this opportunity was extended to the upper grades of the Liechtenstein gymnasium. The sports school should be optimized further through structural modifications on the part of school and clubs,

simplifying the selection process, as well as the assessment of the sports school at the Liechtenstein gymnasium.

MiniGames 2010

The Olympic Games for small European countries will take place in Liechtenstein in June 2011. These are to be carried out according to the regulations of the corresponding international sporting associations and the Charter of the Olympic Games. With some 1'600 athletes, support personnel and functionaries together with 800 volunteers, this will be the largest sporting event ever organized in Liechtenstein. The Liechtenstein PE teachers have taken this major event as a model and, one year beforehand, are organizing the "Secondary School Olympic Games". In this event each school will represent a country participating in the MiniGames. The students are to compete in a total of nine sports and will attempt to win medals for their "country" or school. This sports competition is to be held with opening and closing ceremonies carried out in the Olympic spirit. The 1'600 secondary students are thus to be given the opportunity to live out and experience the Olympic ideal.

Conclusions

A great deal has been achieved in the 113 years of Liechtenstein school sports. Against the backdrop of the current process of education development and the related topic of education standards and measures for quality assurance, the objectives and content of PE teaching is currently also being subjected to review. In the context of this reorganization of the education system, PE has now primarily to substantiate its

significance and educational function in the educational canon, weigh possible adjustments and to reposition itself accordingly. In view of the dangerous tendency of making PE an instrument of "universal therapy" [3] against any and all exposures to health risk and pressure symptoms of the next generation, this decision on its positioning is a difficult tight-rope act. PE is not in a position to resolve all problems found in the context of the lifestyle of today's adolescents [2]. Selecting arguments for legitimating must as a consequence be done very carefully. Within an integrated education development and its interdisciplinary implementation, PE can nevertheless make a substantial contribution to strengthening physical awareness and a healthier lifestyle amongst children and adolescents [6]. Together with the home and club sports, the school counts as the central setting for promoting exercise and, at the same time, as an important socializing facility for developing an awareness for health amongst adolescents. Then again, the high importance of PE in Liechtenstein must be seen against the satisfactory fitness results achieved by the end of primary school for students with clear motor deficiencies. Even though in our society increasingly more children are evidently reducing the extent of their exercise in daily routine [6], the question i.a. obtrudes as to what extent school PE has co-responsibility for the current physical fitness of our children, if possible also for the practical implementation of school sports (primarily for the effective time and intensity of exercising). A critical evaluation of the quality of PE at all school levels in Liechtenstein would therefore be of considerable interest.

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Physical Education in New Zealand: a Socio-Critical and Bi-Cultural Positioning

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Abstract

This paper briefly highlights the socio-historical context in which New Zealand has developed as a nation. In particular it examines how physical education's initial development was dominated by European thought and more latterly within a bi-cultural context where the needs of an inclusive society are considered. Implicit in this development are the State's imperatives for education, which over the last two decades have used a totally revised school curriculum as a key strategy in achieving its political and social agendas. To some degree physical education has been complicit in this. However with the relatively newly developed socio-critical physical education curriculum and the new senior school qualifications alternative ways in viewing the movement culture have become apparent. This, these authors argue, guarantees physical education immediate future.

Key words: Physical education, New Zealand curriculum, senior school qualifications, bi-culturalism.

Purpose

The purpose of this article is to:

Provide a brief overview of the socio-historical and cultural context in which schooling and in particular physical education developed in Aotearoa New Zealand;

Critically outline the recent curriculum developments in physical education in New Zealand including senior school qualifications.

Brief Socio-historical Background

European settlement of Aotearoa/New Zealand began soon after Captain Cook (British explorer) discovered it in 1769. However it was not until 1840 that a founding document (Treaty of Waitangi) between the British and Māori (indigenous people of New Zealand/Aotearoa) was formalised. A central tenet of the Treaty was the principal of a bicultural partnership between the British (Crown) and Māori. A partnership where equal rights, equal opportunities, shared power and decision making processes that respected that both Māori and Pākehā (New Zealander of European descent) cultures would exist [22]. Unfortunately for Māori, as tangata whenua ('people of the land', referring to those who are spiritually linked to the land)

colonization, particularly through the education system, led to the marginalisation of Māori culture, language, customs, values and traditions. The loss of tikanga (cultural practices) including control over traditional Māori physical cultural practices conflicted with the Treaty arrangements and would impact on the New Zealand education system right through to the first decade of the 21st Century.

For this 'young' country, education in the form of schooling played a major role in its future development, both for Māori and Pākehā. Physical education's role in the schooling process was important. Initially, physical education was placed in the school curriculum from 1877. Its presence in the total curriculum can be attributed to the need for physical training and fitness in readiness for possible military action to protect the British Empire [10, 27, 39] and to contribute to civilizing the indigenous people.

Notwithstanding the marginalization of Māori, by 1912 the physical education emphasis in the primary school had faded from its initial focus. However in the secondary school military training remained universal until the 1960's. Educational justification for this approach stressed that training of this nature "would

improve young men's physiques, teach them orderly habits, and give them a conception of the place of obedience in a well ordered life" [27, p.48]. This approach was promoted for both Māori and Pākehā alike. In addition to this emphasis, right throughout the 1900's, the 'education of the physical' for Māori through subjects such as agriculture, market gardening, stock and poultry farming, overtly perpetuated an earlier belief that the civilisation of Māori could be best achieved through activities of a physical nature [20]. The initial categorization of Māori as overtly physical, unenlightened coloured people, and best suited for mindless physical roles simply reinforced the Cartesian philosophy of mind/body dualism and the European dominance in education [1]. Thus, the historical development of physical education in New Zealand was inextricably linked to the colonisation process, the political agendas and alliances, the need to have a disciplined and effective workforce and army [9] and to contribute to 'civilising the natives' [20].

More contemporary developments in New Zealand physical education have progressed along similar lines where the influence and maintenance of Western capitalism has played a major role. As Foucault [15] suggests capitalism quickly realized the importance of physical activity and body control and saw schooling as the ideal place in which this could occur. Physical education and sport in New Zealand have historically been used to achieve controlled and disciplined bodies in preparation for a work force in order to supply the labour markets of capitalism. As Kirk [24] reports the historical and contemporary schooling process was focused on achieving docility and utility. Docility in terms of learning obedience and utility in terms of teaching the students productivity – both of which are critical in the maintenance and development of efficient capital markets and the integration of the indigene. Kirk [24] further argues that little has changed in the 21st Century. Schools continue to regulate bodies and promote uniformity and in so doing become somewhat abstracted from the real life of the student. Foucault [15] had previously argued that:

"In the initial stages of capitalism body control took the form of mass military style

exercise, but as capitalism has evolved into a corporate form, so too has physical education and sport, with an emphasis moving from external control of the body (*and person*) to individual accountability for health and fitness development" [9, p.227].

As many scholars, [6, 7, 10; 15, 23, 24, 41] argued, the role that physical education has played in controlling and disciplining the body has ensured that it has survived in contemporary schooling simply because of the perceived benefits to capitalism. Physical education in New Zealand has clearly been complicit, al-be-it unwittingly at times, in its pedagogical work of promoting economic order and contributing to the civilizing process. Even after 100 years of schooling, the imperatives of the State continue to guide, influence and even direct the nature of the school curriculum and physical education is no exception. This State involvement has continued with, at times, a seemingly indifferent commitment to the Treaty and the fostering of a bi-cultural society. While the State might set out its imperatives through initiatives in curriculum requirements the strategic importance of regulating the teaching profession becomes a central mechanism to achieving its future economic prosperity. The State's need to stay connected to, set learning and achievement goals, direct the teaching profession and monitor its pedagogical work must therefore strategically involve accountability measures. One of these key measures takes the form of, what is to be taught in schools (national curriculum requirements) and physical education is part of this strategic accountability.

Physical Education Curriculum Development in New Zealand

Two decades on from the State's rigorous and vigorous programmes of social and economic reforms New Zealand education continues to be under pressure to achieve economic efficiency. The reforms, which had their roots in the political and economic principles associated with the market ethos of economic rationalism, directly confronted the social democracy that had become a feature of New Zealand's socio-political culture. Instead neo-

liberal views of the market where self-interest, competition and economic efficiency dominated political discourse [6, 8; 34]. The reforms saw the demise of the welfare state, where people's expectations, since the 1930's, to have access to housing, education, health services and employment had now disappeared. As Culpan [6] argues critical to the success of the reforms was the need to embed them in education, which served as the vehicle for psychological, social and structural change. The need to reform schooling in New Zealand was one of the State's important agenda items. *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* [28] consequently served as the blueprint for schooling in New Zealand and as the official policy for learning and assessment. This policy document identified seven essential learning areas which would be the school curriculum. Each of these seven essential learning areas was to have a new curriculum statement. Health and Physical Well-being (later to change to Health and Physical Education) was one of these essential learning areas.

The Ministry of Education released *Health and Physical Education in the New Zealand Curriculum* (NZHPE) [29] at the end of the 20th Century. This document set out the learning requirements for all students in regards to health and physical education. It set out with the intention of developing a new teaching and learning paradigm for physical education [10]. In particular it set out to assist students in their understanding of the diverse meanings and practices associated with the physical and movement cultures [5]. Central to achieving this the developers of NZHPE set out to:

- "provide a broader vision for physical education where the culture of movement can be seen as a valued and legitimate educative practice;
- encourage the development of more holistic practices for physical education by making use of the critical and humanistic dimensions of learning;
- provide alternative visions about what school physical education could be, what it might mean to be physically educated and what knowledge, skills, attitudes and values

are needed to achieve this in a holistic manner;

- capture the potential of physical education by providing a socio-ecological value orientation and anchoring it in social critique that acknowledges the inter-relatedness
- of science, social, moral and ethical dimensions;
- engender debate and discussion on possible alternative pedagogies;
- engender debate and discussion around hidden curriculum discourse such as healthism, competition, elitism, body construction, sport, and bi-culturalism;
- integrate an acknowledgement of both national and international cultural orientations and practices" [12 p.52-53].

Scholars [5, 3, 9, 10, 11, 12] have all contributed commentaries associated with the development of this document, its worthiness and its critique. While it is not our intention to review their arguments one of the common themes that does come through in their writings is that NZHPE and its revised counter-part *The New Zealand Curriculum* (NZC) [31] has a strong socio-critical orientation which draws significantly on a socio-critical humanist perspective. As Culpan and Bruce [12] suggest:

"Essentially the new curriculum sought to redress the dominant focus on the scientisation of movement and its corresponding emphasis on individualism which was philosophically woven into the previous national curriculum statement. As a result of this redress, a socio-critical stance of the type favouring critical pedagogy was promoted in this new context" (p. 4).

Central to achieving a move from a scientised technocratic view of physical education towards a more socio-critical perspective are the four underlying inter-dependent concepts which are:

"Hauora:

A Maori philosophy of well-being that includes the dimensions *taha wairua (spirituality)*, *taha hinengaro (mental and emotional)*, *taha tinana (physical)*, and *taha whanau (social)*, each one influencing and supporting the others.

Attitudes and values:

A positive, responsible attitude on the part of students to their own well-being; respect, care, and concern for other people and the environment; and a sense of social justice.

The socio-ecological perspective:

A way of viewing and understanding the inter-relationships that exist between the individual, others and society.

Health promotion:

A process that helps to develop and maintain supportive physical and emotional environments and that involves students in personal and collective action" [31, p. 22].

These along with the seven key areas of learning in NZHPE of Mental Health, Sexuality Education, Food and Nutrition, Body Care, Physical Activity, Sport Studies and Outdoor Education provide the basic conceptual framework from which programmes are developed.

In conceptualizing physical education in this manner Culpan [10] argues that there were a number of important constructs that need further explanation. Firstly he outlines how NZHPE draws significantly on the work of Arnold's [2] conceptualization of learning in, through and about movement. In Arnold's work the *lived body* becomes central to the notion of human embodiment where one's mode of living, making sense of the world, and ability to move provides a consciousness that allows individuals to recognize their existence, and to explore their personal essence. In drawing on this, NZHPE positions movement as a rich and powerful mechanism for meaning making and indeed contributing to human development. The second construct of NZHPE that Culpan [10] argues as important is the emphasis placed on critique and in particular the attempt by the curriculum to communicate the importance of signaling that physical education is neither removed or isolated from individual existence or from the broader social, political, moral economic and cultural contexts of our times. By promoting this critique NZHPE is encouraging users of the curriculum to embrace a critical pedagogy (for a full analysis see Culpan & Bruce [12]). Indeed Culpan and Bruce [12] argue that by promoting a critical pedagogy physical education is better placed to promote:

"more meaning around physical activity, the importance of deliberate exercise, how people use, shape, and view their bodies, and how sport influences and reproduces power relations and privileges dominant groups in society" (p.50).

The third construct conceptualizing NZHPE is the importance of drawing together and making more obvious the inter-relationship of the physical, social, mental and emotional, and spiritual dimensions of well-being. As argued above, an individual's sense of existence and meaning is inter-twined with the physical, social, mental and emotional, and spiritual contexts of their lives. This construct highlights that previous practices of focusing on the physical at the expense of social, mental and emotional, and spiritual dimensions essentially limited opportunities for students to process their experience in order to make and capture full personal and social meaning [26].

The fourth conceptualization of NZHPE focused on the fundamental need for the curriculum to be underpinned by a holism which, it is argued here, has largely been absent in previous documents. To promote a curriculum that acknowledges the inter-relatedness of the epistemological base of physical education, a holism that assists teachers and students to move beyond individualism and the individualist notions of self in order to recognize 'the other' was indeed necessary. Here the importance of a socio-ecological perspective [21] was adopted in an attempt to incorporate the inter-relatedness of self, others and society – both for the present and the future. The inclusion of a socio-ecological perspective provided the curriculum with a strongly recognizable philosophical position by which teachers and students could challenge constructs and assumptions within the discipline and expose the power relations (for a fuller analysis see Ministry of Education [30]). As Jewitt [21] and Culpan and Bruce [12] argue the central premise behind a socio-ecological perspective is that movement in all its cultural forms is not alienated, separated or isolated from its broader social, political, economic, moral and cultural contexts or relations. As Culpan and Bruce [12] state:

"Such influences affect how people view meanings and practices around physical activity

and how they exercise, use, shape and view their bodies. They also elucidate the competing interests that are evident in movement and how sport influences and reproduces power relations and privileges that dominant group at both individual and societal levels” (p.6).






An example of these conceptual constructs being manifested in NZHPE is in the statement:

“Students will come to understand the social, cultural, economic and environmental factors that influence attitudes, beliefs and

practices associated with sport. They will critically examine sport from the viewpoints of the school and society as a whole” [29, p.44].

Table 1. provides a useful illustration of the change that has occurred from previous physical education curricula to the NZHPE and its revised counter-part NZC. Given this significant epistemological shift in the conceptualisation of physical education in New Zealand new and diverse challenges have emerged.

Table 1. The Shift in NZ Physical Education (Adapted from Culpan and Bruce [12] p. 6).

Scientised or Technocratic Model of Physical Education	Moving towards a Sociocritical Curriculum Orientation	Socio-critical Model promoting Well-being from a holistic sense using emancipatory pedagogies
	From To	
Previous NZ Curriculum	The epistemological and pedagogical shift	The ‘new’ Curriculums NZHPE (1999) and
The focus is on physical skill development. Physical education entirely focused on the physical aspects of movement.		The focus is on all aspects of the movement culture: i.e. learning in, through and about movement and taking into account the physical, social, spiritual and
Health promotion is for physical health through physical activity and fitness development, generally on a		Health promotion is conceptualised in its broadest sense, emphasising the holistic nature of health and
Programmes are dominated by movement orientations dedicated to sport. There is no time to explore other forms of movement. The cultural and spiritual considerations are ignored.		Movement is conceptualised in its broadest sense, with the significance, influence and functions of movement from both an individual and a societal perspective being studied. Cultural meanings are
Teaching is characterised by the direct style: “This is how you do it” Strongly positioned on the left side of the Mosston and Ashworth [32] spectrum. It tends to be gender bias and inequitable.		The teaching style is inquiry-based and reflective in nature. It encourages critical thought and challenges existing practice, and examines assumptions. It is emancipatory with a strong
Characterised by a very scientific view of movement, in which skills and fitness are measured for performance .		Ensures that the scientific, physical, social, economic, ethical and political dimensions of movements are explored and critically

The Changing Nature of Physical Education

The diverse challenges emerging from the mandated curriculum have essentially focussed on the need for programmes in schools to move from a scientised technocratic orientation to one that is socio-critical in nature and emancipatory in action. No longer can school physical education programmes in New Zealand focus solely on performance aspects of diverse movement activities. No longer can physical education programmes' legitimately promote the unproblematic discourse of physical activity=fitness = health. Instead physical education programmes needed to move beyond the gymnasium walls and liberate the subject from its entrapped scientised technocratic practices Culpan [6]. Physical education programmes are now expected to explore and make sense of the oppressive political and social practices within the movement culture. They are expected to be able to highlight the complex inter-relatedness of individual and community well-being and foster the links between theories and practice (praxis). Programmes are expected to be the catalyst in encouraging students into taking social action to address power inequalities and social justice issues within physical education and sport [5]. They are expected to acknowledge the intent of the Treaty and the role physical education plays in achieving a bi-cultural society [35]. The complexities in meeting these challenges, whilst significant, have resulted in change.

Physical educators in schools have had to foster a philosophical paradigmatic shift. This has been characterised by a gradual change in values, beliefs, actions. Essentially programmes have had to under-go a change in value orientation. Already significant progress has been made in this regard with a number of school programmes moving towards a balance between the movement sciences and the socio-cultural aspects of movement [25]. This has been accompanied by the subsequent need to change pedagogical practices [26]. These changes are, and continue to be, a considerable epistemological shift in emphasis and indicates that physical education is moving in the right direction. While this shift has occurred

to some degree, teachers are still mindful that such shifts need to be made within a realisation that the practical elements of physical education still need to be taught. This indeed is a complexity that if not thought through and critically examined can actually create an impediment to progress. That impediment being, a 'suck back' into technocratic scientised behaviours emanating from 20th Century thinking. Examples of such impediments or distractions have become evident with other government initiatives encouraging schools to take responsibility for talent identification for elite sport, physical activity-nutrition imperatives, the State holding schools responsible for the young people's health and the anti social behaviour of some of our young people (for a full analysis of this see Culpan [10] and Gatman [16]. Safe guards to help resist the 'suck back' impediment have been characterised by the promotion of more coherent physical education pedagogies. Pedagogies that assist in moving from technocratic/scientised/ reproductive models of teaching physical education to physical education models that are more student centred, more productive, liberating and critical. Such models include: Mosston and Ashworth's [32] spectrum of teaching styles and games-based approaches such as play-teach-play (Graham [18]; the Teaching Games for Understanding Curriculum model [4]; the Tactical Games Model [19]; Game Sense [13] and Siedentop's Sport Education Model [37]. All these make links to student centred, constructivist pedagogies and allow for the introduction of critical pedagogy using the work of Smyth [38].

Another significant shift in New Zealand physical education brought about by the change in curriculum orientation and the concurrent change in the State's senior school qualification system is senior school physical education programmes.

Secondary School Physical Education Qualifications

Despite physical education's important positioning in the total school curriculum over time, it battled for equal academic recognition and status, particularly at senior school level. In part its status, as a 'second class citizen'

alongside subjects such as English, mathematics and science, is attributed to its lack of formal qualifications at the senior school level. However things changed and three decades ago its academic status improved with the introduction of senior school physical education which contributed to a national qualification. This was firstly introduced at year 12 and then later introduced at year 13. These qualifications were Sixth Form Certificate and Bursaries Physical Education respectively. While the implementation of the qualifications was positive for physical education two challenges still remained. The first was that there was still no nationally recognised physical education qualification at year 11. In effect this meant that there was little progression or spiraling of content knowledge from junior physical education to senior physical education. The absence of a spiraling curriculum meant that students moved from predominantly physical activity programmes at the junior level into heavily scientised physical education content at the senior level [17]. The second challenge was the domination of the sciences such as biomechanics, exercise science, nutrition and motor learning as the underpinning content of the senior school programmes [6]. This privileging of science over many other areas of physical education content such as the socio-cultural and social-history of physical education was problematic. Nowhere in a student's physical education programme did they have the opportunity of studying aspects such as: sport as a valued human practice, its educative worth, the power of the sport media, race and gender inequalities in sport, sport philosophy, Olympism or bi-cultural considerations. Essentially, physical education in New Zealand, at this time, failed to fully deliver a holistic programme. This state of affairs, Lineham [25] argues, can be attributed to physical education's quest for academic credibility through the sciences and society's emphasis on sporting success. Thus, it is argued here the essence of what a 'physically educated' person may be was never thoroughly investigated and as a consequence was lost [25].

Sixth Form Certificate

In the 1980's the Sixth Form Certificate qualification (year 12) was available nationally. The national course had a compulsory module and up to five optional modules drawn from the Physical Education Syllabus for Junior Classes to Form 7 with guidelines for Early Childhood [42]. Additionally schools could develop local courses based on the needs of their students. Sixth Form Certificate was internally assessed using Achievement Based Assessment to generate a final grade for students that ranged from one to nine. All courses had to be approved and moderated by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) [42]. The Sixth Form Certificate offering in physical education was typified by anatomy, exercise physiology, biomechanics, motor learning, sports nutrition and practical aspects such as aquatics, outdoor education and selected sports performance. At that time it mirrored a diluted university physical education course. While this programme proved to be extremely popular it was abandoned in 2002 and replaced by the National Certificate in Educational achievement (NCEA).

University Bursaries/Scholarship Physical

In 1992 Bursaries Physical Education and Scholarship became available to all schools. A national prescription was devised that required students to complete three modules of learning at year 13. The modules included a compulsory Lifestyles model and a choice of two others. Teachers followed internally assessment procedures in all tasks and again Achievement Based Assessment processes were implemented. Bursaries physical education was unique in that it was totally internally assessed while all other subject area had some form of external assessment. To establish national consistency in the assessment of each module a Common Assessment Task (CAT) was utilised. Each CAT specified what must be assessed for each module. The assessment tasks for the CATs and the marking schedule used to grade these tasks were submitted for the national moderation each year to establish consistent grading between schools [42]. The advent of this programme was a major innovation at the time. It

contributed to a student's overall eligibility to enter into New Zealand Universities, provided post-school study opportunities and career pathways in physical education and related areas. Like the Sixth Form Certificate programme it proved to be extremely popular and was abandoned in 2002 to be replaced by the National Certificate in Educational Achievement (NCEA).

National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA)

In 1999 the Ministry of Education decided to revise all senior school qualifications and establish a new system better suited for the 21st Century. As a result all existing senior school qualifications would be phased out by 2002. Panels of experts were established to cover the seven curriculum areas as specified in the Ministry of Education *Curriculum Framework* [28]. The task to the physical education expert panel was to create a matrix of Achievement Standards for senior school physical education and develop examples of assessment tasks and exemplars of student work for each Level One (year 11) Achievement Standard [42]. This process was later repeated for Level Two (year 12) and Level Three (year 13) Achievement Standards. A Scholarship examination was also developed for those students who were academically gifted. It was set at Level 4 of the National Qualifications Framework and was made available to year 13 students who chose to sit the exam [33]. In 2002 NCEA Achievement Standards were released at Level One. Levels Two and Three followed over the next two years.

The development of Achievement Standards across all subjects was an attempt to take the best of internal and external assessment and provide a unified, valid, manageable and academically credible qualification within the National Curriculum. The Standards were designed to demonstrate what students can actually do and understand. Credits achieved from successfully meeting the standard at either: Achieved, Merit or Excellence provided clarity to an individual's specific content knowledge and related skills. Students are awarded the respective credits for each standard they meet, with a total of 24 available for every approved subject area of

which physical education was one [33]. In essence an Achievement Standard:

- "Specifies an outcome to be achieved,
- Specifies the achievement requirements for the awarding of credits,
- Provides the achievement criteria for the award of achievement, merit and excellence grades,
- Has tasks that are moderated nationally,
- Describes internal or external assessment that can be used to measure performance or competence in the areas being studied,
- Assesses curriculum based subjects with between five and eight Achievement Standards with a total of 24 credits at each level" [42].

In physical education's case Achievement Standards were designed to better assess, with greater accuracy, and consistency, the skills, attributes and understandings a physically educated person should have [42]. After debating the merits of external examinations and internal assessments the original expert panel successfully argued with the Ministry of Education for all physical education Achievement Standards to be internally assessed.

The range of Physical Education Achievement Standards from year 11-year 13 is known as The Physical Education Matrix and indicates the standards that may be used to assess content such as the socio-cultural, bicultural, science, physical performance and physical well-being aspects of physical education. In doing so they better reflect the holistic nature of and appropriate levels in, the NZHPE [29]. For physical education, having a nationally recognised and valid qualification at all senior years has certainly raised the profile of physical education as a legitimate and credible academic subject. It has provided a seamless physical education programme from year 1 to year 13. Further to this seamlessness, the senior school qualification, NCEA, has further enhanced the importance of junior school physical education and reinforced the need for teacher to deliver the mandated NZHPE.

While NZHPE [29] and NZC [31] have been mandated for some time now, as expected, progress with these shifts in regards to school

programmes vary from school to school. Some shifts are rapid others pedestrian. Significant shifts have resulted in some school programmes, particularly at senior level focussing on raising student's critical consciousness through the implementation of critical pedagogy [43, 12]. The establishment of the socio-critical perspective that integrates the praxis divide by examining and critiquing macro structures that influence movement culture practises within a movement context are now evident (Wright, 2004). This perspective provides rich and fertile learning material from which students can make meaning, reflect on that meaning making and then if necessary take social action. This is the critical action cycle that is articulated in NZHPE and NZC and is now becoming more and more evident in school programmes.

The curriculum orientation and the subsequent changes including senior school qualifications have received positive endorsement [5, 43]. The changes appear to be consistent with some other international trends, particularly in the UK and Australia [5]. However they have not occurred in the absence of strong criticism [8]. Two particular criticisms of NZHPE have focused on the documents socio-critical orientation and its bi-cultural content.

Critique of NZHPE

Sustained criticism was provided by the Education Forum who have a strong affiliation with a wealthy conservative group of business leaders calling themselves The New Zealand Business Roundtable. The Forum in their submission to the Ministry [14] questioned the epistemological base of the statement, its pedagogical possibility, the breadth and depth of what was being proposed, its manageability in schools, resource costs and assessment implications. To detail and explore each of these is beyond the scope of this article; however, some criticisms that have specific relevance and will be highlighted.

The Education Forum reported to the

Ministry, that in their view, NZHPE did not make clear its theoretical foundations. They argued that although the foundations were unstated, other materials [6, 40] made it clear that the position taken was a 'neo-

Marxist/critical view of education'. The Forum [14] claimed the hidden agendas within the NZHPE were covert attempts at changing New Zealand society "an exercise in individual and social emancipation, and attacks of a subversive kind on existing social, communal, political and economic institutions, structures and practices" (p.5).

Given the Forum's conservative and strong vested interest in neo-liberalism the criticisms are not overly surprising. The Forum argued that NZHPE needed a more appropriate orientation characterised by a pragmatism that would:

"produce a much more constrained and manageable remit for Health and Physical Education, and one that is more true to its particular and respected place in the school curriculum" (p.95).

They proposed that the real remit of health and physical education was Food and Nutrition, Physical Activity and Outdoor Education. The Forum expressed strong support for "the preservation and transmission of knowledge and culture" (p.ix) and strong opposition to the emphasis on educating for emancipation and change. This critique created vociferous debate and strong interrogation but given the significant support from scholars, teachers, community groups and an independent academic evaluation the Forum's criticism did not provide achieve any forced change [8].

Another area of NZHPE which drew criticism was the bi-cultural component. Despite significant Māori input into NZHPE, in the spirit of the bi-cultural nature of New Zealand and the expectations of the Treaty, NZHPE was criticised for not necessarily meeting the needs of Māori [20, 35]. NZHPE claimed to be culturally responsive but Salter [35] noted that whilst NZHPE integrated Māori conceptions of health and physical education, the conceptions were Western interpretations that sanitized the beliefs, values and cultural practices that under-pinned them. The conceptions failed to grasp their Māori meanings. To illustrate the point Salter [36] argued that for Māori, the concepts in NZHPE have far deeper meaning and understanding to that which is evident in the Western view. For Māori these concepts are lived experiences but simply '*official knowledge*' for the Pākehā.

Salter [35] highlights the use of the key concept Hauora, which, when translated loosely, is associated with well-being. For Māori the term's literal meaning is the breath of life interwoven with the cultural complexities of the spiritual, mental, emotional, social connectedness and richness of being human. Despite these powerful criticisms Burrows [5], whilst acknowledging the complexities inherent in the inclusion of Maori conceptions of physical education and health, argues that the presence of such conceptions opens the door for students in physical education and health programmes to explore holistic notions of well-being and to challenge dominant ways of thinking about and practicing physical education.

“Conceiving of well-being in such a holistic fashion disrupts conventional mind/body dichotomies, disturbs everyday understanding that health and fitness can be achieved through individual discipline and effort alone” [5, p. 112].

Burrows [5] further argues that the attempts to encapsulate a bi-cultural holism provides a useful *'non vacuumed'* platform for critical inquiry into the diverse socio-cultural ways in which physical education and health knowledge is created, understood and practiced. In this regard Burrows [5] sees the amalgam of the socio-critical perspective and the bi-cultural component of NZHPE as harmonious innovations. She acknowledges that despite the criticisms NZHPE has certainly provided a new and alternative way in which physical education can be examined and practised. Drawing on this argument, this article proposes that the curriculum innovations over the last decade have served to position and secure New Zealand physical education future in the schooling process for years to come by highlighting its educative and social value.

Concluding Remarks

New Zealand's education system of which physical education has always had an important presence has played a critical role in the

development of the country. Historically, physical education's role was essential in ensuring that our young people were physically capable, had orderly habits, learnt to be obedient and for Māori, New Zealand indigenous people, civilised into and integrated into European ways of living. This later point, although at odds with the Treaty of Waitangi, continued to exist for nearly a century. The rationale behind this was that New Zealand needed to be economically competitive and fully participate in Western capitalism. It is only in the last two decades, with the renaissance of Māori culture and strong political factions insisting on adhering to the sentiments of the Treaty that a true bi-cultural focus consistent with the Treaty has begun to emerge. This focus has meant that the State takes an even more powerful role in education to ensure that its economic and cultural strategy could be achieved. These imperatives have been characterised by a school curriculum that takes cognisance of economic competitiveness and bi-culturalism. In physical education's case, a curriculum was developed that put in place conceptualisations and constructs that changed physical education emphasis from scientised technocratic practices to a more socio-critical orientations. These orientations created opportunities and reinforced the need to use critical humanist pedagogies which in so doing have begun to assist learners to better understand and critique the movement culture and give them critical tools to locate themselves within it [12]. Of particular relevance here is the importance of bi-cultural contexts and the formal introduction of senior schools qualifications.

These events have meant that school programmes have had to change accordingly. As a result school programmes have had to re-conceptualise their orientations in order to meet the new socio-critical thrust of which bi-culturalism is unique, important and critical aspect. The change, it is argued here, has hopefully guaranteed physical education place in the national curriculum for years to come.

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Good Practice Methods in Physical Education – Cooperative Learning

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Abstract

During the winter semester 2008/09, the Institute of Sports Science at the Goethe University in Frankfurt (Germany), conducted and evaluated a seminar for sports students called „Good Practice in Physical Education“. This novel teaching format was designed to link didactical skill-acquisition, in terms of situated learning, to the acquisition of theoretical knowledge, which should enhance the professional core competences of future PE teachers. In addition, this pilot seminar was designed to evaluate the usefulness of a blended learning teaching approach, i.e. online learning combined with face-to-face learning, compared to a conventional attendance format. In both the seminar formats students worked together in constant small groups (3-4 persons). The learning results and related variables were assessed using a variety of tests, questionnaires and interviews. The blended-learning-groups (a total of 70 students) had 4 attendance and 9 online sessions, whereas the attendance groups (60 students) had 14 attendance sessions only. In order to make the learning progress between the groups comparable, at the beginning of the seminar the students were allocated as to the results of a baseline test assessing their knowledge about PE. The same test was conducted afterwards to measure the gain in knowledge with regard to the content of the lectures. The ability to transfer the acquired content-knowledge into PE practice (learning transfer) was assessed by means of a poster presentation, which had to be prepared by each student group during the final phase of the seminar. In addition to the performance tests, data concerning the following variables were collected: learning environment, learning style, learning motivation, team competences. Furthermore, group interviews were carried out and videotaped, in order to analyze the effects of team work on learning performance.

At present, the following results were obtained:

- *The students of the blended-learning-seminar gained significantly more content-knowledge than the students of the attendance seminar ($p < .01$).*
- *This finding is consistent with a significantly higher appreciation of the learning environment by the blended-learning-groups ($p < .01$).*
- *However, no significant difference in the learning transfer could be found.*

Key words: physical education, sport

Introduction

The current syllabus reform interprets the subject of “Sports” in the sense of “physical education” from various perspectives in terms of pedagogical viewpoints, and structures its content based on fields of exercise. This has bequeathed a “mediation gap” that endangers the implementation of the syllabus draft into concrete forms of mediation and organisation in

physical education (cf. Prohl, 2004). The objective of the project contributed by the Institute of Sports Science at Goethe University, Frankfurt, was to counter this “performance gap” in this first reformed syllabus generation concerning sports as a school subject right from the first stage of teacher training at university level with e-learning-based course offerings, in order to ensure development in competencies specific to the profession.

Educational mandate

Sports, games and exercise have become increasingly important in our society – in view of the demographic developments and the challenges laid down by alarming national and international findings concerning the state of health of children and youths (e.g. WIAD studies 1 and 2: Klaes et al., 2000, 2003; EU study: Brettschneider & Naul, 2004; Brettschneider et al., 2006). Lack of exercise, poor nutrition, smoking and alcohol abuse are the major risk factors for human health.

A life-long motivation for practising sports is an important prerequisite in coping with these challenges and maintaining a healthy lifestyle for people of all ages. A key role in the foundational

work for creating this motivation is ascribed – alongside other factors such as family, friends, etc. – to school sports or physical education at school. Despite the urgency and virulence of the challenges delineated above, physical education cannot be restricted to considerations of health alone (cf. Prohl, 2006, S. 147ff.). It is much more a matter of an “all-round development of capabilities, proficiencies and skills in sports” (e.g. Hessian Ministry of Cultural Affairs o.J.a, p. 18). Physical education must be able to transmit the diverse meanings of sports which, besides health, also include accomplishment, daring, bodily experience, creative organisation and cooperation (see Figure 1 ; from: Hessian Ministry of Cultural Affairs, HKM, 2005, p. 5).



Figure 1. Pedagogical perspectives in school sports (Hessian Ministry of Cultural Affairs, 2005, p. 5).

Leistung	=	Accomplishment
Gesundheit	=	Health
Wagnis	=	Daring
Pädagogische Perspektiven	=	Pedagogical perspectives
Cooperation	=	Co-operation
Körpererfahrung	=	Bodily experience
Gestaltung	=	Creative organisation

This pedagogical interpretation of sports with its multiple perspectives in the reformed syllabuses goes hand in hand with an opening up of content. Besides classic types of sports, topics involving multifaceted cultural exercise activities are categorised into varying fields of exercise (cf. fig. 2). This means that physical

education provides specific opportunities for updating educational potential that transcend pure proficiency mediation and are particularly to be found in a didactic interpretation of educational content as well as in a methodical shaping of the mediation process (in extenso cf. Prohl, 2006, p. 177ff.).

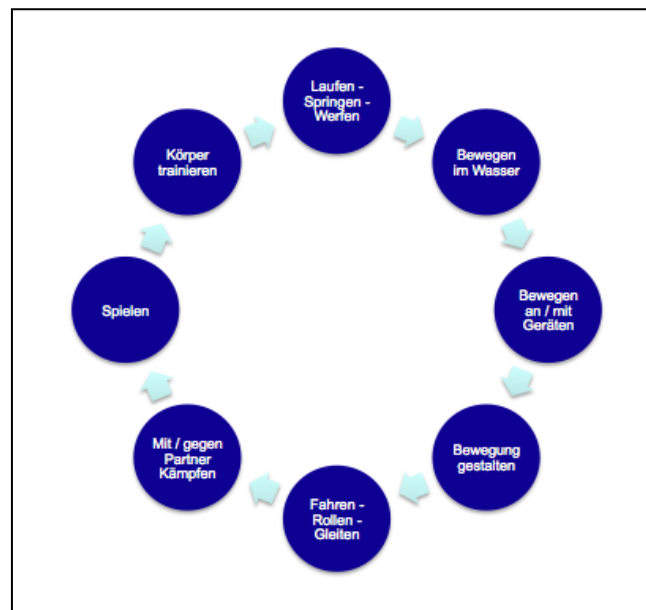


Fig. 2: Fields of exercise in physical education (according to Hessian Ministry of Cultural Affairs, 2005)

Laufen – Springen – Werfen	=	Running – Jumping – Throwing
Körper trainieren	=	Body training
Bewegen im Wasser	=	Exercising in water
Spielen	=	Playing
Bewegen an / mit Geräten	=	Exercising on / with apparatus
Mit / gegen Partner Kämpfen	=	Fighting with / against partner
Bewegung gestalten	=	Creative movement
Fahren – Rollen – Gleiten	=	Travelling – Rolling – Sliding

As has been shown by the results of the syllabus analysis carried out in the course of a national SPRINT survey (cf. Prohl & Krick 2005), this reformed syllabus generation represents a clear horizon where consensus can be achieved in terms of values and objectives for sports pedagogics that are characterised by the idea of “physical education”. However, in the current didactical discussion about sports, it is increasingly pointed out that the implementation of the syllabus drafting into concrete forms of mediation and organisation in physical education is to a great extent unexplained (cf. Beckers, 2003; Prohl, 2004). Dietrich Kurz, the driving force behind the syllabus reform, declared in a current overview report that the perception of the new syllabus in pedagogical practice of physical education is particularly ambivalent for the reason that:

“Specialised conferences and teaching staff may be able to welcome the new liberty and the greater pedagogical leeway that the syllabuses

offer. However, they can also feel abandoned and overwhelmed by them if advice and help are not forthcoming from another source. Advanced training and good materials related to the challenges faced are more in demand than ever before but have been rather the exception up to now – a pertinent criticism” (Kurz 2008, p. 212).

Project objectives

The objective of the planned project is to counter this designated “performance gap” in the reformed syllabus generation as regards to sports as a school subject right from the first stage of teacher training at university level with an e-learning-based educational concept. The purpose of this is to enable a development in competencies specific to the profession in the course of teacher training studies. Professionalism in the sense of this teaching expertise comprehends in the first place an aspect of constructive and multi-dimensional creative formation and monitoring. Against such

a background, the teaching profession can be defined as a “formative profession” (Schön, 1987). On the other hand, an “attitude of being involved” (Neuweg 2005, p. 211) is necessary that is expressed in a sensitive and adaptive engagement towards practical action. This type of competency can only be developed with close reference to concrete requirements in future professional areas. For this reason, forms of situational learning seem to be particularly profitable.

In terms of German (KMK – Kultusministerkonferenz, Conference of the Federal States’ Ministers of Cultural Affairs) teacher training standards, the project contributed by the Institute of Sports Science at Goethe University, Frankfurt aims principally at encouraging professionalised competencies for the proper and expert planning, execution and evaluation of physical education, the furthering of school boys and girls to learn and work self-reliantly plus the mediation of values and standards, and the bolstering of self-determined judgement and action. In this, a didactical and teaching method basis for physical education training was divided into topics, discussed theoretically and illustrated medially. The e-courses designed for teacher training offer a multitude of video sequences from real-life co-operative learning situations in physical education that are focussed on teaching method issues.

Learning Content – Components and Structure

Good practice methods

Central to web-based courses are good-practice co-operative learning situations in the “exercising on / with apparatus” field of exercise. At the sports pedagogics department of the Institute of Sports Science at Goethe University, Frankfurt, these teaching methods have already been the subject of intensive investigation for some years now in the course of quasi-experimental field studies (cf. Gröben 2005; Bähr 2005; Bähr, Prohl & Gröben 2008). It has been shown that these methods offer advantages in the harmonised mediation of relevant disciplinary-motoric and transdisciplinary-social

competencies and are superior to traditional teacher-centred physical education in terms of learning performance. The aims of this type of cooperative group education are:

- to enable a greater measure of participation by learners through a reduction in guidance by teachers.
- to attain more self-reliance in practising, once the means of solving a situation have been set free, and thereby achieving an overall intensive and sustainable learning process.
- to develop social competencies by means of resolving assignments communally.
- to promote proficiency in solidarity and co-determination through self-reliant work in a team and to contribute in this way to the development of the learners’ maturity.

This means that co-operative learning provides didactic options in universities for presenting the proper and expert planning, execution and evaluation of physical education. It also substantiates possibilities of promoting self-reliant learning and working, as well as fulfilling the task of value and standard mediation within the context of physical education (“two-fold task”).

Content module

The content that has been developed is composed of a set of SCORM courses, in which the theory-driven preparation of teaching method skills is clearly illustrated with “good-practice” examples. To help visualise the context setting, striking events are included in the module in the form of video clips that have been taken from real-life school physical education situations. Approximately 18 hours of physical education from eleven Hessian 5th year school classes have been recorded and digitalised (approximately 5TB of data). After examination and editing, approximately 50 flash-based video clips were placed in a resource centre to be used in the courses. The following modules are currently available online at ILIAS:

- M 1: Cooperative Learning – Introduction and state of research (45 min; 5 clips).
- M 2: Characteristics of co-operative learning in physical education (45 min; 10 clips).
- M 3: Actions of schoolchildren in co-operative learning (45 min; 10 clips).

- M 4: Actions of teachers in physical education set up in a co-operative way (45 min; 10 clips).
- M 5: Special problems in co-operative learning (45 min; 10 clips).

Figure 3. Course overview on the learning platform and example of an opened module in the course player

Didactic and Learning Theory Implementation

Seminar concept

As a supplement to the many various representations of educational concepts in print

form, the content put forward here offers examples of good practice in school sports that are suitable both for studying in private and with an accompanying teacher in class. They can thus be employed within the context of university seminar work and also in other places of learning. This was carried out in the main study

period of a teacher training programme in the course of a pilot session.

The courses for the field of exercise “Exercising on and with apparatus” have been designed methodically according to a hybrid learning approach. Hybrid learning or integrated learning are designations for a form of learning that strives to link up traditional classroom sessions and modern forms of e-learning in a didactically meaningful way. This concept is intended to combine the effectiveness and flexibility of electronic forms of learning with the social aspects of face-to-face communication.

Some specific features of this seminar concept are as follows:

- work in constant small groups throughout the entire seminar.
- development of contents with the aid of self-teaching modules.
- regular work assignments during the online phases.
- situational learning by means of illustrative examples from authentic teaching.
- intensive supervision during the online phases.
- pinning down the (intermediate) results in classroom sessions.
- documentation and evaluation of learning performance by means of a poster presentation and knowledge test.

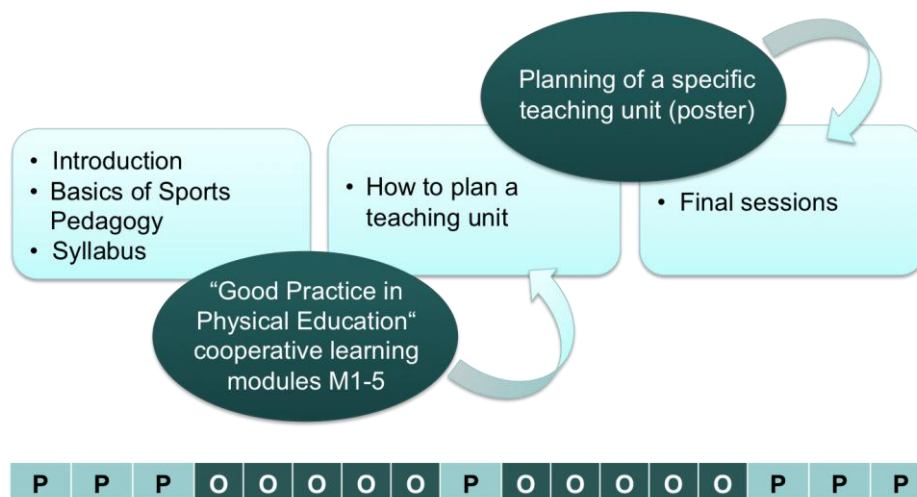


Figure 4. Structure and contents of the hybrid learning seminar (left) compared with a conventional text-based classroom seminar (right)

Präsenzseminar	= Classroom seminar
Woche	= Week
ET Klausur	= Initial test
Einführung Grundlagen ESU	= Introduction basics PE
Grundlagen ESU	= Basics PE
Lehrplan allg.	= General teaching plan
Präsenz	= Classroom
Grundlagen KL	= Basics cooperative learning (CL)
KL-Lehrerhandeln	= CL teacher actions
KL-content M1-5 (4-7)	= CL content Mods. 1-5 (4-7)
KL-Schülerhandeln	= CL school children actions
Diskussion	= Discussion
Präsenz	= Classroom
KI-Spezielle Probleme	= CL special problems
Unterrichtsplanung allg. KL als Bsp	= Gen. teaching planning CL as example
Sachanalyse allg.	= Gen. practical analysis
Unterrichtsplanung (8-10)	= Teaching planning (8-10)
Lerngruppenanalyse	= Learning group analysis
Evaluation Gruppeninterviews	= Evaluation Group interviews
Konzeption des UV	= Teaching concept
Blended-Learning-Seminar	= Hybrid learning seminar
Abschluss Sitzung	= Closing session

Learning platform

The technological basis of the above seminar concept is the distribution of e-learning content across a suitable learning platform to which both students and teachers have access in the online phases. This type of platform is a complex software system that serves to make learning content available and to organise learning processes whilst enabling communication to take place between those teaching and those learning independent of location. The project group at the Institute of Sports Science at Goethe University, Frankfurt utilised the HeLPS group learning platform for this purpose. The sports-edu learning platform is based on ILIAS and offers users the possibility of setting up and managing seminar groups, of posting content, forums, and chats and also provides a news system and file storage with a view to enabling and supporting collaborative work in groups.

Didactic Application Scenarios in Universities and Evaluation Results

Research focus and investigative approach

Since the winter term 2008/09, the content developed at the Institute of Sports Science at Goethe University, Frankfurt has been applied within the context of the physical education specialisation module of the teaching training programme.

In the course of control group testing, the effects of the hybrid-learning seminar were investigated empirically in terms of receptive knowledge acquisition, the transferability of the knowledge acquired and the perception or assessment of the seminar work by the participants. In the “hybrid” groups (2 seminars; $n = 75$), 4 classroom and 9 online sessions were offered; in the classroom groups (2 seminars; $n = 75$) 14 classroom sessions were carried out (cf. Fig. 4).

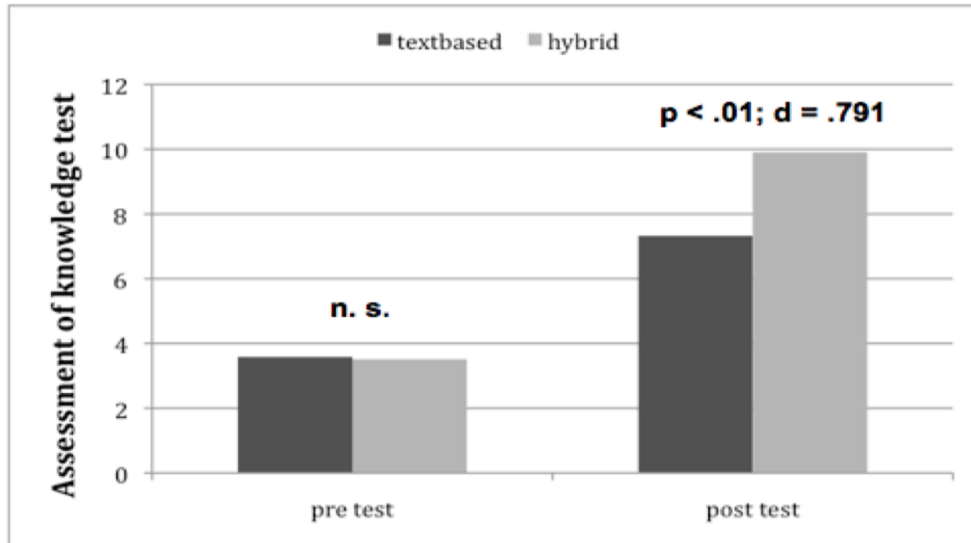
In order to be able to estimate the effectiveness of the pilot seminar, a knowledge test was carried out at its beginning and conclusion, and supplemented by a poster presentation. As regards prior knowledge, equally strong test groups were formed, in which the parallelising criterion was performance in an

initial test. The assessment of both tests and posters was made by “blind” ratings ($r=.87$). The knowledge test investigated receptive learning performance in the “exercising on and with apparatus” field of exercise; the posters investigated transfer capacity for the teaching method knowledge acquired to another field of exercise. In addition to this, data was recorded and evaluated using variance statistics for assessing seminar progress within the context of the standardised and mandatory teaching evaluation system (EvaSys) at Goethe University, Frankfurt.

Results

The following results have been obtained to date:

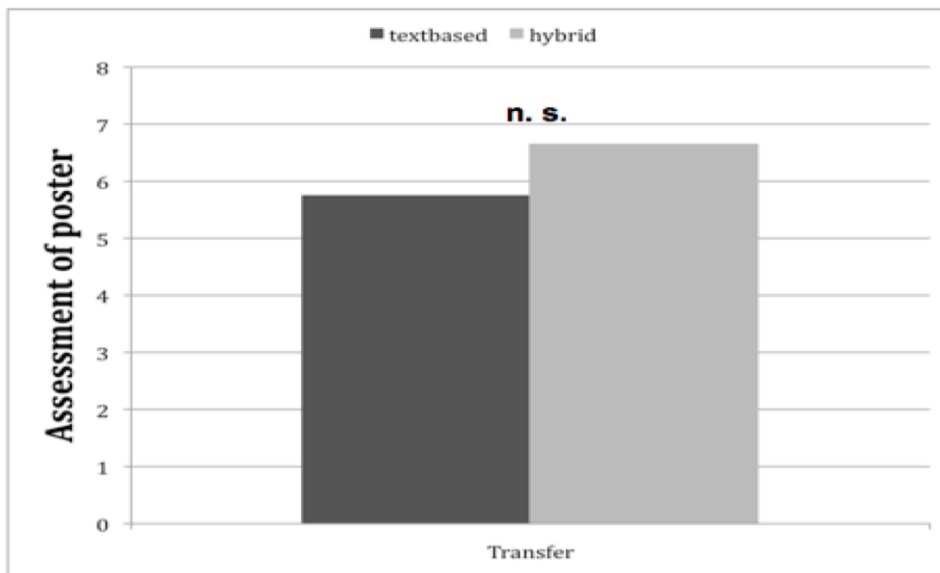
- With regards to receptive learning performance (initial and concluding knowledge test), an appreciable growth in knowledge could be determined in both groups (intra-group comparison). In post-testing, marked advantages were evident in the hybrid-learning group (inter-group comparison: $p < .01$, $d = .791$, cf. Fig. 6).



Bewertung des Bewertung des Wissenstests = Assessment of knowledge test
 ET = Pre test
 AT = Post test

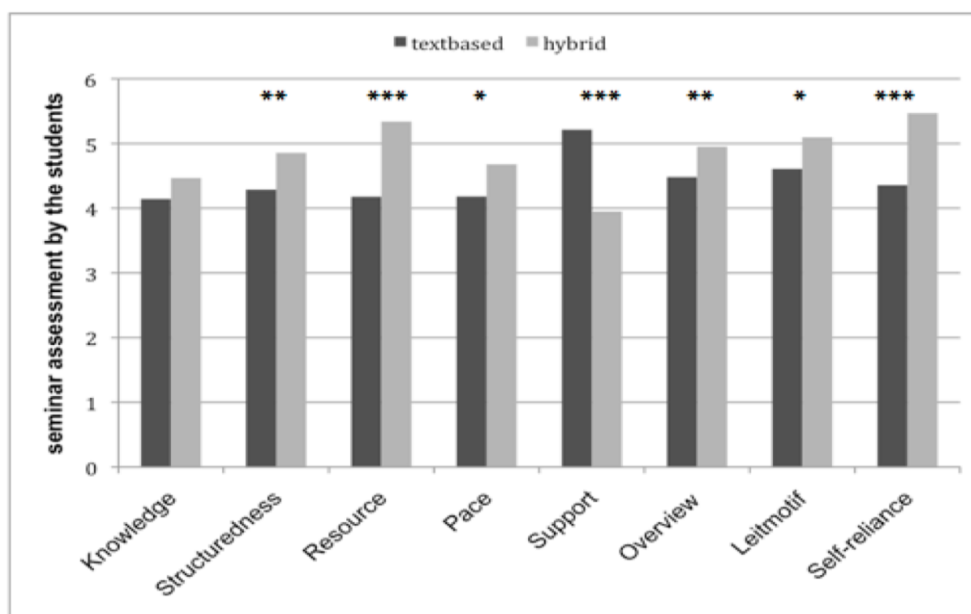
Figure 6: Assessment of test (receptive learning performance) in group comparison

By contrast, the transfer test results are considerably less conclusive, though a slight advantage in favour of the hybrid learning group could be measured. However, this was only significant in terms of trend ($p < .10$, cf. Fig. 7).



Bewertung des Posters = Assessment of poster

Fig. 7: Poster quality (transfer learning performance) in group comparison



Wissen = Knowledge
 Hilfsmittel = Resource
 Unterstützung = Support
 Roter Faden = Leitmotiv

Strukturiertheit = Structuredness
 Tempo = Pace
 Überblick = Overview
 Selbstständigkeit = Self-reliance

Fig. 8. Seminar assessment by students

The positive findings in terms of receptive learning performance (Fig.6) correspond to better self-assessment in the hybrid learning groups. This data was collected by means of the EVASYS questionnaire from Goethe University ($p < .01$ und $.05$, cf. Fig. 9).

To sum up, it has been demonstrated that the hybrid learning seminar performed significantly better in some of the effect areas tested and worse in almost none. Only the assessment of “support through session management” showed an appreciable difference in favour of the classroom session (cf. Fig. 9).

Resumé and Outlook

As described, initial technological and content related foundations were established with respect to hybrid teaching-learning scenarios relating to physical education in schools. Based on the evaluation results, it can be stated that, all in all, the content utilised represents an interesting, innovative and effective option for the subject of sports in a teacher training programme. However, the assessment of the hybrid learning group must be

noted that obviously felt insufficiently (personally) supported by its lecturer. This finding probably reflects a general didactic problem with e-learning.

The content available so far, for reasons stated in the project proposal, forms only a limited part of the contents, topics and teaching methods in this area of academic education. However, the conclusion can be drawn from the hybrid learning group’s poor transfer capabilities when compared with receptive learning performance that the visualisation of good practice examples is only effective in a similar field of exercise. It must therefore be assumed that available picture material is more effective in a specific context. It follows that the production of other content is absolutely necessary to achieve a high-class, sustainable and professional range of hybrid learning products.

For these reasons, the remaining six fields of exercise in the Hessian syllabus for the subject of sports should be addressed and illustrated in respect of each of the teaching method options given.

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Pedagogy and Health Promotion

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to explore and analyze three aspects of the relationship between general pedagogy and Health education.

Two different doctoral dissertations on Health education, claimed to be written from different scientific positions (hermeneutic and positivistic), were analyzed from science--philosophical, knowledge-theoretical and methodological points of view.

The analysis showed that none of the dissertations contained any deeper discussion on science-philosophical or knowledge-theoretical issues and that both of the dissertations were written mainly in the hermeneutic tradition.

The reason for this is probably that Health education, especially promotive Health education, handles divergent questions that seldom, or never, can be handled with positivistic methods.

One consequence of this is that the results of research on promotive Health education rarely, or never, are normative and can tell how to teach about health in a specific educational situation. Instead the results can be used as a background for didactic reflection when planning and realizing Health education initiatives.

Another consequence is that the present trend with demand for evidence based Health education, can be questioned! Because promotive Health education is so heavily loaded with divergent questions, and because pedagogical research, according to Habermas, has an emancipatory or critical "knowledge interest". Research can explain what is going on in one situation but not predict what will happen in a similar, but other situation! Therefore this paper argues that the idea of evidence based, promotive health education is hard, or impossible, to realize.

Key words: health education, health promotion, pedagogy, evidence based.

Introduction

In the advanced level-course "Vetenskapsfilosofi, Kunskapsteori och Metodskolning, 15 hp" at School of Education and Communication (HLK) in Jönköping, one of the examination tasks is to produce a paper that describes the analysis and comparison of two different dissertations with different approaches to science. One of the dissertations shall have a mainly positivistic approach while the other should be more hermeneutic in its appearance.

My main research interest is located in the area of "Health and Learning in School", i.e. what learning, and consequently, what teaching is required if the students shall be able, and willing, to take responsibility for their own health and for the development of the society in a more health-enhancing way?

But I am also interested in how pupils' health, in its widest sense, affect their ability and willingness to learn, that is the reciprocal relation between learning and health!

When I searched for suitable dissertations on this issue, there were not many to find, at least not in Sweden. But also world-wide there seems to be little research in this issue.

There is a lot of research, mainly positivistic, about students health and there is a lot of research, often more hermeneutic, about students' learning.

But few research projects link these two issues to each other, especially not with focus on how students mental health affects the conditions for their learning in school.

Finally I decided to read, analyze, compare and describe two Swedish dissertations;

“De nya hälsomissoinärerna – rörelser i kosvägen mellan pedagogik och hälsopromotion” [9] and “Hälsoarbetets möte med skolan i teori och praktik” [11].

None of these dissertations have a typical positivistic approach to their research – both are more or less hermeneutic – but they have different foci in their theoretical background sections on Philosophy of science, Theory of knowledge and Methodology. That’s why I chose these two dissertations.

Aim

The Aim of this analysis of the two dissertations is to find differences in their approach to science and to see if these differences are reflected in the researchers view upon the role of health promotion in school as well as their understanding of the role of pedagogy in health promotion.

Background

One of the reasons why there are relatively few dissertations discussing the reciprocal relation between learning and health could be that “Health promotion” which is focus in most Health education projects, is a relatively new issue that not yet has fully found its academic legitimacy.

Learning, with its “brothers” and “sisters” (and perhaps “parents”) pedagogy, pedagogical work, didactics etc, is a more well defined concept and relatively well established in most universities, especially those with teacher education.

When I talk about health initiatives in schools, I talk about Health promotion.

Health promotion is defined in Ottawa charter [16] as “*the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health. To reach a state of complete physical mental and social wellbeing, an individual or group must be able to identify and to realize aspirations, to satisfy needs, and to change or cope with the environment. Health is, therefore, seen as a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living. Health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities. Therefore, health promotion is not just the responsibility of the*

health sector, but goes beyond healthy lifestyles to wellbeing” [17].

Health promotion has one of its roots in Health prevention, which has its origin in medical science. Another root Health promotion has in pedagogy, which is obvious from the following definition of the concept: *Health promotion = Healthy public policy x Health education* [15].

Within the concepts of Health Prevention and Health promotion the definition of health plays a crucial role. There are many different definitions of health.

Some are more medical and humoristic as e.g. “*Healthy is only the one who is not sufficiently examined*” or “*Health is the result of successful medical treatment*” to more psychosocial and holistic definitions e.g. *Health is the ability to realize important aims in life* [12] or “*Health is a state of well-being where the individual’s body, psyche, feelings and soul are in balance with each other, with the society, the nature and cosmos*” (American Medical Holistic Association).

The official definition of health is the one launched by WHO in 1948. *Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity* [18]. This definition is important because it points out that well-being, and not only the absence of disease or infirmity, are important factors for health.

While Health promotion is more focused on well-being and how to promote well-being, Health prevention is more occupied with disease and infirmity and how to avoid these conditions.

In this aspect of health the discussion on risk factors and protective factors is very important [7].

Risk- as well as protective factors can be present at both individual-, family-, peer-, school- and society levels and often a riskfactor and a protective factor are “the two sides of the same coin”, e.g. while bad academic performance is a risk factor, good academic performance is considered to be a protective factor on school level.

Present research shows that the number of protective factors a person has access to, minus the number of risk factors the same person is exposed to, is a good predictor of that persons health development in a broad sense [14].

In Health education initiatives in school that have an “promotion approach”, the protective factors, and how to strengthen them, are in focus while in Health education initiatives that have an “preventive approach” the risks, and how to avoid them, are in focus.

Personal protective factors are for example self esteem, coping ability, ability to control anger, social competence etc. One idea of health promoting Health education is that the school should support the development and strengthening of these protection factors. But this kind of health education should also develop skills and competences to cope with, and change the situation is the family, in school and in society towards a more health promoting situation i.e. action competence [1].

In the “preventive approach” of Health education, focus is on teaching the students “risk awareness” and how to avoid different risks such as drugs, alcohol, a fat, sweet, salty and low-fiber food, smoking, sexual promiscuity, etc.

From what is written above in this Background section, it is obvious that pedagogy plays a crucial role in education for health in schools. But what this role looks like, and is performed, is very dependent on which approach to health education that the individual school or the teacher/s decide to realize.

In a promoting approach the pedagogy used is probably very different from the pedagogy used in a preventive approach.

The role of pedagogy in Health education is also “on the table” in the discussion about the Successful school [4] and possible differences and similarities between the Successful school and the Health promoting school [3].

If there is a close relationship between pedagogy and Health education, a change in the common approach to one of these factors, should be reflected in a change also in the other factor, i.e. a change in the common view of pedagogy should bring about a change also in the approach to Health education or vice versa.

In Great Britain health promotion at present have a very weak position, both in universities and in the public health sector (Personal communication with Derek Colquhoun, professor of urban learning at Hull university) Whether this could be the result of a changing approach to

pedagogy, teaching and learning in Great Britain, is still under discussion.

Another reason for the diminishing importance of Health promotion in Great Britain could also be caused by a change in research policy. More funding is directed to medical and technical research while less funding is available for humanistic and pedagogic research. Also this assumption is still under discussion.

In Sweden Health promotion is still an important issue in school health initiatives. But presently big changes are announced and undertaken in the national educational policy. In teacher education there will be more focus on knowledge of academic subjects and less on “common teacher skills” as pedagogy, developmental psychology, leadership, conflict handling etc. (Personal communication with Hans Albin Larsson, professor of History, member of the “Teacher Education Committee” and “vice president of the Swedish national school inspection authority).

And it is these “common teacher skills” that are important when the school intends to develop and strengthen the students personal protective factors.

If the ongoing change in Swedish education policy also will be followed by a change in the approach to health education, from a promotion approach to a prevention approach, still remains to see.

Therefore it is interesting to see how relations between school and different health initiatives as well as the relation between Health promotion and pedagogy are described in the two chosen dissertations.

Method

The method I use for analyzing these two dissertations is to read them carefully, especially the sections about scientific approach and methodology and put these in relation to what is said about philosophy of science, theory of knowledge and methodology in the course literature.

Finally I compare what is written in the dissertations about relations between health and school and between Health promotion and pedagogy with some international textbooks in this field. The purpose for this comparison is to see what differences and similarities there are between

Sweden and some other countries (Great Britain and Germany) in the discourse around health education in school.

Result

The overall aim of the thesis *Hälsoarbetets möte med skolan i teori och praktik* [11] "is to investigate whether, and if so how, schools can be developed in a way that foregrounds a greater awareness in their role of the promotion of health". The methods used in the research is a comprehensive analysis of literature on the issue of health and learning [10].

The literature analysis was followed by a collection of data made in connection with a number of evaluations of different school projects with the purpose to develop health promoting schools. This data collection was made mainly by interviews and the method used during these interviews was "creative interviewing" (p. 106).

According to the author, there are three circumstances that have contributed to the creation of the thesis *De nya hälsomissionärerna – rörelser i korsvägen mellan pedagogik och hälsopromotion* [9]. These circumstances are

- "a wish to understand the place of pedagogy on the arena for health promotion",
- an ambition to discover and defend a certain degree of scientific competence among (the author's) students and to account for the art and direction if the health promotion work",
- funding from the University college in Värnersborg.

The method used in the research is mainly analysis of students' examination papers in the course "Application of pedagogy in Health promotion". These papers are on academic C-level and the students final examination thesis before receiving their "B.Ed. with a major in health promotion".

These papers describe the students' own research projects in the field of Health promotion and are not restricted to the school for children or young people.

Many papers describe projects undertaken in other settings and with other target groups, but with a purpose to promote the health among the persons in these groups.

As pointed out in the Introduction section, none of these dissertations have a positivistic

approach to science. None of them use questionnaires, medical analysis, statistical calculations or other methods that could be considered quantitative, in their research. On the contrary, both dissertations apply more qualitative methods on literature reviews, analysis of students papers and "creative interviews".

In spite of great similarities in scientific approach between the two dissertations, there still are important differences, especially in to what degree the two dissertations relate to philosophy of science.

For example B. Mårdén discusses rationalism and empirism as two radically different philosophies of science that are important if we want to understand Health promotion in a scientific way (p. 16). B. Mårdén places Health promotion partly in the rationalistic tradition because it has been defined as a social science and it has been decided that Health promotion should take its starting point in the healthy, not in the illness!

But B. Mårdén [9] admits that also empirism plays an important role in Health promotion, mainly because of the relationship between Health promotion and medicine and medical science mainly builds on a empiristic philosophy of science. B. Mårdén also gives references to H.G. Gadamer (p. 19) who really places health promotion in the Hermeneutic philosophical tradition [2].

So my conclusion is that B. Mårdén positions his research on the "eclectic" or "pluralistic" [5] arena where he picks different elements from different scientific philosophies.

In L. Nilsson [11] I cannot find such a profound discussions about the philosophies of science as in B. Mårdén [9]. L. Nilsson seems to take it for granted that Health promotion is a natural part of a hermeneutic philosophy of science. But from the following citation it seems obvious that Nilsson also think of an eclectic perspective in her research "*can one, as I have done, mix results received not just with different methods but also emerging from different ontological and epistemological approaches? Yes, you not only can, in social science research there is a need for combining different scientific approaches and methods to be able to get*

further in these problems that are about several disciplines” (p. 102).

Except from this philosophical reflection, L. Nilsson seems to be more occupied with questions about methods.

L. Nilsson compare her research to a journey where she sometimes have a map, sometimes not, she travels through different landscapes, meet different people, have no exact plan for her journey but let the landscape and meetings guide her way to the goal, which is to try to better understand how educational efforts in school can contribute to the development of the students’ health.

L. Nilsson starts her research with knowledge gathered with quantitative methods, i.e. her literature review, but at the same time she argues that *“All research starts with a qualitative approach in the fundamental sense that all research methods are, at bottom, qualitative and are, for that matter, equally objective; the use of quantitative data or mathematical procedures does not eliminate the intersubjective element that underlies social research”* (p. 104).

The main part of L. Nilsson’s research is based on interviews and participating observations. She elaborates her findings in these activities by writing, which L. Nilsson means is her main method. This leads me to the conclusion that L. Nilsson’s research is qualitative research based in a hermeneutic philosophy of science.

New Knowledge

What new knowledge has the research behind these two dissertations developed or revealed?

In my view, none of these dissertations delivers new knowledge that can be directly adopted by colleagues and other professionals working in the field of pedagogy and health promotion and applied in their daily work. In this respect the result of the research described in the dissertations is not normative – it gives no clear advices or receipts on how to use pedagogy, or which form of pedagogy shall be used, when working with health promotion projects in schools and other settings.

Although B. Mårdén argues that his ambitions are not only descriptive – he also intend to give some normative advices [9], I can’t find these normative advices anywhere in his dissertation!

And you will not find any clear advices on how to integrate Health promotion with the normally ongoing work in school to a health promoting and effective school in L. Nilsson’s dissertation either.

But what these researchers and their dissertations have contributed to, is a deeper understanding of the different ways the “Health promotion students” apprehend the role of pedagogy in Health promotion (B. Mårdén) and different factors that can act as obstacles or facilitators for those who intend to carry through a Health promotion project on their school (or any other setting) (L. Nilsson).

In this way, the results of the research, and the dissertations, can function as a background for didactic and methodological reflections for those that are about to initiate, implement and institutionalize a health promoting project with the aims that this project should be integrated in the regular activities in school and promote not only health, but also learning, among the students.

And maybe that is the best you can expect from pedagogical research – that it shall function as a background for reflection rather than as normative statements about how to handle different educational situations. Maybe we, together with Plato can see pedagogical science and research as theoretical, rather a way of look upon the world in the light of the rational reason than a way to handle the reality and the world? [8].

Ethical Aspects

None of the dissertations accounts explicitly for any ethical considerations. I cannot find any research-ethical discussions anywhere in the texts.

And in my opinion, these two research projects don’t face any big ethical challenges.

As far as I can see, the literature review in Nilsson’s dissertation needs no ethical consideration. And the participating schools and the interviews and interviewed persons

(informants?) are “de-identified” and described in a way that it is not possible to recognize them. If the participating schools and persons have been informed that their participation in the health education project, and the evaluation of it, should be used in a research project is not evident from the text in the thesis.

B. Mårdén uses his students’ theses in his research. This could be a problem if the students were not informed and if it was possible to identify individual students from the texts in Mårdén’s dissertation. I can not find anything in Mårdén’s text about information to the students but even if B. Mårdén use citations from the students’ papers, and publish them in his dissertation, the students are de-identified and given different pseudonyms in the text [9, p. 233].

There is another ethical problem in research and that is the use of the results from the research. There is an ongoing and never ending discussion about to which degree a researcher is responsible for how the results of his research are used. This problem is generally more evident in medical, technical and scientific research than in social and pedagogical research.

As far as I can see, there are no such ethical problems with the results of the two research projects that I have chosen to study!

Discussion

The reading and analysis of the two dissertations has raised the question “in fashion” about “evidence based health promotion” in my mind.

It is obvious that different organizations and authorities recommend, or even demand, the use of evidence based techniques or even projects in different intervention activities, also in Health promotion projects.

The idea of “evidence basing” has its origin in medical science. There it is comparatively easy to design and undertake big double blind tests, with certain drugs or medical techniques, on quite big and homogenous selections of a population. And it is likely that such a test would give the same result in different parts of the world if it was applied on the same selection of the population. Therefore it is relatively easy to understand why there is such a strong demand

for evidence based practice in medical treatments.

But this demand for evidence based practice has spread also to the Health promotion sector. And it could even be busy invading the educational sector (personal conversation Tomas Kroksmark, professor of pedagogy at School of Education and Communication, Jönköping University). It is easy to accept that evidence based practice plays an important role in Health prevention with its close relation to medical science. But the question is to what degree it is possible to evidence base different practices in pedagogy? And because pedagogy plays a crucial role in Health promotion, the same question is valid for this kind of health education.

According to J. Habermas [6] different kinds of science have different kinds of “knowledge-interest”. Technical, scientific and medical research all have a normative knowledge-interest aiming at development. The results of this kind of research can tell you what to do in different situations and what the result most likely will be.

Social science, on the other hand, has a critical and emancipatory knowledge-interest. The purpose of such research is to understand what, how and why something is going on, instead of trying to predict the future.

E.F. Schumacher [13] designates the former kind of research as “research for manipulation” and the latter as “research for understanding”.

Pedagogy is a part of the social science and therefore pedagogical research is a research for understanding rather than a research for manipulation. This means that pedagogy rarely can deliver normative statements about how to handle a certain situation or how to teach in a particular group of students or how to organize teaching in a special subject.

Perhaps this can be the reason for the well-known fact that practicing teachers relatively seldom are genuinely interested in results from pedagogical research?

The reason for this could be that pedagogy and teaching are working with questions that Schumacher name “divergent questions” in opposite to natural science and physical medicine who mostly work with “convergent questions”.

“Convergent questions” are questions where it is possible to reach, and agree on, an answer that are accepted by all (or nearly all) researchers in the discipline in question, e.g. “which is the optimal temperature and pressure for synthesizing ammonia from nitrogen and hydrogen” or “how does beta-blockers work when they reduce the blood-pressure in the cardiovascular system?”

Divergent questions are questions that are so highly impregnated with attitudes and values, pre-assumptions, religious thoughts, own experiences, expectations for the future etc, that it is impossible to arrive at common answers accepted by all (or nearly all). For example “which were the true reasons behind the US attack on Iraq in 2005?” or “which is the best way to use corporal punishment when raising children?”

In my opinion, pedagogy is over-loaded with “divergent questions” and that is why pedagogical research never (or very seldom) can deliver normative statements, accepted by the big majority of teachers, on how to organize and realize teaching in different situations.

Another reason for this is that “pedagogical situations”, (teaching- and learning situations) are very complex and influenced by a lot of different factors of great importance for the processes going on. And in pedagogical research it is practically impossible to keep all factors, except the studied factor, constant to be able to say something normative about this factor.

So what pedagogical research can do, is to deliver a background for reflection when teachers reflect on their own teaching with the

purpose to develop and improve their own praxis.

But to be able to use results from pedagogical research in such a reflective process, teachers need to have a good deal of own experiences, tested experiences and tacit knowledge, to which they can relate the theories from research.

All these processes, described above, at the same time going on in pedagogical activities, makes it very difficult, at least in my opinion, to “evidence base” pedagogical methods and work.

As pedagogy is a crucial and very important part of Health promotion, I think that Health promotion suffers from the same problems as pedagogy/education when it comes to delivery of normative statements or “evidence basing”. Another reason for this is that Health promotion focuses health instead of illness. And the questions “What is health?” and “How to promote health?” are heavily divergent questions, which health promotion research can’t deliver any commonly accepted answers to.

So my conclusion is that the research from B. Mårdén and L. Nilsson, described in the two dissertations, deliver a very good background for teachers and health professionals when they reflect on, and make plans, for different health initiatives, inside or outside school. But the research doesn’t (and can’t) present any normative statements or commonly accepted, definite rules to use when realizing a health promoting project.

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Counteracting America's Value Orientation to Sport: A Perspective for the 21st Century

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Introduction

The term "*modernism*" is used to describe cultural movements in today's world that were caused by onrushing science, technology, and economic globalization. It is said to have started in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Conversely, *postmodernism*, as variously defined, can be described loosely as an effort by some intelligent and possibly wise people to react against what is happening to this *modern* world as it "races headlong" toward an indeterminate future.

It can be argued reasonably that America's thrust is modernistic to the nth degree. To the extent that this is true, I am arguing here conversely that Canada—and the rest of the world—should work to counteract America's value orientation as the world moves on into the 21st century. I believe that this can—and should be done—by adopting a position that might be called "moderate" postmodernism.

Granted that it will be most difficult for the Western world to consistently exhibit a different "thrust" than America. Nevertheless I believe that now is the time for the West to create a society characterized by the better elements of what has been termed postmodernism. In fact, I feel that the entire world will be *forced* to grapple with the basic thrust of modernism in the 21st century if they hope to avoid the "twilight" that is descending on "American culture" (Berman, 2000). You, the reader, may well question this stark statement. However, bear with me, and let us begin.

What is postmodernism? While most philosophers have been "elsewhere engaged"

for the past 50 plus years, what has been called postmodernism, and what I believe is poorly defined, has gradually become a substantive factor in broader intellectual circles. I freely admit to have been grumbling about the uncertain character of the term "postmodern" for decades. I say this because somehow it too has been used badly as have other philosophic terms such as existentialism, pragmatism, idealism, realism, etc. as they emerged as common parlance.

In this ongoing process, postmodernism was often used by a minority to challenge prevailing knowledge, and considerably less by the few truly seeking to analyze what was the intent of those who coined the term originally. For example, I am personally not suggesting, as some have, that scientific evidence and empirical reasoning are to be taken with a grain of salt based on someone's subjective reality. Further, if anything is worth saying, I believe it should be said as carefully and understandably as possible. Accordingly, the terms used must be defined, at least tentatively. Otherwise one can't help but think that the speaker (or writer) is either deceitful, a confused person, or has an axe to grind.

If nothing in the world is absolute, and one value is as good as another in a world increasingly threatened with collapse and impending doom, as some say postmodernists claim, then one idea is possibly as good as another in any search to cope with the planet's myriad problems. This caricature of a postmodern world, as one in which we can avoid dealing with the harsh realities facing humankind, is hardly what any rational person

might suggest. How can humankind choose to avoid (1) looming environmental disaster, (2) ongoing war because of daily terrorist threats, and (3) hordes of displaced, starving people, many of whom are now victims of conflicts within troubled cultures? Further, as we still occasionally hear said, what rational being would argue that one idea is really as good as another?

What then is humankind to do in the face of the present confusion and often conflicted assertions about postmodernism from several quarters that have been bandied about? First, I think we need to consider the world situation as carefully as we possibly can. Perhaps this will provide us with a snapshot of the milieu where we can at least see the need for a changing (or changed) perspective that would cause humankind to abandon the eventual, destructive elements of modernism that threaten us. An initial look at some of the developments of the second half of the twentieth century may provide a perspective from which to judge the situation.

Historical Perspective on the "World Situation"

In this search for historical perspective on world society today, we need to keep in mind the significant developments of the decades immediately preceding the turn of the 21st century. For example, Naisbitt (1982) outlined the "ten new directions that are transforming our lives." Then his wife and he suggested the "megatrends" they saw insofar as women's evolving role in the societal structure (Aburdene & Naisbitt, 1992). Here I am referring to:

- the concepts of the information society and Internet,
- "high tech/high touch",
- the shift to world economy,
- the need to shift to long-term thinking in regard to ecology,
- the move toward organizational decentralization,
- the trend toward self-help,
- the ongoing discussion of the wisdom of participatory democracy as opposed to representative democracy,
- a shift toward networking,
- a reconsideration of the "north-south" orientation, and

- the viewing of decisions as "multiple option" instead of "either/or".

Add to this the ever-increasing, lifelong involvement of women in the workplace, politics, sports, organized religion, and social activism, and we begin to understand that a new world order has descended upon us as we begin the 21st century.

Moving ahead in time slightly past the presentation of Naisbitt's first set of *Megatrends*, a second list of 10 issues facing political leaders was highlighted in the *Utne Reader*. It was titled "Ten events that shook the world between 1984 and 1994" (1994, pp. 58–74). Consider the following:

- the fall of communism and the continuing rise of nationalism,
- the environmental crisis and the Green movement,
- the AIDS epidemic and the "gay response,"
- continuing wars (29 in 1993) and the peace movement,
- the gender war,
- religion and racial tension,
- the concept of "West meets East" and resultant implications,
- the "Baby Boomers" came of age and "Generation X" has started to worry and complain because of declining expectation levels,
- the whole idea of globalism and international markets, and
- the computer revolution and the specter of the Internet.

It is true that the world's "economic manageability"--or adaptability to cope with such change--may have been helped by its division into three major trading blocs: (1) the Pacific Rim dominated by Japan [now by China as well], (2) the European Community very heavily influenced by Germany, and (3) North America dominated by the United States of America. While this appears to be true to some observers, interestingly perhaps something even more fundamental has occurred. Succinctly put, world politics seems to be "entering a new phase in which the fundamental source of conflict will be neither ideological nor economic." In the place of these, Samuel P. Huntington, of Harvard's Institute for Strategic Studies, asserted that now

the major conflicts in the world would be clashes between different groups of civilizations espousing fundamentally different cultures.

These clashes represent a distinct shift away from viewing the world as being composed of "first, second, and third worlds" as was the case during the Cold War. Thus, Huntington is arguing that in the 21st century the world will return to a pattern of development evident several hundred years ago in which civilizations will actually rise and fall. (Interestingly, this is exactly what the late Arnold Toynbee in his now famous theory of history development stated. However, to confuse the situation even more, most recently we have been warned by scholars about the increasing number of clashes within civilizations!).

Internationally, after the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (the USSR), Russia and the remaining communist regimes have been severely challenged as they sought to convert to more of a capitalistic economic system. Additionally, a number of other multinational countries are regularly showing signs of potential breakups. Further, the evidence points to the strong possibility that the developing nations are becoming ever poorer and more destitute with burgeoning populations resulting in widespread starvation caused by both social and ecological factors.

Further, Western Europe is facing a demographic time bomb even more than the United States because of the influx of refugees from African and Islamic countries, not to mention refugees from countries of the former Soviet Union. It is evident that the European Community is inclined to appease Islam's demands. However, the multinational nature of the European Community will tend to bring on economic protectionism to insulate its economy against the rising costs of prevailing socialist legislation.

Still further, there is evidence that Radical Islam, possibly along with Communist China, is becoming increasingly aggressive toward the Western culture of Europe and North America. At present, Islam gives evidence of replacing Marxism as the world's main ideology of confrontation. For example, Islam is dedicated to regaining control of Jerusalem and to force Israel

to give up control of land occupied earlier to provide a buffer zone against Arab aggressors. Also, China has been arming certain Arab nations, but how can the West be critical in this regard when we recall that the U.S.A. has also armed selected countries in the past [and present?] when such support was deemed in its interest?).

As Hong Kong, despite its ongoing protestations, is gradually absorbed into Communist China, further political problems seem inevitable in the Far East as well. Although North Korea is facing agricultural problems, there is the possibility (probability?) of the building of nuclear bombs there. Further, there is the ever-present fear worldwide that Iran, other smaller nations, and terrorists will somehow get nuclear weapons too. A growing Japanese assertiveness in Asian and world affairs also seems inevitable because of its typically very strong financial position. Yet the flow of foreign capital from Japan into North America has slowed down. This is probably because Japan has been confronted with its own financial crisis caused by inflated real estate and market values. Also, there would obviously be a strong reaction to any fall in living standards in this tightly knit society. Interestingly, further, the famed Japanese work ethic has become somewhat tarnished by the growing attraction of leisure opportunities.

The situation in Africa has become increasingly grim. Countries south of the Sahara Desert--that is, the dividing line between Black Africa and the Arab world--have experienced extremely bad economic performance in the past two decades. This social influence has brought to a halt much of the continental effort leading to political liberalization while at the same time exacerbating traditional ethnic rivalries. This economic problem has accordingly forced governmental cutbacks in many of the countries because of the pressures brought to bear by the financial institutions of the Western world that have been underwriting much of the development that had taken place. The poor are therefore getting poorer, and health and education standards have in many instances deteriorated even lower than they were previously. At this point one wonders how there

ever was thought about the average family ever living "the good life".

America's Position in the 21st Century

Reviewing America's position in the 21st century may help us to get to the heart of the matter about where the world is heading. For example, we could argue that North Americans do not fully comprehend that their unique position in the history of the world's development will in all probability change radically for the worse in the 21st century. Actually, of course, the years ahead are really going to be difficult ones for all of the world's citizens. However, it does appear that the United States is currently setting itself up "big time" for all kinds of societal difficulties. As the one major nuclear power, Uncle Sam has taken on the ongoing, overriding problem of maintaining large-scale peace. At the turn of the 20th century Teddy Roosevelt, while "speaking softly," nevertheless had his "big stick." The George ("W") Bush administration at the beginning of the 21st century had its "big stick", also, but it hasn't given a minute's thought about "speaking softly." The president actually claimed that America's assertive actions are "under God" and are designed for the good of all humanity. This has caused various countries, both large and small, to speak out about many perceive as a bullying posture. Some of these countries may or may not have nuclear arms capability already. That is what is so worrisome.

America, despite all of its proclaimed good intentions, is finding that history is going against it in several ways. This means that previous optimism may need to be tempered to shake politicians loose from delusions, some of which persist despite what seems to be commonsense logic. For example, it is troublesome that despite the presence of the United Nations, the United States has persisted in positioning itself as the world superpower. Such posturing and aggression, often by unilateral action with the hoped-for, belated sanction of the United Nations, has resulted in the two recent United States-led wars in the Middle East and other incursion into Somalia for very different reasons. There are also other similar situations on the recent horizon (e.g., Afghanistan, the former

Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Sudan, and Haiti, respectively). I haven't even mentioned the "Vietnam disaster" of the 1960s. And--let's face it!--who knows what the Central Intelligence Agency has been doing lately to make the world safe for American-style democracy? Cuba first and now look out Venezuela!

There may be reason--post-George "W" in the Obama era^o--that is, to expect selected U.S. cutbacks brought on by today's excessive world involvement and enormous debt. Of course, any such retrenchment would inevitably lead to a decline in the economic and military influence of the United States. But who can argue logically that the present uneasy balance of power is a healthy situation looking to the future? More than a generation ago, Norman Cousins sounded just the right note when he wrote: "the most important factor in the complex equation of the future is the way the human mind responds to crisis." The world culture as we know it today simply must respond adequately and peacefully to the many challenges with which it is being confronted. The societies and nations must individually and collectively respond positively, intelligently, and strongly if humanity as we have known it is to survive.

Additionally, problems and concerns of varying magnitude abound. It seems inevitable that all of the world will be having increasingly severe ecological problems, not to mention the ebbs and flows of an energy crisis. Generally, also, there is a worldwide nutritional problem, and an ongoing situation where the rising expectations of the underdeveloped nations, including their staggering debt, will have to be met somehow. These are just a few of the major concerns looming on the horizon. And, wait a minute, now we find that America has spent so much more "straightening out" the "enemy" that its debt has reached staggering proportions.

In his highly insightful analysis, *The twilight of American culture* (2000), Morris Berman explains that historically four factors are present when a civilization is threatened with collapse:

- (1) Accelerating social and economic inequality,
- (2) Declining marginal returns with regard to investments in organizational solutions to socioeconomic problems,

- (3) Rapidly dropping levels of literacy, critical understanding, and general intellectual awareness, and
- (4) Spiritual death--that is, Spengler's classicism: the emptying out of cultural content and the freezing (or repackaging) of it in formulas-kitsch, in short. (p. 19).

He then states that all of these factors are increasingly present on the American scene. Question: how did America get itself into this presenting highly precarious situation in regard to the daily lives of its citizens?

The Impact of Negative Social Forces Has Increased

Keeping our focus on humankind's search for "the good life" in the 21st century, in North America we are finding that the human recreational experience will have to be earned typically within a society whose very structure has been modified. For example, 1/ the concept of the traditional family structure has been strongly challenged by a variety of social forces (e.g., economics, divorce rate); 2/ many single people are finding that they must work longer hours; and 3/ many families need more than one breadwinner just to make ends meet. Also, the idea of a steady surplus economy may have vanished in the presence of a burgeoning budgetary deficit. What nonessentials do we cut from the debt-overwhelmed budget at a time like this to bring back what might be called fiscal sanity?

Additionally, many of the same problems of megalopolis living described back in the 1960s still prevail and are even increasing (e.g., declining infrastructure, crime rates in multiethnic populated centers, transportation gridlocks, overcrowded school classrooms). Thinking back to 1967, Prime Minister Lester Pearson asked Canadians to improve "the quality of Canadian life" as Canada celebrated her 100th anniversary as a confederation. Interestingly, still today, despite all of Canada's current identity problems, some pride can be taken in the fact that Canada has on occasion been proclaimed as the best place on earth to live. Nevertheless, we can't escape the fact that the work week is not getting shorter and shorter, and that the 1960s' prediction about achieving four different types of

leisure class still seems a distant dream for the large majority of people (Michael).

Further, the situation has developed in such a way that the presently maturing generation is finding 1/ that fewer good-paying jobs are available and 2/ that the average annual income is declining (especially if we keep a steadily rising cost of living in mind). What caused this to happen is not a simple question to answer. For one thing, despite the rosy picture envisioned a generation ago--one in which we were supposedly entering a new stage for humankind--we are unable today to cope adequately with the multitude of problems that have developed. This situation is true whether inner city, suburbia, exurbia, or small-town living is concerned. Transportation jams and gridlock, for example, are occurring daily as public transportation struggles to meet rising demand for economical transport within the framework of developing megalopolises.

Certainly, megalopolis living trends have not abated and will probably not do so in the predictable future. More and more families, where that unit is still present, need two breadwinners just to survive. Interest rates, although minor cuts are made when economic slowdowns occur, have been reasonable. Yet, they have been inching higher. A booming real estate market discourages many people from home ownership. Pollution of air and water continues despite efforts of many to change the present course of development. High-wage industries seem to be "heading south" in search of places where lower wages can be paid. Also, all sorts of crime are still present in our society, a goodly portion of it seemingly brought about by unemployment, drug-taking, and rising debt at all levels from the individual to the federal government.

The continuing presence of youth crime is especially disturbing. (This is especially true when homegrown youth turn to terrorism!) In this respect, it is fortunate in North America that municipal, private-agency, and public recreation has received continuing financial support from the increasingly burdened taxpayer. Even here, however, there has been a definite trend toward user fees for many services thereby affecting people's ability to get involved. Life goes on,

however, but the question arises in ongoing discussions as to what character we seek for people within a burgeoning population.

What Character Do We Seek for People?

Functioning in a world that is steadily becoming a "Global Village," or a "flat earth" as described by Thomas Friedman, we need to think more seriously than ever before about the character and traits which we should seek to develop in people. Not even mentioning the Third World, people in what we call "developed nations" continue to lead or strive for the proverbial good life. To attain this state, children and young people need to develop the right attitudes (psychologically speaking) toward education, work, use of leisure, participation in government, various types of consumption, and concern for world stability and peace. If we truly desire "the good life," we somehow have to provide an increased level of education for the creative and constructive use of leisure to a greater percentage of the population. As matters stand, there doesn't seem to be much impetus in the direction of achieving this balance as a significant part of ongoing general education. We are not ready for a society where education for leisure has a unique role to play on into the indeterminate future? How might such a development affect the character of our young people?

What are called the "Old World countries" all seem to have a "character"; it is almost something that they take for granted. However, it is questionable whether there is anything that can be called a character in North America (i.e., in the United States? In Europe? in Canada?). Americans were thought earlier to be heterogeneous and individualistic as a people, as opposed to Canadians. But the Canadian culture--whatever that may be today! --has moved toward multiculturalism quite significantly in the past two decades. Of course, Canada was founded by two distinct cultures, the English and the French. In addition to working out a continuing, reasonably happy relationship between these two cultures, it is now a question because of an aggressive "multicultural approach" of assimilating--as Canadians (!)--

people arriving from many different lands. And let's not forget the claims of "first nations" whose 99 entities in British Columbia alone claim more territory than exists!

Shortly after the middle of the twentieth century, Commager (1966), the noted historian, enumerated what he believed were some common denominators in American (i.e., U.S.) character. These, he said, were (1) carelessness; (2) openhandedness, generosity, and hospitality; (3) self-indulgence; (4) sentimentality, and even romanticism; (5) gregariousness; (6) materialism; (7) confidence and self-confidence; (8) complacency, bordering occasionally on arrogance; (9) cultivation of the competitive spirit; (10) indifference to, and exasperation with laws, rules, and regulations; (11) equalitarianism; and (12) resourcefulness (pp. 246–254).

What about Canadian character as opposed to what Commager stated above for America? (Could there be such a thing as European character?) Although completed a quarter of a century ago, Lipset (1973) carried out a perceptive comparison between the two countries that has probably not changed significantly in the interim. He reported that these two countries probably resemble each other more than any other two in the world. Nevertheless, he asserted that there seemed to be a rather "consistent pattern of differences between them" (p. 4). He found that certain "special differences" did exist and may be singled out as follows:

Varying origins in their political systems and national identities, varying religious traditions, and varying frontier experiences. In general terms, the value orientations of Canada stem from a counterrevolutionary past, a need to differentiate itself from the United States, the influence of Monarchical institutions, a dominant Anglican religious tradition, and a less individualistic and more governmentally controlled expansion of the Canadian than of the American frontier (p. 5).

Seymour Lipset's findings tended to sharpen the focus on opinions commonly held earlier that, even though there is considerable sharing of values, they are held more tentatively in Canada. Also, he believed that Canada had

consistently settled on "the middle ground" between positions arrived at in the United States and England. However, Lipset argued that, although the twin values of equalitarianism and achievement have been paramount in American life--but somewhat less important in Canada--there was now consistent movement in this direction in Canada as well (p. 6). Keeping national aims, value orientations, and character traits in mind as being highly important, of course, as well all of the material progress that has been made by a segment of the population, we are nevertheless forced to ask ourselves if we in Canada are "on the right track heading in the right direction?"

What Happened to the Original Enlightenment Ideal?

The achievement of "the good life" for a majority of citizens in the developed nations, a good life that involves a creative and constructive use of leisure as a key part of general education, necessarily implies that a certain type of progress has been made in society. However, we should understand that the chief criterion of progress has undergone a subtle but decisive change since the founding of the United States republic in North America. This development has had a definite influence on Canada and Mexico as well. Such change has been at once a cause and a reflection of the current disenchantment with technology. Recall that the late 18th century was a time of political revolution when monarchies and aristocracies, and that the ecclesiastical structure were being challenged on a number of fronts in the Western world. Also, the factory system was undergoing significant change at that time.

As Leo Marx (1990, p. 5) reported such industrial development with its greatly improved machinery "coincided with the formulation and diffusion of the modern Enlightenment idea of history as a record of progress..." He explained further that this: "new scientific knowledge and accompanying technological power was expected to make possible a comprehensive improvement in all of the conditions of life--social, political, moral, and intellectual as well as material." This idea did indeed slowly take hold and eventually "became the fulcrum of the

dominant American world view" (p. 5). By 1850, however, with the rapid growth of the United States especially, the idea of progress was already being dissociated from the Enlightenment vision of political and social liberation.

By the turn of the twentieth century, "the technocratic idea of progress [had become] a belief in the sufficiency of scientific and technological innovation as the basis for general progress" (Leo Marx, p. 9). This came to mean that if scientific-based technologies were permitted to develop in an unconstrained manner, there would be an automatic improvement in all other aspects of life! What happened--because this theory became coupled with onrushing, unbridled capitalism--was that the ideal envisioned by Thomas Jefferson in the United States has been turned upside down. Instead of social progress being guided by such values as justice, freedom, and self-fulfillment for all people, rich or poor, these goals of vital interest in a democracy were subjugated to a burgeoning society dominated by supposedly more important instrumental values (i.e., useful or practical ones for advancing a capitalistic system).

Have conditions improved? The answer to this question is obvious. The fundamental question still today is, "which type of values will win out in the long run?" In North America, for example, a developing concept of cultural relativism was being discredited as the 1990s witnessed a sharp clash between (1) those who uphold so-called Western cultural values and (2) those who by their presence are dividing the West along a multitude of ethnic and racial lines. This is occasioning strong efforts to promote "fundamentalist" religions and sects--either those present historically or those recently imported. These numerous religions, and accompanying sects, are characterized typically by decisive right/wrong morality. It is just this sort of "progress" that has led concerned people to inquire where we in the developed world are heading. What kind of a future is "out there" for humankind if the world continues in the same direction it is presently heading? We don't know for certain, of course, but a number of different scenarios can be envisioned depending on

humanity's response to the present crisis of a society characterized by modernism.

Future Societal Scenarios (Anderson)

In this adventure of civilization, Walter Truett Anderson, then— president of the American Division of the World Academy of Art and Science, postulates four different scenarios for the future of earthlings. In *The future of the self: Inventing the postmodern person* (1997), Anderson argues convincingly that current trends are adding up to an early 21st-century identity crisis for humankind. The creation of the present “modern self,” he explains, began with Plato, Aristotle, and with the rights of humans in Roman legal codes.

Anderson argues that the developing conception of self bogged down in the Middle Ages, but fortunately was resurrected in the Renaissance Period of the second half of The Middle Ages. Since then the human “self” has been advancing like a “house afire” as the Western world has gone through an almost unbelievable transformation. Without resorting to historical detail, I will say only that scientists like Galileo and Copernicus influenced philosophers such as Descartes and Locke to foresee a world in which the self was invested with human rights.

Anderson's “One World, Many Universes” version is prophesied as the most likely to occur. This is a scenario characterized by (1) high economic growth, (2) steadily increasing technological progress, and (3) globalization combined with high psychological development. Such psychological maturity, he predicts, will be possible for a certain segment of the world's population because “active life spans will be gradually lengthened through various advances in health maintenance and medicine” (pp. 251-253). (This scenario may seem desirable, of course, to people who are coping reasonably well at present).

However, it appears that a problem has developed at the beginning of this new century with this dream of individual achievement of inalienable rights and privileges. The modern self envisioned by Descartes—a rational, integrated self that Anderson likens to Captain Kirk at the command post of (the original Starship Enterprise—is having an identity crisis. The

image of this bold leader (he or she!) taking us fearlessly into the great unknown has begun to fade as alternate scenarios for the future of life on Earth are envisioned.

For example, John Bogle of Vanguard, in his *The Battle for the Soul of Capitalism* (2007) argues that what he terms “global capitalism” is destroying the already uneasy balance between democracy as a political system and capitalism as an economic system. In a world where globalization and economic “progress” seemingly must be rejected because of catastrophic environmental concerns or “demands,” the bold-future image could well “be replaced by a postmodern self; decentered, multidimensional, and changeable” (p. 50).

Captain Kirk, or “George W.,” as he “boldly went where no man has gone before”—this time to rid the world of terrorists)—faced a second crucial change. Now, as the Obama American Government seeks to shape the world of the 21st century, based on Anderson's analysis, there is another force—the systemic-change force mentioned above—that is shaping the future. This all-powerful force may well exceed the Earth's ability to cope with what happens. As gratifying as such factors as “globalization along with economic growth” and “psychological development” may seem to the folks in Anderson's “One-World, Many Universes” scenario, there is a flip side to this prognosis. This image, Anderson identifies, as “The Dysfunctional Family” scenario. It turns out that all of the “benefits” of so-called progress are highly expensive and available now only to relatively few of the six billion plus people on earth. Anderson foresees this scenario as “a world of modern people relatively happily doing their thing--modern people still obsessed with progress, economic gain, and organizational bigness--along with varieties of postmodern people being trampled and getting angry” [italics added] (p. 51). And, I might add further, as people get angrier, present-day terrorism in North America could seem like child's play.

What Kind of A World Do You Want for Your Descendents?

What I am really asking here is whether you, the reader of these words, is cognizant of,

and approves of, the situation as it is developing today. Are you (and I too!) simply "going along with the crowd" while taking the path of least resistance? Can we do anything to improve the situation by implementing an approach that could help to make the situation more beneficent and wholesome in perspective? What I am recommending is that the time is ripe for a country like Canada—not to mention the European Union—to distinguish itself more aggressively as being on a "different path" than the United States of America. To do this, however, individually and collectively, we would need to determine what sort of a world we (and our descendants) should be living in.

If you consider yourself an environmentalist, for example, the future undoubtedly looks bleak to you. What can we do to counter the strong business orientation of society (i.e., being swept along with the "onward and upward" economic and technologic growth of American modernism and capitalism)? Such is most certainly not the answer to all of our developing problems and issues. We should see ourselves increasingly as "New Agers" working to help the rest of the Western world as it works to forge its own identity. I grant you, however, some sort of mass, non-religious "spiritual" transformation would have to take place for this to become a reality.

Let me offer one example based on my personal experience where I think we can all make a good beginning in this respect. (Some who read this may wish to hang me in effigy [or literally!] for this assertion). Nevertheless I believe that Canada should strive to hold back the negative influences of America's approach to overly commercial, competitive sport in both universities and the public sector. At present we are too often typically conforming blindly to a power structure in which sport is used largely by private enterprise for selfish purposes. The problem is this: opportunities for participation in all competitive sport—not just Olympic sport—moved historically from amateurism to semi-professionalism, and then on to full-blown professionalism.

The Olympic Movement, because of a variety of social pressures, followed suit in both ancient times and the present. When the International Olympic Committee gave that final

push to the pendulum and openly admitted professional athletes to play in the Games, they may have pleased most of the spectators and all of the advertising and media representatives. But in so doing the floodgates were opened completely. The original ideals upon which the Games were reactivated were completely abandoned. This is what caused Sir Rees-Mogg in Britain, for example, to state that crass commercialism had won the day. This final abandonment of any semblance of what was the original Olympic ideal was the "straw that broke the camel's back." This ultimate decision regarding eligibility for participation has indeed been devastating to those people who earnestly believe that money and sport are like oil and water; they simply do not mix! Their response has been to abandon any further interest in, or support for, the entire Olympic Movement.

The question must, therefore be asked: "What should rampant professionalism in competitive sport at the Olympic Games mean to any given country out of the 200-plus nations involved?" This is not a simple question to answer responsibly. In this present brief statement, it should be made clear that the professed social values of a country should ultimately prevail--and that they will prevail in the final analysis. However, this ultimate determination will not take place overnight. The fundamental social values of a social system will eventually have a strong influence on the individual values held by most citizens in that country, also. If a country is moving toward the most important twin values of equalitarianism and achievement, for example, what implications does that have for competitive sport in that political entity under consideration? The following are some questions that should be asked before a strong continuing commitment is made to sponsor such involvement through governmental and/or private funding:

1. Can it be shown that involvement in competitive sport at one or the other of the three levels (i.e., amateur, semi-professional, professional) brings about desirable social values (i.e., more value than disvalue)?
2. Can it be shown that involvement in competitive sport at one or the other of the

three levels (i.e., amateur, semiprofessional, or professional) brings about desirable individual values of both an intrinsic and extrinsic nature (i.e., creates more value than disvalue)?

3. If the answer to Questions #1 and #2 immediately are both affirmative (i.e., that involvement in competitive sport at any or all of the three levels postulated [i.e., amateur, semi-professional, and professional sport] provides a sufficient amount of social and individual value to warrant such promotion), can sufficient funds be made available to support or permit this promotion at any or all of the three levels listed?
4. If funding to support participation in competitive sport at any or all of the three levels (amateur, semiprofessional, professional) is not available (or such participation is not deemed advisable), should priorities—as determined by the expressed will of the people—be established about the importance of each level to the country based on careful analysis of the potential social and individual values that may accrue to the society and its citizens from such competitive sport participation at one or more levels?

Further, as one aging person who encountered corruption and sleaze in the intercollegiate athletic structure of several major universities in the United States, I retreated to a Canadian university where the term “scholar-athlete” still implies roughly what it says. However, I now see problems developing on the Canadian inter-university sport scene as well. We have two choices before us. One choice is to do nothing about the “creeping semiprofessionalism” that is occurring. This would require no great effort, of course. We can simply go along with the prevailing ethos of a North American society that is using sport to help in the promotion of social, as opposed to moral, character traits. In the process, “business as usual” will be supported one way or the other. A postmodern approach, conversely, would be one where specific geographic regions in Canada (the east, the far west, Quebec, and the midwest) reverse the trend toward semi-professionalism that is steadily developing. The

pressures on university presidents and governing boards will increase steadily. Will they have wisdom and acumen to ward off this insidious possibility?

The reader can readily see where I am coming from with this discussion. I recommend strongly that we take a good look at what is implied when we challenge ourselves to consider what the deliberate creation of a postmodern world might do for an increasingly multiethnic Canada. Despite the return to a Conservative minority government, expanding the elements of postmodernism in Canada has a fighting chance to succeed. In the United States--forget it! Nevertheless, in its solid effort to become a unique, multicultural society, Canada may already be implementing what may be considered some of the better aspects of the concept of “postmodernism.” For better or worse—and it may well be the latter—we are not so close to “the behemoth to the South” that we can't read the handwriting on the wall about what's happening “down there.”

Can We Strengthen the Postmodern Influence?

My review of selected world, European, North American, regional, and local developments occurring in the final quarter of the 20th century may have created both positive and negative thoughts on your part. You might ask how this broadly based discussion relates to a plea for consideration of an increasingly postmodern social philosophy. My response to this question is “vigorous”: “It doesn't” and yet “It does.” It doesn't relate or “compute” to the large majority of those functioning in the starkly modern “North American” world. The affirmative answer--that it does--is correct if we listen to the voices of those in the substantive minority who are becoming increasingly restless with the obvious negatives of the modernism that has spread so rapidly in the modern world.

To help reverse this disturbing development, some wise scholars have recommended that the discipline of philosophy should have some connection to the world as it was described above. The late philosopher, Richard Rorty (1997), termed a so-called Neo-pragmatist, exhorted the presently “doomed

liberal Left" in North America to join the fray again. Their presumed shame should not be bolstered by a mistaken belief that only those who agree with the Marxist position that capitalism must be eradicated are "true Lefts." Rorty recommends that philosophy once again become characterized as a "search for wisdom," a search that seeks conscientiously and capably to answer the many pressing issues and problems looming before humankind worldwide.

While most philosophers were "elsewhere engaged," some within the fold considered what has been called postmodernism carefully. For example, in *Crossing the postmodern divide* by Albert Borgmann (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), it was refreshing to find such a clear assessment of the present situation. Time and again in discussions about postmodernism, I have encountered what I soon began to characterize as gobbledygook (i.e., planned obfuscation?). This effort by Borgmann was solid, down-to-earth, and comprehensible. However, in the final two pages, he veered to a Roman-Catholic position that that he calls postmodern realism as the answer to the plight caused by modernism. It is his right, of course, to state his personal opinion after describing the current political and social situation so accurately. However, if he could have brought himself to it, or if he had thought it possible, it might have been better if he had spelled out several alternative directions for humankind to go in the 21st century. (Maybe we should be thankful that he thought any one might be able to save it!)

With his argument that "postmodernism must become, for better or worse, something other than modernism," Borgmann explains that: [postmodernism] already exhibits two distinct tendencies: The first is to refine technology. Here postmodernism shares with modernists an unreserved allegiance to technology, but it differs from modernism in giving technology a hyper-fine and hyper-complex design. This tendency I call hyper-modernism. The alternative tendency is to outgrow technology as a way of life and to put it to the service of reality, of the things that command our respect and grace our life. This I call postmodern realism (p. 82).

At what point could we argue that the modern epoch or era has come to an end and that civilization is ready to put hyper-modernism aside and embrace Borgmann's postmodern realism--or any form of postmodernism for that matter? Can we hope to find agreement that this epoch is approaching closure because a substantive minority of the populace is challenging many of the fundamental beliefs of modernism? The "substantive minority" may not be large enough yet, but the reader may be ready to agree that indeed the world is moving into a new epoch as the proponents of postmodernism have been affirming over recent decades. Within such a milieu all professions would probably find great difficulty crossing this so-called, postmodern gap (chasm, divide, whatever you may wish to call it). Scholars argue convincingly that many in democracies, under girded by the various rights being propounded (e.g., individual freedom, privacy), have not yet come to believe that they have found a supportive "liberal consensus" within their respective societies.

My contention is that "post-modernists"--whether they recognize themselves as belonging to this group--now form a substantive minority that supports a more humanistic, pragmatic, liberal consensus in society. Yet they recognize that present-day society is going to have difficulty crossing any such postmodern divide. Many traditionalists in democratically oriented political systems may not like everything they see in front of them today, but as they look elsewhere they flinch even more. After reviewing where society has been, and where it is now, two more questions need to be answered. Where is society heading, and--most importantly--where should it be heading?

As despairing as one might be of society's direction today, the phenomenon of postmodernism--with its accompanying deconstructionist analytic technique affirming the idea that the universe is valueless with no absolute--brings one up short quickly. Take your choice: bleak pessimism or blind optimism. The former seems to be more dangerous to humankind's future than that of an idealistic future "under the sheltering arms of a Divine Father." Yet, some argue that Nietzsche's philosophy of

being, knowledge, and morality supports the basic dichotomy espoused by the philosophy of being in the post-modernistic position. I can understand at once, therefore, why it meets with opposition by those whose thought has been supported by traditional theocentrism.

A better approach, I recommend, might be one of "positive meliorism" in which humankind is exhorted to "take it from here and do its best to improve the world situation." In the process we should necessarily inquire: "What happened to the "Enlightenment ideal"? This was supposed to be America's chief criterion of progress, but it has gradually but steadily undergone such a decisive change since the founding of the Republic. That change is at once a cause and a reflection of our current disenchantment with technology.

Post-modernists do indeed subscribe to a humanistic, anthropocentric belief as opposed to the traditional theocentric position. They would probably subscribe, therefore to what B. Berelson and G.A. Steiner in the mid-1960s postulated as a behavioral science image of man and woman. This view characterized the human as a creature continuously adapting reality to his or her own ends. Such thought undoubtedly challenges the authority of theological positions, dogmas, ideologies, and some scientific "infallibles".

A moderate post-modernist--holding a position I feel able to subscribe to once I am able

to bring it all into focus--would at least listen to what the "authority" had written or said before criticizing or rejecting it. A fully committed post-modernist goes his or her own way by early, almost automatic, rejection of all tradition. Then this person presumably relies simply on a personal interpretation and subsequent diagnosis to muster the authority to challenge any or all icons or "lesser gods" extant in society.

Concluding Statement

In conclusion, it seems obvious that a moderate post-modernist would feel most comfortable seeking to achieve his or her personal, professional, and social/environmental goals through the stance that has been described. This position would be directly opposed to the traditional stifling position of, for example, "essentialist" theological realists or idealists. The world is changing. It has changed! These conflicting "world religions" are getting in the way of civilization's progress. The conflicts they cause could destroy humankind. A more pragmatic "value-is-that-which-is proven-through-experience" orientation that could emerge as one legacy of postmodernism would leave the future open-ended. That is the way it ought to be for the future on this "speck" called Earth in an infinite multiverse...

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